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The Will to Play

Performance and Construction of Royal Masculinity in Early Modern History Plays

Arbeit zur Erlangung des Doktortitels

Katharina Bähne

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages [...].

William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, 2.7.138-142.

[D]iscourse is not life; its time is not yours[.]

Michel Foucault, "History, Discourse and Discontinuity."

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List of Abbreviations

RII	*Richard II*
1HIV	*1 Henry IV*
2HIV	*2 Henry IV*
HV	*Henry V*
1HVI	*1 Henry VI*
RIII	*Richard III*
EII	*Edward II*
EIII	*Edward III*
1EIV	*1 Edward IV*
2EIV	*2 Edward IV*

The *Geneva Bible*, translated in 1560 by English Calvinists in Geneva, will be used as edition for references to biblical texts. It was the most popular Bible translation up to the *James Bible* edition in the early seventeenth century despite the existence of a more monarchy-friendly Elizabethan edition called the *Bishops' Bible* dating from 1568. The *Bishops' Bible* was the official edition used in churches in the 1590s, but apparently it was not commonly read due to its linguistic style.[1]

[1] Lampe 2011: 17.

1 Introduction

What does it take to be a man? This question is as ancient as humankind and has been answered differently throughout history via various perceptions, signs, and initiation rites. Masculinity is often perceived as an achievement, as the effect of an effort of will; manhood is therefore a quality that has to be achieved and maintained—and not a natural given.[2] Through this constant anxiety and negotiation of what it means to be a man, masculinity has been perceived as constantly being in crisis, especially in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.[3] But, at all times, the main engine of re-evaluating and constructing masculinity is a conflict of pressures.[4] This work examines how the early modern theatre negotiated, constructed, and evaluated masculinity for the high nobility in the history plays of the 1590s. Not only was the early modern period a time of historic social change, it was also a politically and economically turbulent time.[5] At such a turning of the tides, conflicting demands of what a man was expected to be—even more so if he was in a socially elevated position—were re-evaluated. This could result in criticism or readjustments; but, either way, the discussion reveals the insecure nature of what it means to be a man—and in particular a king—in changing times. This work therefore first surveys the paradigms and ideas that shaped the social construction of the hegemonic concept of masculinity for kings, how they related to others, and what role the theatre had within this social frame. A special focus will be on kingship and its discourses that are an essential part of a male monarch's identity.

Writing about English Renaissance plays may seem an exercise in futility. The complexity of the material, the reception history of a few hundred years, and the cultural impact Shakespeare and his fellow playwrights had on Western cultures is more than one reason to shrink away from the task—even more so when looking at the gender construction of a whole era. However, the complexity and ambiguity of early modern plays also incite curiosity; the media of popular culture such as the theatre condensed, reinforced, and influenced public discourse as in a social petri dish. The movement from a medieval to a modern mind-set could not happen without faultlines, conflict, and upheaval; the history plays mirror and negotiate these tensions. Further, the Enlightenment was a radical break in how the West organised its knowledge.[6] To try

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[2] Orgel 1996: 19; see also Connell 1995: 32-33.

[3] Kimmel 1987, 121; Doyle 1983: 17, 135; Goldberg 1976; Sexton 1969; Farrell 1974 (for criticism on Farrell see Connell 1995: 207-208).

[4] Brod 1987: 46-47.

[5] Esler calls the years from the early 1590s onwards to Elizabeth's death "bottleneck years" for the aspiring courtiers of the 1560s generation (Esler 1966: 125).

[6] Strier discusses the applicability of the terms "early modern" and "Renaissance" in an interesting footnote. For him, "Renaissance" conveys the idea that something supposedly lost (his examples are "good Latin; good letters; the art of perspective; the true church," Strier 1995: 5) was retrieved—in a somewhat judgmental and idealising way. "Early modern" is more neutral as it does not focus on high culture that much, but nevertheless it puts the post-moderns in a superior position as it is the period that will eventually pave the way for the contemporary world (Strier 1995: 5-6, fn. 5). In this work, no judgment is implied in the use of either of these terms. They will be used interchangeably with the term "Elizabethan."

and understand how an early English aristocrat might have shaped his male identity, this intellectual barrier has to be overcome; to tackle this complexity, it has to be looked at from different angles.[7]

In the first part of this work, parameters that shaped early modern aristocratic masculinity shall be made palpable by a kaleidoscopic exploration of Renaissance ideas about the body, mind, and social norms. While a complete reconstruction of royal masculinity will never be possible, a rapprochement should convey at least a partial picture of what hegemonic masculinity demanded of a man belonging to the English nobility. To bridge this gap, an intertextual dialogue of texts shall provide the grounds to recapture and approach the axiomatic thinking pattern of the early modern period. In this thesis, Renaissance texts shall enter into a dialogue with the plays to reconstruct how the Elizabethans thought about masculinities and how these ideas were challenged by contemporary culture. This array of parameters will then provide the methodological basis for a semiotics of masculinity in the second part of this work that will be used to analyse selected history plays from the 1590s to understand how the Tudor stage evaluated the characters and actions of English male kings.[8] The analysis will show how Elizabethan popular theatre culture constructed, negotiated, and criticised early modern masculinities; the results are then summarised and compared in the conclusion.

Thus, one of the goals of this work is to expose how early modern masculinity is physically, socially, and formally constructed within the structural bounds of family, power, and religion. Further, distinct notions of how a royal male should wield his power, how he perceived his gender, how he shaped his self image, and how his body influenced these processes according to the norms of the time shall be evaluated according to the material practice of the early modern stage in plays that mainly deal with power, legitimacy, war, and reason of state. The analysis of the fringes of discourse, such as the thin line between male-male friendship and sexual attraction between men, will incorporate marginalised representations of alternative masculinities.

To achieve a thorough understanding of gender construction, post-modern theories will be included to shed light on the underlying patterns of thought; even though this work aims at an understanding of the Renaissance mind-set, it is impossible to entirely drop a post-modern perspective in retrospective. However, "mere reading," as Paul de Man demanded, is the key to what the texts reveal.[9] And while the focus will be on hegemonic masculinity of the high nobility, deviant and alternative masculinities will find their place in the analyses as well.[10] Early modern society in England consisted of different social strata that developed diverse cultural backgrounds and status groups.

---

[7] Smith 2000: 5.

[8] A semiotic approach avoids the pitfalls of arbitrary essentialist definitions or the restrictions of positivist and normative approaches and transcends the personal level (Connell 1995: 70-71). Connell advises to look at the power relations, the production relations, and the emotional attachment of masculinity to get a rounded view of the structure of gender (Connell 1995: 73-75).

[9] de Man 1986: 24; see also Strier 1995: 1; 125-126.

[10] Strier claims that some old and new historicist theories deny that radicalism, freedom of conscience, and rebellion were even thinkable in the Renaissance (Strier 1995: 5-6). Unthinkability is an unnecessary restriction to Renaissance thought. His examples also provide proof that these issues were indeed thinkable (see Strier 1995: 118-164, 165-202).

The high nobility had a different way of living than the country or parish gentry; they communicated through different networks, had different values, different patterns of behaviour and even socially stratified sub-cultures.[11] The spread of printed material further deepened this social divergence. The dissemination of new ideas brought about a divergence of opinions and values that formed distinct patterns.[12]

The world of the early modern stage is dominated by kings and princes, especially so in the genre of the history plays. Even if they do not enter the stage during the whole play, the characters on stage always move within a space that is under the spell of some prince's rule.[13] Shakespeare's kings struggle with the tension between the demands of reigning according to divine right on the one hand and dealing with earthly problems and the power structures they are themselves entangled in on the other.[14] The royal characters of other writers likewise operate in this social friction where the most private is public; in this work, the impact of this tension on the personalities and masculinities of the kings will be evaluated. Thus, aristocratic Renaissance men, though they seemed to be masters of their brave new world, were themselves not free but entangled in discourses that formed and constricted them.

To give a broad basis for the textual analysis, a selection of ten history plays dating from the 1590s will be used to illustrate how Tudor playwrights negotiated royal masculinity on stage. The Shakespearean plays—by far the largest section—comprise the two tetralogies, namely *Richard II* (first printed 1597)[15], *1* and *2 Henry IV* (1596/7 and 1598/9)[16], *Henry V* (1599)[17], *1 Henry VI* (1592)[18], and *Richard III* (1592/3)[19]. Marlowe's famous *Edward II* (1592), Heywood's *1* and *2 Edward IV* (1599)[20], and the anonymous *Edward III* (1596)[21] are the further plays that round off the literary canon to give a perspective that is not solely based on the Shakespearean cycles of history plays. While the tetralogies are the most famous and possibly the densest history plays, all of the non-Shakespearean plays either display an alternative male character or a different structural approach to the construction of a royal persona or his legacy. Other plays like the anonymous *Woodstock*, *Sir John Oldcastle, Part I* by the writer group Drayton, Hathaway, Munday, and Wilson, Peele's *Edward I*, the anonymous play *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, and Shakespeare's *King John* were not included because they

[11] The rich classes, be they wealthy because of their landed property, their profession, or due to trade, comprised the top three or five per cent of society that dominated the huge rest of the lower and less wealthy classes (Stone 1995: 37).
[12] Other factors that diversified society apart from class and property were literacy and religion (Stone 1995: 22-25).
[13] Schruff 1999: 1.
[14] Schruff 1999: 271.
[15] See Eisaman Maus 1997: 420.
[16] Howard 1997: 629.
[17] Eisaman Maus 1997: 717.
[18] Howard 1997: 252.
[19] Greenberg 1997: 319.
[20] See Rowland 2005: 3.
[21] Sams's claim that the play is Shakespearean will not be pursued further in this work (see also Howard 2008: 711-716).

either lack a certain complexity or have a different focus; some of them will be referred to, but they will not be analysed in detail.

At a time when a female monarch had ruled successfully for decades, the social hegemony of men was called into question; according to Breitenberg, men perceive crises of self-definition if there is a structural crisis of the interpretation of masculinity due to transforming changes in the institutions of personal life like marriage and the family at historical junctures.[22] While these gender crises also have an impact on sexual discourse, the reasons are social, not sexual.[23] The Renaissance with its massive political, religious, social, and economic changes was such a turning point in Western civilisation that made the renegotiation of masculinity an important social issue and caused a deep feeling of gender anxiety in many Elizabethan men. While patriarchy had been a constant in gender relations for ages,[24] men had to relocate their standing in the power structures with a female monarch who ruled England successfully. The paradigm shift at the end of the sixteenth century indicated that there was also a crisis of interpretation that influenced gender politics. Additionally, society was in unrest; London had grown rapidly during the second half of the sixteenth century into a metropolis that sucked up trade and entertainment and was full of foreigners around 1600 (especially so if Scots, Irishmen, and Welshmen are counted as foreigners in England, too);[25] the old gentry and aristocracy were threatened by the emerging commercial classes; and any deviation from the heterosexual norm could end fatally. In this atmosphere, where the Reformation, the theatre as a new medium, the explosion of printed material, geopolitics and new discoveries changed the life of Englishmen, uncertainty and instability produced a creative as well as investigative surrounding where dramatists as well as other writers could explore what it essentially meant to be human[26] – and male. The shift from medieval culture to new parameters of politics and religion made the structures overlap, so the dramatists of the time could use these dislocations creatively in the new media. The need for cultural identity as well as the feeling of change were penetrating the late sixteenth century[27]—even more so as many people were afraid, frustrated, and disoriented in this puzzling new world.

In the 1590s, many of these strains reached a climax; after a phase of political stability, the fortunes of Elizabeth faded away. Even though she was aging, the queen had forbidden any discussions of the question of succession, and "in effect the people were very generally weary of an old woman's government."[28] In the last decade of

[22] Breitenberg 1996: 177.
[23] Kimmel 1987: 123.
[24] Doyle 1983: 23.
[25] Smith 2000: 104; Rowland 2005: 15. Rowland also mentions the riots against foreigners as well as the xenophobia that erupted in riots against foreigners in 1593/4, showing that the city was full of tension, ready to break out at any time (Rowland 2005: 18).
[26] Kamm and Lenz 2009: 7-8.
[27] Pfister 2009: 219.
[28] Goodman 1839: 97. Keller contradicts this statement by saying that people were "disgruntled because of the succession of James I to the English throne." He refers to the fact that under James, the social order as preserved under Elizabeth began to crumble (Keller 1993: 166). However, this was probably more a consequence of the social erosion that already set in in the 1590s and continued under James's reign (Loades 1999: 268-269).

Elizabeth's reign, corruption and economic crisis led to public discontent about finances, government, and recruitment that even alienated courtiers from the monarch.[29] From 1595 onwards, the political system eroded due to the costs of war, taxation, and a weak economy. The deaths of Elizabeth's main advisers, factionist struggles between the parties of Essex and the Cecils,[30] and the changes in the Privy Council furthered the feeling that England was going downhill.[31] As the crown's financial resources were drained, royal patronage declined. The rising costs were met with a higher tax burden that caused a lot of grumbling, especially after 1593.[32] To stabilise her brittle finances, the queen tried to raise additional revenues through additional taxation, selling crown lands, and getting forced loans. Thus, Parliament—and the wealthy gentry that was represented in the House of Commons—gained a lot of power due to taxation.[33]

The war with Spain, the political problems, and the growing feeling that Elizabeth's reign would end soon, made people discontent and restless, especially the younger

[29] Between 1585 and 1602, about 117,500 men were recruited—an average of 6,529 men per year. 1588 reached a peak with 15,000 soldiers to be levied, and in 1596 it was 11,000 men. Towards the end of the century—in 1597, 1598, and in 1601—more than 9,000 soldiers were levied. Hammer argues that these numbers have to be reduced by seven per cent due to the "dead pays" which were fictional soldiers that were added to the lists due to budgetary reasons (Hammer 2003: 245-248; Cahill 2008: 13). The numbers towards the end of the sixteenth century indicate that a rising number of soldiers were conscripted; the public spending on war, the involvement in different conflicts as in Scotland, Ireland, France, and the Netherlands as well as the ensuing conscription of soldiers made war an important issue for Elizabethans during the 1580s and 1590s (Campbell 1947: 257; Guy 1988: 379; Cruickshank 1966; MacCaffrey 1992; for details on the wars during the 1590s, see Hammer 2003: 154-223).

[30] Guy talks of "second-rate men" who made up the faction of the Cecils. Thus, the Cecils could promote their men but no one would challenge their position in the administration. Guy even goes so far as to question Robert Cecil's political integrity (see Guy 1988: 438-439). Thus he gives a completely different take on the Essex rebellion and its political justification. He argues that the rivalry between Essex and Cecil was not only personal due to patronage for their protégés, but rather political about the control of court policy. These allegations would put Elizabeth in a position where she did not have full control over her policies as well as her court—which may be doubted for a queen who was very shrewd in questions of political balance.

[31] In 1588, the Earl of Leicester died, Mildmay in 1589, Walsingham and the Earl of Warwick in 1590, and Sir Christopher Hatton in 1591. The overtowering eminence in the council that remained was Lord Burghley. His son Robert Cecil was admitted to the council in 1592 and was to be his father's successor after his death (Guy 1988: 437-438). Other new members along with Robert Cecil were Sir Thomas Heneage (who died in 1595), John Fortescue, and Sir John Puckering (Guy 1988: 437-438).

[32] English taxation was relatively equitable, as the poor paid little or even nothing. The taxation of the aristocracy was relatively light, so they were relatively wealthy (Loades 1999: 156-157). However, many tax payers, even Lord Burghley himself, evaded taxation—a problem reported from the 1560s onwards. In 1593, even three subsidies were granted, a heavy burden for the population. Despite these efforts, effectively the net income of the crown dropped during Elizabeth's reign because the net income could not keep up with inflation (Dietz 1964: 22, 382-393; Guy 1988: 382-384; Fletcher 1975: 202-217; Cheyney 1948: 214-258; Braddick 1996: 155-179).

[33] The tax revenues collected from the English laity rose significantly; Guy calculated that accumulated taxes reached 690,000 pounds from 1559 to 1571, 660,000 pounds between 1576 and 1587, and 1,1 million pounds between 1589 and 1601 (Guy 1988: 381; Dietz 1964: 22-29, 53-55, 70-72, 80-81, 380-393). Forced loans from 1569, 1588, 1590, 1597, and 1601 raised a total income for the crown of 330,600 pounds. Even though these measures were extremely unpopular, Elizabeth could tighten her control over the sources of her finances (Outhwaite 1971: 251-263; Dietz 1964: 25-29; Guy 1988: 382; Loades 1999: 255-257). Outhwaite also reports that the English crown also tried to obtain loans abroad; their means of borrowing, however, were highly unpopular and burdensome (Outhwaite 1971: 251-258, 263).

gentry, many of whom put their hopes in the dazzling figure of the Earl of Essex.[34] Anthony Esler sums up the feeling at the close of the sixteenth century:

> And yet, the overpowering impression remains that it was not till close to the turn of the century that the melancholy mood really laid hold of the nation. […] The single most important cause of the melancholy mood that descended over England at the end of the reign of Elizabeth was quite probably the fundamental failure of Elizabethan ambition. For this widespread sense of frustration and failure transformed an optimistically ambitious generation into a generation of malcontents; and the malcontent was the basic type of the melancholy man.[35]

Not only did the financial basis of the state crumble but the old socio-political networks also broke down and gave way to the centralised authority of the crown.[36] Trade was disrupted; the plague broke out multiple times; harvests failed in 1596 and 1597; and an economic depression shook the lives of ordinary people.[37] From 1594 to 1598, death rates surged, and the price for agricultural goods rose, while the real income of people plummeted to the lowest level between 1260 and 1950.[38] England witnessed a struggle between the forces of stability and change. While people realised the opportunities of the new social mobility, its conditions were still restricted by the old system.[39] The contradiction between mobility and hierarchy was one of many tensions within Elizabethan society; the old order based on divine right and feudal structures slowly gave way to people who tried to take their fortunes into their own hands.[40] The opportunity of social mobility, and the "activist" approach of Protestantism imbued

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[34] Loades 1999: 263. Essex also tried to pose as a chivalric model based on Sir Philip Sidney; he saw himself committed to the chivalric codes of honour that were against common law. Essex fought duels, "cultivated a military clientele," and tried to imitate his personal hero Sidney in his military attempts. Essex even married Sidney's widow, and many of his followers were also somehow connected to Sir Philip (McCoy 1989: 78; Strong 1977: 140-141; Falls 1955: 24; Guy 1988: 439-443). At the 1590 Accession Day tilt, Essex appeared clad in black as a sign of mourning in honour of Sir Philip Sidney—and to show that he wanted to be his ideological successor (McCoy 1989: 77-78, 82; Peele 1590: [sig. A4r]-[sig. A4v]). Sidney personally even handed down his best sword to Essex after having received his fatal injury at Zutphen, handing down his "chivalric legacy" (McCoy 1989: 79-80). Essex' heroic image was even fostered by Shakespeare alluding to him in the chorus to the fifth act of *Henry V*, where he equals Henry's victory at Agincourt with the hoped-for victory of Essex in the Irish campaign (Guy 1988: 447, Gurr 2005: 1). The queen herself was not pleased by Essex' arrogant and ambitious behaviour. She even stated that she wished there was someone to "take him [Essex] down and teach him better manners," (Falls 1955: 24; McCoy 1989: 83). She apparently sensed that Essex' ambitions could become dangerous (see also Esler 1966: 87-99).

[35] Esler 1966: 234-235.

[36] Guy 1988: 388. However, the ruling social strata were more united than ever before during this time, building an opposition to the growing numbers of working poor and other disadvantaged members of society (Guy 1988: 406-407).

[37] Guy 1988: 288. Rowland further states that the harvests failed consecutively between 1594 and 1597 (Rowland 2005: 20).

[38] Guy 1988: 404; Wrigley and Schofield 1981: 313-340, 377-384, 638-693; Brown and Hopkins 1956: 296-314; Bowden 1967: 846-855. The queen even distributed money to the most needy of each ward and the aldermen tried to regulate the pricing of food in the markets so that the poorest citizens could still afford it (Rowland 2005: 20, 21).

[39] Keller 1993: 173-174; Champion 1977: 10-11; Wrightson 1982: 26-27, 161-162.

[40] McCoy 1989: 36; Keller 1993: 32-33; 70. It cannot be stated that politics became de-mysticised by writings like Machiavelli's, as Keller argues. The English monarchy had already been quite pragmatic in its approach to the church as well as in its use of political power, which never became absolutist as on the continent. Parliament and the binding of kingship to common law had prevented the developments that took hold of the Continent later on.

masculinity with the ethos of activity and political action. The mixture of old structures crumbling, a state in crisis, and a society redefining its values and virtues also made men redefine their roles and the norms guiding their selves. Machiavelli, one of the new voices, argued that political necessities had to be evaluated independently of ideologies and norms according to the realities of the situation.[41]

The dramatic texts of the 1590s are a result of the social and economic upheaval of the time, reflecting the cultural and material practices of a society undergoing fundamental change.[42] One of the main characteristics of the 1590s was the English fear of being invaded by Spain. As a result, Catholic Englishmen were more and more exposed to the question of allegiance. After Elizabeth's excommunication by the papal bull *Regnans in excelsis*, the Counter-reformation, plots against Elizabeth's life, and the attempted succession of Mary Stuart, the English government hedged its bets against Catholics, and the recusancy laws were heavily enforced during the Armada scare of the 1590s.[43] The Church of England did not only struggle with Catholicism but also with the growing influence of Puritanism from the 1580s onwards.[44] The Puritans' wish for decentralised church organisation challenged the queen's rule in church matters—as well as obedience to the given order. The Anglican Church, however, won against both the Puritans as well as the Catholics, an outcome that manifested itself during the 1590s.[45]

The theatre mirrored these tensions and developments; as a part of ongoing social re-evaluations, drama in late Tudor England also traced the struggle towards a redefinition of gender relations. The theatre, its production and rhetoric, both mirrored and influenced this conflict.[46] The history play as a specific form of drama was a massively popular phenomenon when it hit the Elizabethan stage in the 1590s. During this decade, acting troupes drew multitudes to the theatres with historical material. However, that fad ebbed away after 1600.[47] Apparently, the popularity of the history plays catered for the needs and interests of late Tudor society. It is striking that people were so interested in history that was as far off for an Elizabethan audience as the French Revolution is to the early twenty-first century; Graham Holderness explains that late medieval history was omnipresent in the Renaissance society, even "scarcely distinguishable from their own present." The history of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries built the explanation of the early modern world of the late sixteenth century,

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[41] Kluxen 1967: 10, 34, 37; Machiavelli 1997: 18-31; 37-44; 57-76; 81-88; Schruff 1999: 235.
[42] See Kamm and Lenz 2009: 12.
[43] Loades 1999: 255, 236-240, 267-269; Strier 1995: 158. Cardinal Allen wrote a Catholic defence in 1584, stating that both Catholic and Protestant believers agreed on the principle that princes might be resisted for lack of faith and religion (Allen 2009: 335-338). Four years later, Allen's tone became fiercer; in *A Declaration of the Sentence and Deposition of Elizabeth, the Usurper and Pretensed Queen of England*, he outright denied Elizabeth's legitimacy (Allen 2009: 377-378). This development shows that the English state rightly classified Catholics as potentially seditious. For the text of the bull see Pope Pius V (2009): 157.
[44] Actually, during the 1593 Parliament, the measures against Catholics from 1581 were also extended to Puritans (Strier 1995: 138; Neale 1953b: 296-297).
[45] Loades 1999: 270-275.
[46] Masten 1997: 4-5.
[47] Rowland 2005: 11.

with all its constant quarrels between the monarch and the nobility—the Wars of the Roses—that led in the end to the glorious ascent of the Tudors to the English throne.[48] One reason for the popularity of history plays was the fact that they were "action plays" and therefore appealing to both men and women in the audience.[49] Another reason why history plays were in fashion in the 1590s was their use as a relatively safe cover-up for criticism of actual politics because the plays were "only staging historical facts." While history plays negotiate norms and the self-image of England as an emergent nation, they often refer to contemporary conditions critically and subversively.[50] Writers in the 1590s very shrewdly used material from historic periods that had parallels to their own time.[51] Censorship made it impossible for playwrights to treat contemporary English history during Elizabeth's reign. When James ascended the throne, however, there was a flood of history plays dealing with the reign of Elizabeth. Continental contemporary history, like Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*, had not been considered problematic under Elizabeth.[52] Therefore, history plays held an important place in Elizabethan political discourse[53] as a means of political and social criticism.

Even though the late Tudor period had a relatively normative and tight discursive frame that defined what was right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate, the literature of the time cautiously moves in the grey area between rules and norms that were positively sanctioned and the realm of free thinking—it was the publication of deviant ideas that might involve heavy sanctions. The space for what could be done was quite narrow, of course—but writers like Marlowe, Shakespeare, Hayward, and Jonson crossed the borders of the acceptable at times.[54] The tension between the allowed and the subversive has already been treated and theorised extensively in academia; Stephen Greenblatt's *Shakespearean Negotiations* is one of the best-known examples of these studies. However, while there was an official episteme that governed the way of thinking, the Greenblattian wish for "containment" or the Tillyardian idea of an all-encompassing world picture are concepts that facilitate easier theorising. Just as no absolutely restricting, cemented view of the world existed, punishments for deviancy did not necessarily produce social coherence.[55] Absolute containment of thoughts and ideas is just not possible. While every writer depends on "the intellectual framework of

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[48] Holderness 1989: 1-2.

[49] Gurr claims that the histories primarily dealt with "the masculine affairs of war and military history," while Cahill argues that women were also interested in that matter and frequented these plays (Gurr 1996: 141; Cahill 2008: 22-23).

[50] See for example Guy 1988: 408-410. Voicing an own opinion on politics amounted to *lèse-majesté* in Elizabethan England, so people had to watch their tongues if they did not want to risk anything. To prevent the charge of lèse-majesté, allegories were often used as a veil for the direct meaning, as in *The Faerie Queene* (Guy 1988: 402, 410; Greenblatt 2005: 121; Greenblatt 1988: 19). "Safe," however, was a relative term. Sir Walter Raleigh stated strikingly: "[W]ho-so-ever in writing a moderne Historie, shall follow truth too neare the heels, it may happily strike out his teeth" (Raleigh 1614: [sig.E4r]). On the role of history in the formation process of England as a nation state, see also Rackin 1990: 4.

[51] Ribner 1965: 17.

[52] Ribner 1965: 15. For more information and sources on Elizabethan censorship see Wickham et al. 2000: 48-119.

[53] Guy 1988: 410.

[54] Strier 1995: 6.

[55] Greenblatt 2005: 79.

his cultural moment and participates in the cosmological practices of his time" that order and structure his knowledge and the material practices of his society,[56] he was not absolutely constricted by it. If anything is free, it is human imagination.

The following chapters will identify the underlying patterns that informed these social and political structures important for the understanding of masculinity. Among these are normative ideology and the *episteme* that informed royal masculinity in the history plays such as thinking patterns, humoral pathology and the understanding of the physical body, virtues, cosmology, the order of being, discourses structuring male interpersonal relations as well as the connection between self-restraint and the right to rule.

[56] Paster 2004: 23.

2 Early Modern Construction of Masculinity and Royalty

The following chapters describe a wide range of issues, thoughts, and knowledge that shaped early modern masculinity, kingship, and the theatre. The text will move gradually from post-modern notions of how gender in general and masculinity in particular are socially constructed to the Renaissance perception of ideal masculinity, focussing especially on what was expected from aristocrats. This hegemonic concept of masculinity shows what range of action and scope of norms empowered and constricted a man born into the higher strata of society. These demands are formative forces that influence the individual and its subjectivity (examined later in this thesis), as is the body that sets physical facts and produces expectations and desire. The relationship an individual develops within himself between the self and the soul shall then be extended to relationships with others, male and female, in different contexts. The social plane of the self will then be transcended to a national level by the issues of power, rule, and ideology in late Elizabethan England, leading up to the perfomativity of the theatre as the arena where royal masculinity was staged. Its development and struggles are embedded in the web that Renaissance historiography and thought built, so the connection to their influence will be drawn. The court as the political theatre of the time will show how the courtiers played their social and male roles under the reign a female monarch who disturbed the concept of a male ruler and what was expected of a king.[57] The fact that a queen reigned rendered the situation quite delicate. To sum up the parameters that made up royal masculinity, a semiotics of masculinity shall provide the means to analyse the construction of masculinity in the selected history plays of the 1590s. Then, the analyses of the plays will prove or dismiss the aforementioned theses.

There is no single valid form of masculinity that encompasses all races, classes, and milieus at all times.[58] There are as many masculinities as there are men re-producing and enacting the roles of masculinity available to them. However, the physical anatomy of a male is a constant and a given in this discourse that has to be contextualised historically and socially. It is discourse, and not biology, that puts male bodies into relation with the world around them and submits their bodies to social practices and gender relations.[59] The high nobility in early modern England provided a role model of what a man should be like; this masculinity was hegemonic but nevertheless contested, dynamic, and always seen in relation to other forms of masculinity. While the concept of normative versus deviant masculinity is too static to describe dynamic changes and the question of power within gender relations, this work seeks to define the discursive field that delimited the hegemonic masculinity for the high nobility. Whereas norm and deviance are an oppositional couple, hegemonic masculinity is more complex, as Connell explains:

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[57] On the courtier system at court, see Esler 1966: xviii-xxiv and Whigham 1984.

[58] Connell provides a short overview of the European and American history of masculinity and the challenges posed by feminism in Connell 1995: 185-199; see also Brod 1987: 7.

[59] Connell 1995: 43-44, 64-65.

> Hegemony, then, does not mean total control. It is not automatic, and may be disrupted – or even disrupt itself. […] Such observations show that the relationships constructing masculinity are dialectical; they do not correspond to the one-way causation of a socialization model.[60]

So, while hegemonic masculinity is dominant, it is important to understand how it positions itself towards other, alternative forms of masculinity and understand what dynamics work within it. Thus, the formative pressures can be identified for men living and acting within a relational web of a complex society.[61]

As hegemony denotes the claim of a social class to lead class relations, hegemonic masculinity is the preferred or ideal form of masculinity at a given time in a given culture that was accepted and legitimised by the majority. This does not mean that the representatives of hegemonic masculinity are the most powerful people; rather, they represent this form of masculinity.[62] Hegemony implies asymmetry of power and social subordination; that does not mean that hegemonic masculinity dominates only females but rather that it also suppresses other forms of masculinity. The subordination of homosexuals by heterosexual men is an example of this.[63] Class and sexual orientations play an important part of belonging to the hegemonic group, markers that denote the relationship between dominant and subordinated social groups that are marginalised by the dominance of hegemonic masculinity. Thus, marginalisation awaited any individual who did not fit into the idea of hegemonic masculinity; it became the other side of hegemonic standards.[64]

As hegemonic masculinity comprises an ideal, not many men are likely to live up to its standards even though they might profit from the concept. Even though they might not fully embrace or embody it, they do not question it and thus continue its legacy.[65] Masculinity is no absolute category but is produced both by historically and culturally specific conditions; in turn, these conditions are also produced and become social practice.[66] Thus, hegemonic masculinity can change and even subvert itself by "overdoing" masculinity.[67] If the conditions within a society change, the ideal of hegemonic masculinity is undercut as well; the old order might be challenged and new forms of hegemony can emerge. Thus, hegemonic masculinity is a relative, dynamic concept that incorporates social change, exposing the correlation between institutional power and a cultural ideal.[68] This social reality is both formed by history and creates history at the same time. By changing the circumstances men live in, the discourse about masculinity becomes material and shapes the real experiences of men as well as the circumstances of their lives.[69]

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[60] Connell 1995: 37.
[61] Connell 1995: 76-77.
[62] Connell 1995: 77.
[63] Connell 1995: 78, 81.
[64] Connell 1995: 80-81.
[65] Connell 1995: 79-80.
[66] Connell 1995: 39.
[67] Connell 1995: 63-64, 37.
[68] Connell 1995: 77.
[69] Connell 1995: 81-82.

To uphold existing gender relations, the hegemonic group might use open or structural violence to maintain its privileges; the more violence is used, the more the flaws and lack of legitimacy of the gender hegemony show, indicating a gender crisis and a re-imagining of gender hegemony due to changing power relations.[70] Even though hegemonic masculinity *can* change, it is the bearer of social authority anchored in culture and institutions that are difficult to change. As cultural hegemony shapes the perception of the world as well as the structures working within, hegemony is intricately intertwined with social structures.[71] During Elizabeth's last decade, the masculinity ideal of the high nobility in England was indeed hegemonic; Tudor orthodoxy formed a large framework for the construction of this male image. But before historical impacts on gender can be examined in detail, the social construction of gender should be further explored.

2.1 Masculinities and Gender

Since the 1980s, literature on gender roles, gender crossing, cross-dressing and homoeroticism on the Renaissance stage has flooded academia due to the impact of feminist and poststructuralist re-readings of the early modern English canon.[72] While the great interest in this field of research continues, two critics stand out in the inestimable mass of literature. Judith Butler, who developed her theory of performativity in her books *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies That Matter*, is one of the most elucidating theorists working on gender, while Michel Foucault is an extraordinary analyst of formative discourses surrounding sexuality in his three-volume work *The History of Sexuality*. In the history plays, a very specific form of masculinity is under scrutiny—the one of kings who literally *perform* their gender as fictive characters on stage. As the royal male roles are arbitrary constructions based on the historical discourse surrounding and structuring them, they condense the discourse of male royal gender prevalent in the late Tudor period.[73] As these characters come to life in a row of performative acts, ontological questions about the true soul or an interior essential psychology of a fictional stage character become irrelevant. Using Butler's performativity thesis to approach the characters' gender will be—in a historically adapted way—very helpful in deciphering the mechanisms of gender representation; Butler herself draws the connection between theatre and politics.[74] Foucault's work will then guide the discursive analysis of the ideological influences shaping the idea of what it means to be a man. If identity is not essentialist but constructed by permanent enactment, it can be decoded via deeds and speech, the means of the stage. So, the contexts and signs that "make a man" can disclose what masculinity meant in early modern England.

Men's studies are concerned with the experience of history (and society) of men *as men*, as carriers of masculinity; as a consequence of feminist studies, they have been

[70] Connell 1995: 82-84, 90.
[71] Connell 1995: 156.
[72] Comensoli and Russell 1999: 1.
[73] Butler 1993a: 227.
[74] Butler 2008: xxi.

integrated into the curricula of academia. Part of this explicitly male experience is a certain psychological identity, a social role, cultural norms, a "sense of the sacred" as well as a man's economic position.[75] The vast majority of scholars of men's studies usually reject the argument that masculine and feminine genders are the sole result of biological facts. The general notion of socially accepted masculinity or femininity is culturally constructed just like any other social product[76] and does therefore not solely depend on biological givens. While the "male-stream" has indeed marginalised women for a long time, men as the subjects of scholarship and discourse were not represented as *males* with their own experiences and struggles within the social structure that is often split between the private and the public sphere that usually defines a man's gender role.[77] Doyle sees the public sphere as "all of the expectations and norms, the prescriptions and proscriptions, and the sanctions and stereotypes placed on the male by others."[78] As power is a big feature in the public sphere, writing about masculinity often focuses on power, which has a large impact on the lives of men but is often evaded or ignored in their writings.[79] According to Hacker, men's close connection to power in Western societies constricts the range of masculinities rather than enlarges them.[80]

The negotiation of masculinities has a history that reaches well beyond the simple dichotomy of "modern" and "traditional" male roles as the nature of masculinity has been questioned for ages.[81] Often, gender roles seem to be based on biological sex; the "inescapable facts," as Stephen Orgel calls them, seem to rid bodies of all ambiguity. Genitalia, then, would be the "ultimate truth of gender."[82] Many theorists contest this view; Davidoff and Hall argue that gender is not a logical consequence of a biological sex but rather a social construction in flux that influences individuals on many levels:

> As a generation of feminists has argued, every individual's relation to the world is filtered through gendered subjectivity. That sexual identity is organized through a complex system of social relations, structured by the institutions not only of family and kinship but at every level of the legal, political, economic and social formation. Neither these identities nor institutional practices are fixed and immutable. 'Masculinity' and 'femininity' are constructs specific to historical time and place. They are categories continually being forged, contested, reworked and reaffirmed in social institutions and practices as well as a range of ideologies. Among these conflicting definitions, there is always space for negotiation and change although often differing interpretations are covered by a seemingly unified 'common sense'. Violations of gender boundaries by either men or women were, and are, subject to sanctions ranging from ridicule to violence.[83]

This quotation captures many basic ideas underlying the construction of gender: it is negotiated and enforced by social institutions, material practices, and ideologies that are the metaphysical backup of a social thinking pattern that in turn translates into culture. If the general notions of gender promoted by hegemonic thinking are not followed,

[75] Stimpson 1987: xii.
[76] Stimpson 1987: xii-xiii.
[77] Brod 1987: 2-3; Doyle 1983: 3, 9.
[78] Doyle 1983: 3.
[79] Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1987: 64.
[80] Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1987: 74.
[81] Brod 1987: 48.
[82] Orgel 1996: 19.
[83] Davidoff and Hall 1987: 29.

individuals are punished by other members of the society or even the law. As thinking patterns harden into normative categories, this work will focus on gender as outlined by Foucault and Butler who concentrate on the strategies and discourses that form gender. However, these constructions are not necessarily coherent or even consistent. Additionally, it is very difficult to separate gender from the contexts and discourses that form its bases. Often, the assumption prevails that the terms *men* and *women* denote a general common identity.[84] However, men and women do not have an essential core to their sexual identity; the immense variety of gender images and gender norms through time and space prove this point.[85] Besides, since gender roles *have* changed, they are not eternally fixed, even if they take centuries to alter significantly.

Nevertheless, masculinity is often generalised as a common denominator for all men with a list of adjectives that describe normative masculinity. An example is Patricia Sexton‘s definition of what it means to be male:

> What does it mean to be masculine? It means, obviously, holding male values and following male behavior norms. [...] From evidence to be found in this volume and elsewhere, male norms stress values such as courage, inner direction, certain forms of aggression, autonomy, mastery, technological skill, group solidarity, adventure, and a considerable amount of toughness in mind and body. Of course, a good deal of deviation from these norms is clearly permitted by the male code.[86]

As Sexton herself stresses that she is talking about “male norms,” she does not talk about actual men, who—in their entirety—do not embody all those “obvious” attributes but allows for deviation. The normative masculinity she actually talks about is nothing real but rather something to aspire to in a specific given society. This idea of a “normal” state of being is quite a recent one. The root of the word “norm” derives from the Latin “norma,” a measuring instrument used to draw lines.[87] In the Renaissance, the needs of mustering men for the army made it necessary that the individual was subjected to qualification, measurement, normativity, technology of war, battle arrays, and codified rules; while masculinity as such was guided by social norms, it was thought to be an

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[84] Butler 2008: 4-5.

[85] Examples of other genders beside the masculine and the feminine can be found in Native American cultures, among others. The *Berdache* of the Crow tribe was a biological male who did not identify with the male warrior role. While some of them lived with men, others did not. Neither the Berdache himself nor the warrior who chose to take a Berdache as a wife suffered scorn or ridicule (Doyle 1983: 83). The *Nadle* of the Navajo and Mohave tribes is a child born with ambiguous genitals. The Navajos also allowed others to assume the role of a Nadle later on. The Nadle was treated with extreme deference and adapted his/her clothing to his/her activities: if doing women’s work, the Nadle dressed like a woman, if engaged with men, he/she wore men’s clothes. Only hunting and warfare were denied to the Nadle. He/she could also choose a partner of any sex and also acted as an intermediary in tribal causes like marital disputes (Doyle 1983: 83). Other examples are the alhya and hwame roles of the Mohave Indians in the American West (Doyle 1983: 85). The *hijras*, the third sex of Indian and Pakistani cultures, are another example from Asia that are highly structured by a distinctive socio-religious discourse. All of these examples show that each social group (and hence also historical periods that are based on different norms and systems of knowledge organisations) defines and interprets the aspects of male existence differently. But the more people try to define what “masculinity“ actually means, the more blurred and inconsistent the result becomes (Stimpson 1987: xi). For more on Native American culture and gender concepts, see Garbarino 1976.

[86] Sexton 1969: 15.

[87] Canguilhem 1978: 145-146; Cahill 2008: 78. Canguilhem explicitly connects the concepts of norms and orthodoxy on both a linguistic and social level (Canguilhem 1978: 149; 145-158).

original expression of genuine masculinity within the individual rather than extrinsic ideals. This military objectification of males to authority led to the modern and quantifiable perception in the nineteenth century that would make up "normality" in contrast to normativity. The recruiting scene of *2HIV* (3.2.236 ff) is a wonderful satire of this burgeoning notion.[88] The functionality of the soldier deprived him of his individuality; while this notion seems to be so very contrary to humanist ideas, it was a part of the modernisation process in society.[89] Conforming to a social average was a concept alien to the Middle Ages when it was desirable to be virtuous; the concept of normality as a standard was not yet used.[90] These "norms," however, portray a standard to aspire to for the individual; they mirror the needs and fears of a certain society and age, including the anxieties and fears of men that they might not meet these expectations.[91]

2.1.1 The Construction and Performance of Gender

It is impossible to develop a coherent picture of what the concept of "masculinity" entails; however, it is possible to understand masculinity as an aspect of a larger structure. Masculinity is located within a larger frame of gender relations and historical discourse; and to understand what Renaissance considered to be male, these larger structures as well as the ruling gender dichotomy have to be taken into account.[92] Therefore, the historical, geographical, and social circumstances have to be considered to create an approximation of what masculinity in the 1590s in England meant.[93]

Judith Butler's point of departure in her groundbreaking study *Gender Trouble* is exactly this perceived "truth" of gender that she discards generally in regard to gender, gendered lifestyles, and sexual practices. Rather, she claims that gender is a way to secure normative heterosexuality that is a part of "true" masculinity in these societies.[94] Butler asks what normative practices reify sex and not how gender is an interpretation of it.[95] Gender construction works through a constant repetition of norms through time that both produces and destabilises sex; examples are the boying or breeching of a male child that both constructs his sex and comprises its inherent instability or vulnerability.

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[88] The recruiting scene of *2HIV* (3.2.236-297) is a good example and a wonderful satire of that notion (Cahill 2008: 3-4, 7, 18, 20). Cahill even talks of a "socially engineered population" and goes on to claim that the "matter" presented on stage—the language and action of actors on the stage—were what appealed to the Elizabethan audience. Beside, the emergent social concept of "them" and "us" could be perceived on an abstract level in the plays (Cahill 2008: 18, 28). Traub makes clear that the concept of normality was not a social category until the 1840s; it is therefore important to distinguish between normativity and normality as different social demands on the individual (Traub 1992: 14-15).
[89] Cahill 2008: 40-41.
[90] Cahill 2008: 79.
[91] Brod 1987: 46-47.
[92] Connell 1995: 67-68.
[93] Connell 1995: 68.
[94] Butler 2008: viii, xii. Elizabethan England as a strongly heteronormative society sanctioned deviant sexual practices and had a legislation aiming at keeping heteronormative standards. Elizabethan ideology aimed at maintaining the concept of a natural, proper order based on hierarchies and theology. Elizabethans feared that any deviations would eventually lead to chaos—so non-normative sexual practices had the power to destabilise gender as such (see Butler 2008: xi).
[95] Butler 1993a: 10.

Anything that is not part of the male norm might cause a fault line escaping the male norm—they either exceed the norm or cannot be fixed by it.[96] If the self is also defined by what it is not, the unspeakable becomes part of the exclusion of possibilities necessary for the formation of a self, the "outside" of identity.[97]

The formation of a self is also subjected to power and discourse that influence the intelligible world; this is a force that shapes and sustains the individual, not a personified power that itself is constructed as a metaphysical subject. Thus, the subject is constructed by the influences of power and discourse in a repetitious process of acts; this is what makes them powerful and lasting as there is no singular power that "acts."[98] While gender determines *ex ante* what a person is, it cannot be put on and off like clothes at will. Butler challenges the assumption that there must be an "I" or "we" that stands temporally "before" this construction, an entity that enacts the social norms. As a subject not subjected to the norms of gender cannot be thought, she concludes that an individual, "subjected to gender, but subjecticated by gender," cannot stand before or after a cultural construction of the body but emerges within its construction as a self. This self as a subject or agent is not a "willful appropriation" but a category that culturally enables and makes willing possible, a result of this very construction.[99] Agency, then, is the "double-movement of being constituted in and by a signifier," where "to be constituted" means "to be compelled to cite or repeat or mime" the signifier itself.[100] This performance is not an intentional, willing act by a conscious individual. Rather, performativity is a citationally and discursively constitutional act, enforced by its constant reiteration.[101] Thus, discourse is power as it produces the effects it names according to ruling norms. The "I" that speaks is formed by the assumption of a sex, by surrendering to a discursive norm and excluding all other possibilities.

This materialisation is what Butler calls "construction," a "*process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter*."[102] "Discourse," then, is the confluent chain of "effects" that build the vectors of power materialising into an idea, a formative construction of what masculinity is. The outcome of gender discourse is rather a condition and cause for a chain of acts that repeats and reifies the formation process of a gendered subject. By these repetitive chains of effects, ideas, knowledge, and even matter become culturally intelligible.[103] Heteronormativity in societies is an example of this cultural legibility of "facts." Generally (and not only in Elizabethan England), compulsory heteronormativity wants to establish itself as "the original, the true, the authentic" or even "the natural" version of gender.[104] Talking about the duality of male and female in heteronormative terms as "ideal dimorphism, heterosexual complementarity of bodies, ideals and rule of

[96] Butler 1993a: 10.
[97] Butler 1993a: 188.
[98] Butler 1993a: 9.
[99] Butler 1993a: 7.
[100] Butler 1993a: 220.
[101] Butler 1993a: 230-231, and *passim*.
[102] Butler 1993a: 9, italics in the original.
[103] Butler 1993a: 187.
[104] Butler 1993b: 312.

proper and improper masculinity and femininity, many of which are underwritten by racial codes of purity and taboos about miscegenation" is an example. It creates an ontological matrix in which bodies are given legitimate expression.[105]

Intertwined with heteronormativity—and important for royal masculinity—is legitimacy that is based on categories like sex, gender, and desire. To show how they become mere effects of discursive power, Butler refers to Foucault's attempt to see genealogy as an identity category that is an effect of institutions, practices, and discourses rather than origins or natural causes. Hence, heteronormativity constructs itself as natural by drawing deliberate but enforced parallels between sex, gender, and sexual desire via institutions like phallocentrism and compulsory heterosexuality. Despite this rather random contextualisation, there is no "biological fact" that expresses itself externally by "the gait, the posture, the gesture." There is eventually no essential link between sex and gender.[106]

Even though sex is a biological given, it does not have any *ex ante* connection to the eventual gender; rather, the connection is instituted *ex post* by the "social significance that sex assumes within a given culture." As "'the' body comes in genders," it is gender that forms the subject, not vice versa.[107] Thus, sex eventually is replaced, "*de*substantiated" into gender.[108] Sex, as a category, is a normative ideal construct and material practice for Butler that reifies its categories over time into actual bodies. This materialisation is never complete and has to be re-enacted continuously to keep the body as close to the norm as possible.[109] When a newborn child gets gendered with the first declaration of "It's a boy," the "boying" of a male child becomes a cultural sign that is only the beginning of such a gendering mechanism via language and naming; it is the setting of a boundary as well as a repetition of a cultural norm because a normative command such as sex cannot be thought apart from a gendered identity.[110] Such "authoritative speech" with a binding power can also be interpreted as a performative act. No one actively "chooses" these designations but everyone has to negotiate them on their own terms to make gender culturally legible.[111]

> If gender is the social construction of sex, and if there is no access to this "sex" except by means of its construction, then it appears not only that sex is absorbed by gender, but that "sex" becomes something like a fiction, perhaps a fantasy, retroactively installed at a prelinguistic site to which there is no direct access.[112]

As there is no access to either sex or gender without language, the discursive images of what it means to be a man or a woman are deeply ingrained and intertwined with it. The act of speech is both an instance of power and an expression of discourse with both linguistic and theatrical dimensions. For Butler, speech is neither exclusively corporeal

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[105] Butler 2008: xxiv-xxv.
[106] Butler 2008: xxxi; Butler 1993b: 317. On the discourse of sex, gender, and desire in Shakespeare's plays, see also Traub 1992: 2-22.
[107] Butler 1993a: ix-x.
[108] Butler 1993a: 5.
[109] Butler 1993a: 1-2.
[110] Butler 1993a: 7-8.
[111] Butler 1993a: 237.
[112] Butler 1993a: 5.

representation nor language; it is both word *and* deed.[113] Discourse and language themselves form what may be conceded; in other words, there is no pure body free of any formative influence of discourse or language on the web of expectations, knowledge, and power that organises what gender means within a society.[114] Foucault calls this framework and axioms of thinking episteme in *The Order of Things* where he analysed the function of such thinking patterns. This structure is linked to specific forms of discursive and disciplinary power that vary through time and space, informing the understanding of what it means to be human through language, the organisation of knowledge, and social ideology that are themselves deeply gendered.[115] It is not only society and discourse that concede meaning; individuals also identify with a certain category of being that excludes all other possibilities. To say "I am a man" eliminates different options of identity and calls for a substantial coherence with all the others who claim to be men and results in a totalisation of the self. However, the statement "I am a man" does not reveal the full content of that being; rather, it occludes this identity by all that is left out.[116] The designation "man" does not say anything about the emotional make-up of a person, his desires, wishes, strengths, or his sexuality. It is discourse that fills this gap by weaving a web of meaning that tries to fill the void within the term.

Most people, however, identify with some sort of identity category that means subsuming one's self to a discursively fixed group. By taking on a sexed identity, other forms of identification are excluded and disavowed. Everything the subject excludes forms an "outside" that may then be destabilising and threatening for the subject, as it is a place the subject cannot fully control.[117] However, the categories that fix a person's being thus come from the outside like the "boying" of a male child. This is not necessarily constricting—Butler claims that these categories can be both "normalizing categories of oppressive structures" and "rallying points for a liberatory contestation of that very oppression."[118] Michel Foucault claims that "discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy."[119] But there is a gap in this reasoning: discourse does not only exert its power by open repression, by a "for" or "against" a point of view but also covertly by "a domain of unthinkability and unnameability." If practices, identities, or sexualities cannot be thought or named, they do not have a place within discourse to oppose the oppression from—the fate of homosexuality within heteronormative discourse for a long time.[120] Male homosexuals

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[113] Butler 2008: xxvii, xx.
[114] Butler 1993a: 10.
[115] Breitenberg 1996: 78; Foucault 1970, *passim*. However, Foucault does not include gender dynamics in his concept of *episteme*.
[116] Butler 1993b: 309.
[117] Butler 1993a: 2-3.
[118] Butler 1993b: 307-308.
[119] Foucault 1978: 101.
[120] Butler 1993b: 312. Butler criticises Foucault's failure to acknowledge that unnameability—not taking part in discourse—is a means of violence and oppression. For him, power always works *within* discourse by the means of oppression and subjection that finally lead to the formation of the subject (see Butler 1993b: 319, fn 11). Her approach goes thus also beyond Greenblatt's mechanism of ideological dominance and subversion contained within the dominant discourse.

were more than a mere deviance; they committed, as Sir Edward Coke stated, "a detestable and abominable sin, amongst Christians not to be named."[121] This unnameability places male homosexuals in the void of unthinkability within the heteronormative society of early modern England. Paradoxically, their explicit exclusion from normative society brought them back into discourse again. By making male-male sexual contacts a punishable offense, male-male love was both thought and named—a process that entailed the detailed description so that the offence could be persecuted.[122] Theory—or social ideology—has a political impact as concepts and ideas reflect the guidelines of human action.[123] This practical effect of "ideology" shows that gender discourse does not stand on its own but is intertwined with analogies, theology, order, and many other fields of meaning and thinking that converge in a distinct and characteristic *episteme*. Ideology thus structures the organisation of thinking into a coherent perception of the world as it should be—it is the link between orthodoxy and orthopraxy that cannot be separated from each other.

Discourse therefore leads, restricts and keeps up the categories that define "the human" and becomes an integral part of being without which the human could not be thought or linguistically expressed.[124] It enables and informs the ways in which bodies and sex can be socially "read" and understood. It is a process of ongoing repetition that is never finished but results in the reification of sex in gender that depends on repetitive but not necessarily conscious enactment. To make her point clearer, Butler uses drag as a performative and imitative construction of gender that is a critique of the ruling discourse on the heterosexual matrix and thus it questions the "inside" and the "outside" of gender performance.[125]

> Drag constitutes the mundane way in which genders are appropriated, theatricalised, worn, and done; it implies that all gendering is a kind of impersonation and approximation. If this is true, it seems, there is no original or primary gender that drag imitates, but *gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original*; in fact, it is a kind or imitation that produces the very notion of the original as an *effect* and consequence of the imitation itself. […] In other words, the entire framework of copy and origin proves radically unstable as each position inverts into the other and confounds the possibility of any stable way to locate the temporal or logical priority of either term.[126]

Performativity, therefore, is a discursive practice that produces, like a self-fulfilling prophecy, the effect it denotes.[127] Gender performativity thus forms the self by the

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[121] Traub 2000: 433.
[122] Franceschina 1997: 19-20, Kay 1998: 123; Traub 2000: 433-434; Smith 2000: 125; Smith 1991: 41-53.
[123] Butler 1993b: 308.
[124] Butler 1993a: 8.
[125] Butler 1993a: 233-234. Absolute truth and the essence of fictional stage characters will not be questioned in this analysis. Rather, the relativity of normative "truths" will be under scrutiny.
[126] Butler 1993b: 313; italics in the original. A good example from the Renaissance might be Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*. A man in drag plays a "perfect woman" and thus exposes the gender norms as a mere performance that does not necessarily correlate with reality.
[127] Butler 1993a: 2, 12-13, 15, 187, 220. This is a parallel to ideology, which is part of the ruling discourse and which occludes the strategies it uses. Emig connects performativity and power by stating that "[p]ower therefore maintains itself in the performance of its relations" (Emig 2009: 52). Thus, not only the gender dichotomy, but also the relation between socially privileged and the lower classes are reproduced constantly by the performance of power.

citation of power and discourse.[128] Therefore, the self, the "I," can only be generated in relation to and in accordance with power that claims to "represent" that self as a prior truth.[129] The self constitutes the "I" as a man through constant reiteration and repetition of the male. Thus, the male being is "established, instituted, circulated, and confirmed." Paradoxically, this self-same repetition is the moment of instability within that identity.[130] If gender is the result of constantly repeated acting, it seems as if the basis of acting, or the modes to choose from, is deliberate. But it is not: the styles one may choose from are already charged with meaning. If the rules of gender enactment are not obeyed, intelligibility is lost eventually.[131] Intelligibility is dependent on *signs* that are performed. An analysis of masculinity in the theatre can consequently only be a semiotics of gender. Transferring Gilbert Ryle's distinction of "knowing what" and a "knowing how," Pfister sees masculine gender as a content of knowledge, the values, virtues and concepts surrounding masculinity, as well as an embodied knowledge of how to enact and fill masculinity with life. Thus, masculinity is a practice, an enacted form of practised knowledge.[132] This does not mean that the internal of the psyche is thrown overboard; rather, it is the "internality" of the "psychic world" that should not be taken "for granted."[133] Identity is a generated effect, a process that is neither essential nor fixed. The idea of identity as an effect does not mean that it is fatalistically determined or that it is completely artificial and arbitrary. The fact of identity being constructed means rather that some form of agency is needed in the first place. Construction is "the necessary scene of agency, the very terms in which agency is articulated and becomes culturally intelligible."[134]

2.1.2 Male Gender in the Renaissance

Renaissance thinking in contrast stressed the connection of an essentially true biological, inner sex that showed in outer gender representation. This ontological difference is radical, hence Butler's construction of self cannot be fully applied to the understanding of gender in the Renaissance and has to be adapted to the restrictions governing and enforcing Tudor discourses. Any disturbance in gender perfomativity and sexual identity was considered to be an abomination that disrupted the self as well as the social order. The agent within the individual that could control the body and its functions, the "I," was thought to be the soul in Tudor England.[135] Signs were even more important in the Renaissance as they mirrored the inner qualities of a person on the outside. Gender was likewise thought to display the different make-up of the bodily humours of an essentially identical body, so male and female were only two extremes of a continuum on which anything was potentially possible.[136] Because of this essential

[128] Butler 1993a: 94-95.
[129] Butler 1993a: 15.
[130] Butler 1993b: 311.
[131] Butler 2008: xix.
[132] Pfister 2009: 220; Ryle 1945-46: 1-16.
[133] Butler 2008: xvi.
[134] Butler 2008: 201.
[135] See also chapter 2.1.4.
[136] See also chapter 2.1.3 and its subchapters.

sameness of the male and female bodies, gender distinctions and the signs representing them had to be enforced to form a distinctly gendered identity. As late Tudor England was no free, post-modern society, male identities were heavily influenced by institutions such as the state, the family, patriarchy, and the church, especially for the upper echelons of the social strata. The reiteration of gender was enforced in most fields of life by society, and, in some cases, even law. Issues like sexual practices and the signs representing difference, like clothing,[137] were legislated by the church and civil law so that the inner and outer expression of one's gender conformed to the ruling discourse. Hegemonic ideology aimed at eradicating deviances by force, especially when they challenged the ruling hierarchy that depended—like the construction of the self—on difference rooting in the discourses of nature, religion, and order.

Elizabethan thinking stressed the need for coherence of the inner and outer qualities of the self that were constructed as a performative act. The essential truth of the inner self that expressed itself in the outer behaviour were forcefully constructed and enforced by Tudor discourse. As a consequence, society was even more aware of the performative aspect of self, gender, and the signs denoting them. Queen Elizabeth herself stated on the theatricality of kingship in 1586 that "princes are set on stages in the sight of and view of all the world."[138] Consequently, at least the higher echelons of society were aware of the performativity of their selves. The formation of self-fashioning as a means of creating and adapting the self, as well as the rise of the theatre as a mirror for social developments[139] are further indications that Elizabethans conceived themselves as performers, especially in highly ritualised settings like the court.[140]

The question whether Butler's and Foucault's postmodern approach can be used for the analysis of early modern male gender can be answered with a clear yes. However, the discursive mechanisms of gender construction have to be adapted to the social limitations of Elizabethan England.[141] Butler's elucidating theoretical analysis of how

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[137] Clothing was an expression of the status of a person, it expressed what a person was identified as—it was the exact outer replica of the inner essence (see also chapter 2.1.3 and its subchapters).

[138] Greenblatt 2005: 167; Goldberg 1999: 59. It was a convention that a good king should also be able to be a good actor (Howard 1988b: 270); Strong illustrates this point: "[T]he use and cultivation of the imagery and motifs of legends of chivalry formed an integral part of the official 'image' projected by sixteenth-century monarchs," (Strong 1977: 161). For an evaluation of the theatricality of kingship in Shakespeare's work, see Pye 1990 *passim*.

[139] The relationship between fictional stage plays and real life at the time are rather reciprocal. On the one hand, plays represent identity, masculinity, and social tensions; on the other hand, to be recognisable by the audience, they themselves might have set up ideals and norms to adhere to (Smith 2000: 41).

[140] The attacks on the theatre and acting show a good amount of what people were concerned about socially. One of the arguments against the theatre was that it broke up the connection between the signifier and the signified. There was a real person on stage, impersonating a king in the garments and symbols of a king without being a king (actors often received old clothing of their patrons, usually nobility). This pretence rendered the link between clothes and person shaky. Another question related to this "acting" was the anxiety by critics of the theatre about the self of the actor. Did his self show in his clothes? Was it something an actor could put on and off like his costume? What was the essence of his soul? Acting, therefore, was seen to harm, derange, and distort people, especially the actors, in a very tangible and practical way (see Smith 2000: 33, 34).

[141] Strier claims that anachronisms should be avoided; however, the notion of "anachronism" is often used to denote unusual or non-hegemonic perceptions. He warns that the term may be employed to cement

gender and sex are related and formed can be used for early modern texts with certain restrictions. Her methodology shows how discourse structured the knowledge about and the expectations of males in a strictly heteronormative society, propped up by Foucaultian discourse analysis. Both approaches help to understand how male gender was constructed, reified, and implemented by ideology in late Tudor society.

The stage kings of the 1590s are great material for unearthing the mechanisms of discursive strategies that informed royal masculinity in Elizabethan England. The characters are a fictionalisation of gendered individuals who act in a setting deliberately arranged with artistic and reflected intention. Their personae are entangled in a web of ruling discourse and expectations that concern their actions as well as their bodies, consciously reproduced by the playwrights. The kings literally have to enact their maleness on stage—they operate in an atmosphere highly charged with power and hierarchies that is artificially and culturally constructed. The history plays show the effects of power, gender production, and hierarchies on masculinity. The kings have to display the signs denoting their masculinity, especially due to their high social status; thus, they are exemplary cultural signs representing the discourse of kingship connected to their physical bodies.[142] The aim of this study is, then, to extract the language, signs, and actions denoting "a man" and what deviations of those expectations may be found in the plays.

"'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone," John Donne lamented in 1611.[143] People at the time were well aware that not only political and historical changes were under way but also that Elizabethan society was transforming substantially. This fact created social fears and anxieties for men as well as for the relations between the sexes.[144] Masculinity has always been seen as an unstable state that has to be constantly worked towards, achieved, and then maintained – a notion that can also be found in early modern England. This proves that masculinity is not an essence but a construction; the royal men on the Tudor stage always struggle to come to terms with their own male identities and their social roles, either striving for the ideal or failing.[145]

Elizabethans were disturbed by ambiguity and instabilities of the gender system; cross-dressing is only one issue that shows how gender and status boundaries were negotiated on the stage.[146] There are many more sites of contention, as society apparently desired clear-cut delineations in a world full of change. The crisis Donne mentioned was due to a sea change in society that caused males to experience a lot of anxiety, caused by tensions between the new and the old.

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homogenous discursive formations where the issue at hand does not fit in. Thus, "the interests of a conservative picture of the past" would be upheld. Radicalism and new thinking is possible in early modern texts—even though some texts might have shocked the contemporaries or been perceived as strange (Strier 1995: 6; 8; 24-25). See in detail his discussion of the theoretical debate between Tuve and Epsom (Strier 1995: 13-26).

[142] Ryle 1945-1946: 1-16. Discourse would be Ryle's "know that," while the enactment of gender is his "know how." See also chapter 2.3.2 and subchapters on the king's two bodies.

[143] Donne 1981: 41.

[144] Schruff 1999: 13.

[145] Smith 2000: 2, 99, 131, 132-133.

[146] Breitenberg 1996: 150.

The construction of male gender was not only a theoretical process but had practical implications for the lives of real men. As the Renaissance was ignorant of hormones, psychoanalysis or neurobiology, gender constructions had different perspectives on sex, society, medicine, and culture than the post-modern West. Ideologically, the representation of sexuality and gender follows similar patterns: potentially insubordinate features are expelled after being demonised, or incorporated after being represented as inherently submissive; however, ideology does not have the power to contain the potential for revolt against hegemonic discourses.[147]

It helps to look at the terminology of the Renaissance on gender and the self to bridge the gap between early modern and post-modern thought. Early modern texts use different terminologies that do not denote the same as their post-modern equivalents. Even though it will not be possible to completely reconstruct the scope of linguistic difference between early modern England and the twenty-first century in regard to gender, one can reconstruct enough to be representative of the period. There is no definition of what "masculine" and "feminine" globally mean; nowadays, the term "male" usually denotes the biological meaning of sex, while "masculinity" or "masculine," on the other hand, signify the term for the cultural construction that a society confers to its male members. "Gender" is understood as the social role assigned to a biological sex.[148] In early modern usage, the term "masculinity" was a rather physiological concept whose equivalent today would be "maleness."[149] The meaning of "masculinity" as respective to attributes and deeds appropriate for a male did not enter the English language before the 1620s, so Shakespeare and his fellow writers would have used the term "manliness" to denote the modern understanding of "masculinity." In their compendium on Shakespearean language, David and Ben Crystal list the nouns "manliness, courage, [and] valour" under "manhood" and connote "manly" with the adverbs "heroically, bravely, gallantly," whereas "masculine" is described as "manly, virile, macho."[150]

While these connotations still harp back to male clichés, "masculinity" in Renaissance usage was a concept grounded in the physical appearance, whereas "manliness" denoted a certain social behaviour. The biological sex expressed itself via outward signs like clothing, speech and actions, but this mechanism also worked the other way round: clothes, speech and behaviour could influence a man's gendered and even sexual being. This might be a reason why clothing, outward comportment and sumptuary laws occupied and worried Elizabethan England to such an extent because clothes were a signifier of a person's self, his or her personhood.[151] Male identity, then,

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[147] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 128.
[148] Smith 2000: 2. The definitions are conclusions from Butler's use of the words, see above.
[149] Smith 2000: 10. See also OED, "masculine," I.
[150] Crystal and Crystal 2002: 274, 276. See also Spevack 1993: 17-18. Interestingly, Spevack lists "effeminate" under "woman," not "man."
[151] These qualities are iconised in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean portraits of men (1590-1610). The bearded head is often separated from the rest of the body by a ruff, a bulging torso underlined by the doublet, and exaggerated thighs ending in small feet. These physical features point to the importance of certain body parts: the head, the iliac region, and the thighs. The groin was often further emphasised by a bulging codpiece, and also swords or daggers represented the social standing of the person depicted. The

was perceived to be located in the outer appearance, the *physis*.[152] Garments should indicate the social standing of a person—a code that was enforced by law to guarantee social coherence. The government ceased its attempts to regulate clothing in 1604—just after the death of a queen who was very deliberate about her own clothing and appearance; previously, Elizabethan government had tried to tighten the increasingly loosening relation between appearance and social standing.[153]

The word "gender" usually referred to the declension of masculine, feminine and neuter nouns in Latin in the sixteenth century, not to human behaviour. Apparently, early modern people did not perceive the split between the social role and the sexual being as very drastic—rather, these concepts were presumed to be united, and ideology at least stressed the congruence between the physical appearance and the social role.[154]

The following pages will examine how the male body and the male self correlated and interacted with the outside world. The construction of the body and its psychology will be explained by the one-sex model and humoral pathology, important categories that also influenced ideas about personhood and the self. From these physiological bases of self-construction as subject and male agent, the view will broaden to males in social contexts and personal relationships, and the discourses shaping them.

2.1.3 The Male Body and the Self

As masculinity was and is thought to emanate from the male body; the body is the carrier of masculinity, and both its signifier and the signified.[155] The Renaissance had a very intricate and complex way of constructing this genesis of masculinity from the body. In early modern thought, the body is not an independent entity, it is related to the self as well as the cosmos; it is the outward sign of inner male qualities. The image of the body as a microcosm mirroring the macrocosm is recurrent in the Renaissance.[156] Thus, the world, the body and the self weave an interconnected web of being, of mirroring each other, and of mutual influence.[157] Renaissance thinking subscribed to

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swords are an "ultimate extension of the male body into social space" (Smith 2000: 32). All parts marked masculinity in a certain way (Smith 2000: 30-32). The head represented rationality, the groins masculine potency (See Smith 2000: 31-32), and the legs physical activity and thus martial valour. Harry Brod mentioned in his opening speech at the Conference on Masculinity at the TU Dresden in 2009 that the modern tie also represents masculinity by separating the head from the rest of the body on one end and pointing arrowlike at the genitals on the other.

[152] Smith 2000: 11. See also chapter 2.1.3 and its subchapters.

[153] See Smith 2000: 29. From 1604 onwards, the regulation of clothing was directed from criminal courts to ecclesiastical ones that guarded "public morality"—a move that complicated the matter even further due to muddled guidelines. The sumptuary laws also distinguished social barriers via dress—and not gender distinctions (Orgel 1996: 98-99; Howard 1994: 96-97).

[154] Smith 2000: 11.

[155] Connell 1995: 45. Connell further finds it hard to provide evidence for "natural masculinity"; rather, the biologically determined differences between the sexes are based on social fictions. Studies show that differences within the genders vary more than between them, so gender differences are much more complex than the reduction to biological determination. Rather, biology is used to cement social hierarchies into "natural" gender differences (see Connell 1995: 47-48).

[156] Suerbaum 2003: 492-498; on the position of the king in this structure see Suerbaum 2003: 498-504.

[157] See Sedlmayr 2009: 39.

Augustine's belief that if the soul is separated from the body, the result is death. Augustine writes that

> Wherefore, as regards bodily death, that is, the separation of the soul from the body, it is good unto none while it is being endured by those who we say are in the article of death. For the very violence with which body and soul are wrenched asunder, which in the living had been conjoined and closely intertwined, brings with it a harsh experience, jarring horridly on nature so long as it continues, till there comes a total loss of sensation, which arose from the very interpenetration of spirit and flesh.[158]

According to Augustine, the intertwining of soul and body is the very prerequisite that makes life, sensation, and feeling possible. If the soul is severed from the body, death ensues. The reverse follows; life is created through the intertwining of soul and body. "Manliness" is, like all life, a product of the interaction and close-knit relation between body and soul.

Qualities that were considered manly related both to the inner and outer lives of a man and were often characterised by the juxtaposition to the female—the male was everything the female was considered not to be. Because of the essential identity of male and female bodies according to the one-sex model, distinctions had to be drawn consciously and arbitrarily; Rachel Blau DuPlessis sums up the adjectives usually employed to characterise genders in the Renaissance: while the male is "lean, dry, terse, powerful, strong, spare, linear, focused, explosive," the female is thought to be "soft, moist, blurred, padded, irregular, going round in circles." Females were considered the opposite of males and usually seen as inferior or more degenerate than the male.[159] Shakespeare himself uses this gender dualism in his epic poem *The Rape of Lucrece*. The female principle is described there as "waxen," whereas the male is "marble."[160] These are not only adjectives describing appearance, but also evaluations of these two gender principles.

Renaissance thinking distinguishes between *physis* as "the innate, the objectively true," and *nomos*, which designates "custom and subjectivity." Another distinction equates *physis* with instinct and *nomos* with objectivity or "rational principle."[161] This distinction can be separated into the physical and the discursive forces working within a body, both influencing each other and the male self. The *physis* and the psyche were interdependent and influenced each other, just as the inner mirrored the outer and vice versa. These norms both capture what a man's physique was supposed to be, and also his ideal behaviour. Manly qualities have their seat in the physical body as shown in the one-sex model based on humoral pathology that was the basic concept for corporeality at the time. This early modern concept of physicality entailed fundamental implications for the male gender.

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[158] Augustine 1993: 416.
[159] DuPlessis 1985: 278.
[160] Shakespeare 1997: 669 l. 1240.
[161] Altman 1978: 253.

2.1.3.1 The One-Sex Model

The one-sex model was the main concept of Renaissance physiology that is radically different from contemporary knowledge about the body. The modern division of "male" and "female" into two biologically different and separated sexes was a fundamental shift in sexual sensibility that took place after the seventeenth century and changed the outlook on eroticism and sexuality as well as on the individual and society.[162]

Since around 1300, Galen's works on anatomy and physiology were studied intensively at European universities. Along with the works of Arab physicians like Avicenna, Galen's theories were the strongest influence on European medicine from the late twelfth century up to early modern times.[163] In the tradition of European medicine, established and authoritatively transmitted anatomical errors were unlikely to be "corrected" if there were philosophical or astrological reasons. Galen, for example, believed that the womb was separated in two parts with seven divisions; three warm ones engendered males on the right side, three colder ones on the left females, and one placed in the middle produced hermaphrodites. This idea could explain multiple births and corresponded to the magical quality of the number seven; further, it incorporated humoral pathology in the qualities of these divisions. Even though this theory could not be verified by dissections, it gained support and was reproduced in medical writing during and after the thirteenth century.[164]

Gender was a real and tangible entity in the Renaissance as the body was only the external sign that reflected the internal qualities and status.[165] Elizabethans thought that the biological sex was caused by the dominance of one gender in an otherwise hermaphroditic body. Sexual organs originated from the same principle but the male was considered to be stronger than the female.[166] So while the two sexes were structurally equal, the bodies of men and women were thought to be different due to more or less heat in the system. As men were believed to be hotter than women, the heat ejected their sexual organs so that they protruded from the body.[167] Women were colder, so they were deemed weaker; as a consequence, their ovaries were internal and believed to produce a weaker sort of semen than the males did.[168] In Galenic anatomy, women's organs are the interior version of male genitalia that failed to turn outside due to a lack of corporeal heat.[169] Elaborate analogies were drawn between the male and female body: the vagina was an inverted penis, the uterus was the scrotum, while the ovaries were

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[162] Zimmerman 1992: 7. For a thorough account of the one-sex model as the basis for the Renaissance body and its social implications, see Laqueur 1990 *passim*.
[163] Siraisi 1994: 84, 100-101.
[164] Siraisi 1994: 91, 95-96.
[165] Laqueur 1990: 8.
[166] Greenblatt 1988: 78-79.
[167] Laqueur 1990: 5-7, 25-62; Smith 2000: 15
[168] Schleiner 2000: 189-190; Adelman 1999: 26.
[169] Schleiner 2000: 180. Galen is even mentioned explicitly in the history plays: "I have read the cause of this in Galen" (*2HIV*, 1.2.133; see Turnley 1968: 95). Siraisi writes that Galen was "the principal source of the pharmaceutical theories of the later Middle Ages," (Siraisi 1994: 145).

thought to be female testicles.[170] The sexes were, consequently, physically analogous and thus essentially the same. Likewise, sexual experiences were also perceived to be the same—and both male and female ejaculation was believed to be necessary for procreation.[171] Both seeds were believed to make up the foetus whose sex would be determined by whatever seed would be stronger.[172] Interestingly, the female was described in male terms—not do define femininity but to establish anatomical terms for masculinity. However, this anatomical sameness did not imply any homologies in social status or other egalitarian tendencies between men and women.[173] On the contrary; to eradicate this sameness, discourse established artificial differences in status and hierarchy between the genders.[174] Consequentially, the one-sex model had practical implications for the relations between the sexes as well as for the power structures in society. As a result, maleness was rather perceived of as a higher qualitative form of being than something completely distinct from the female.

Gender was not regarded as fixed from birth to death. During the age of a man, he transgressed through a "female" stage until he came into his male features at the age of seven, when he was breeched and entered the world of men. Up to that time in his life, every boy wore dresses. From his breeching onwards, his "training" as a man began.[175] If men did not produce enough corporeal heat or were not able to uphold and perform their masculinity through their behaviour or outer appearance, they could consequently "regress" to the female stage again.[176] Masculinity was therefore threatened by effeminacy which could include nearly everything that was not distinctly masculine and was perceived of as a falling away from the totality of the superior masculine essence, a deterioration. Every kind of behaviour that was not considered manly could induce the loss of virility.[177] As men and women were thought to occupy opposite extremes on a humoral continuum, the ambiguous, undefined space in the middle threatened and destabilised masculinity in the forms of androgyny, effeminacy, and transsexuality. These categories confused the clearly defined borders that structured gender, sex, desire, and status on the surface. The Renaissance struggled massively with delineating gender; the opaque identities created by androgyny, cross-dressing, effeminacy, and transsexuality contradicted the desire for clear-cut distinctions.[178] However, people of the time were fascinated by gender ambiguity; stories of gender metamorphoses widely

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[170] Greenblatt 1988: 79.

[171] This does not necessarily mean female ejaculation as such; as the ovaries were thought to be female testicles, an orgasm of both the male and female were thought necessary to conceive offspring (Traub 2002: 16).

[172] Orgel 1996: 20. Consequently, female offspring meant a failure of the stronger male semen to assert itself and therefore indicated male weakness.

[173] Orgel 1996: 24-25.

[174] See chapters 2.1.3.1, 2.1.3.2, 2.1.4.2, 2.2.1.1, 2.2.1.2, 2.2.1.3, and 2.2.1.4.

[175] Orgel 1996: 25-26; Greenblatt 1988: 78.

[176] Greenblatt 1988: 78-79. Greenblatt explains these phenomena in his classic chapter "Fiction and Friction" of his book *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Greenblatt 1988: 66-93).

[177] Smith 2000: 106-107. On manhood and effeminacy, see also Fletcher 1995: 83-98.

[178] Breitenberg 1996: 151. There is also a biblical prohibition of cross-dressing in Deuteronomy 22:5: "The woman shall not weare that whiche parteyneth vnto the man, neither shall a man put on womans rayment: For all that do so, are abhomination vnto the Lorde thy God." For more on cross-dressing, theatre, and effeminacy in Renaissance England, see Levine 1994 and Howard 1988a.

circulated in the Renaissance although often the reported cases turned out to be really hermaphroditism or protruding clitorises.[179] Nevertheless, the fear of loosing masculinity and returning to femininity was a real anxiety of Elizabethan men.[180] This gender anxiety and indeterminacy is a distinctively Renaissance fascination.[181]

Effeminacy was a constant threat to even the manliest of men; the danger of becoming soft and effeminate haunts even very masculine heroes in stage plays regardless of social rank or type.[182] It could be caused by too much devotion to women;[183] after a boy's breeching at the age of seven, his contact with the women who had brought him up so far was reduced so that it would not inhibit him to pursue his manliness.[184] Even Marlowe's super hero Tamburlaine is not immune to feminising influences brought on by his romantic love of a woman. He moans:

> But how unseemely is it for my sex,
> My discipline of arms and chivalry,
> My nature and the terror of my name,
> To harbour thoughts effeminate and faint!
> […]
> And every warrior that is rapt with love
> Of fame, of valour, and of victory
> Must needs have beauty beat on his conceits[.]
> (*Tamburlaine I*, 5.1.174-177, 180-182)

The man in love—or rather the warrior in love—is no good model of his sex. He is "indecorous to his soul," or does not act according to his nature.[185] Mere contact with and passion for women could render a man effeminate—just like the theatre with its social tendencies to annihilate both gender and social hierarchies.[186] Even Catholicism, especially devotion to representations of the Virgin Mary or the saints, was thought to deflect men from the vigorous pursuit of the good, leaving them idle and effeminate. The destruction of Catholic images, therefore, was believed to lead men from "ladyness to Godliness," as Hugh Latimer put it.[187] There is, of course, an aggressive, active, and

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[179] Greenblatt 1988: 66-86, *passim*. Helkiah Crooke also refutes the idea that women could turn into men and suspects hermaphroditism or deceptive genital formations to be the cause for such phenomena. For him, it is impossible to change one's sex as he perceives the sexes to be inherently different (Crooke 1615: 249-250; Adelman 1999: 37).

[180] Kay 1998: 121; Orgel 1996: 25. However, Crooke reports that "the ancients haue thought that a woman might become a man, but not on the contrary side a man become a woman," (Crooke 1615: 249; see also Laqueur 1990: 141-142).

[181] Zimmerman 1992: 8.

[182] Smith 2000: 107.

[183] See for example Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. See also Kamm 2009: 72.

[184] Orgel 1996: 25-26. A modern psychological theory tries to explain male dominance with the avoidance of identification with the feminine. In most cultures, the mother is the first point of reference for the infant boy. This theory suggests that if nothing happens, the boy will develop a feminine identity—but as he grows older he has to counteract this feminine imprint of him. Therefore, the boy has to subjugate and control the people he identified with as a little boy—women. However, there is little anthropological evidence for this theory (Doyle 1983: 81). Approaches like these show how much early modern thinking patterns still prevail to this day. Elyot also advises to have the boys removed from female influences after the age of seven (see Elyot 1962: 18-19).

[185] Altman 1978: 324.

[186] Orgel 1996: 25-26.

[187] Latimer 1845: 403.

"masculine" moment in this approach to Protestantism but the idea that Catholic countries like Italy or France were effeminate echoes this idea.

In 1616, Nicholas Brenton described an "effeminate fool" as

> The figure of a baby. He loves nothing but gay, to look in a glass, to keep among wenches, and to play with trifles; to feed on sweetmeats and to be danced in laps, to be embraced in arms, and to be kissed on the cheek; to talk idly, to look demurely, to go nicely, and to laugh continually; to be his mistress' servant, and her maid's master, his father's love and his mother's none-child; to play on a fiddle and sing a love-song; to wear sweet gloves and look on fine things; to make purposes and write verses, devise riddles and tell lies; to sigh for love and weep for kindness, and mourn for company and be sick for fashion […]; to lie on a bed and take tobacco, and to send his page of an idle message to his mistress […]. In sum, he is a man-child and a woman's man, a gaze of folly, and wisdom's grief.[188]

The hermaphrodite posed a third biological threat to masculinity; it symbolised both effeminacy and impotence, and threatened male identity as s/he possessed both male and female characteristics and was therefore not sufficiently differentiated.[189] This gender ambiguity destabilised male identity which depended on the clear-cut identity of the object of male desire.[190] This lack of differentiation, be it posed by "natural" hermaphrodites or by cross-dressing, was considered a "monstrosity." The *Hic Mulier* pamphlet of 1620 condemns cross-dressing women explicitly because of their "monstrousness"[191]—their lack of respect regarding the established gender boundaries in dress. Anti-theatrical critics feared that cross-dressed boy actors on stage could be transformed by their roles; their female costume as well as playing a woman would be an adulteration of the God-given essence of personal identity, a further annihilation of gender boundaries and social distinctions via dress.[192] Stephen Gosson raged about cross-dressed actors:

> The Law of God very straightly forbids men to put on womés garments, garments are set downe for signes distinctive betwene sexe & sexe, to take unto us those garments that are manifest signes of another sexe, is to falsifie, forge, and adulterate, contrarie to the expresse rule of the worde of God.[193]

The charge of "monstrosity" was also brought forward against women who seized power. A female ruler and therefore a female representative of God on earth was for

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[188] Brenton 1891: 274-275.
[189] Breitenberg 1996: 157-158.
[190] Breitenberg 1996: 160.
[191] Breitenberg 1996: 153, 160. It should also be noted that cross-dressing women were often associated with and accused of prostitution and criminality (Howard 1994: 95-97, 100-102), so these women allegedly not only crossed gender or social boundaries, but also sexual delineations by trying to court men in the guise of another man or boy. For more on sexual disguise and the *Hic Mulier/Haec Vir* debate, see also Rose 1988: 65-92.
[192] Orgel 1996: 26-27. Interestingly, costumes used for court masques were hired out to anyone. Thomas Giles complained against this practice in 1572—but his concern was not about the blurring of social barriers via dress, but rather the treatment of royal clothes by ordinary men. He very probably just wanted to protect his own business of renting fancy clothes and get rid of cheap competition (Orgel 1996: 101-102). For more on cross-dressing and anti-theatrical discourse, see Levine 1994 and Howard 1988a. Not only did dress confuse gender boundaries but players wearing the clothes of aristocrats did also muddle up hierarchical distinctions (Howard 1988b: 271-272). For more information and sources on costumes, properties, and playbooks of acting companies, see Wickham et al. 2000: 229-242.
[193] Gosson 1582: E3v.

some a monstrous and blasphemous idea. John Knox published his pamphlet *First Blast of the Trumpet Against The Monstrous Regiment of Women* in 1558, just a few months before Elizabeth ascended the throne. Aimed at Mary Tudor and Mary of Guise, he fulminated that it was against female nature to rule over men as women were not able to rule because of their supposed weaknesses. Knox grounded his views on godly order, nature, and experience:[194]

> And first, where that I affirm the empire of woman to be a thing repugnant to nature, I mean not only that God by the order of His creation hath spoiled woman of authority and dominion, but also that man hath seen, proved, and pronounced just causes why that it should be. […] I except such as God, by singular privilege and for certain causes known only to Himself, hath exempted from the common rank of women and do speak of women as nature and experience do this day declare them. Nature, I say, doth paint them forth to be weak, frail, impatient, feeble, and foolish, and experience hath declared them to be unconstant, variable, cruel, and lacking the spirit of counsel and regiment.[195]

Knox merely repeated the dominant ideology at the time. The experience of Mary Tudor's ineffective rule fuelled the belief that a king should be the head of state, the male rational guiding principle of the realm.

It is difficult for a modern audience to appreciate how the early modern period constructed normative categories on the basic conception that the body was fluid and ever-changing, and that the body encapsulated all possibilities of being within itself. The more artificial distinctions and borders between the genders escape the frames of logic, the more ideology has to harden the conceptions it wants to implement in society. Natural "facts" were used to construct ideology.[196] Public discourse heavily stressed the immutability and naturalness of gender principles to smooth over the volatile and shifting image of the humoral body. Both language and dress were often used as semantic means to stress the "natural" differences between the genders.[197] Dress, at the time, was believed to express a person's internal essence, as well as to influence the being of a person. If someone dressed not according to his or her social position, s/he tampered with the organization of both society and his/her self. But what is that essence?[198] Philip Stubbes' comments on cross-dressing try to illuminate the dilemma:

> Our apparell was giuen as a signe distinctiue, to discerne betwixt sexe and sexe, and therefore one to weare the apparell of another sexe, is to participate with the same, and to adulterate the veritie of his owne kinde. Wherefore these women may not be improperly bee called *Hermaphroditi*, that is Monsters of both kindes, halfe women, halfe men.[199]

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[194] Levin 1994: 10-11.
[195] Knox 2009: 78.
[196] Breitenberg 1996: 67. Swetnam's claim that women were "nothing else but a contrary vnto man" sweep away the instabilities surrounding masculinity construction. He tries to inscribe the naturalness of gender difference into the dominant discourse by language through smoothing over any doubts by simply declaring something as a truth, thus materialising ideology in his writing (Breitenberg 1996: 166, 168; Swetnam 1615: F1r).
[197] Breitenberg 1996: 151-152.
[198] Orgel 1996: 27.
[199] Stubbes 1585: [sig.F6v]. At the close of *Twelfth Night*, the cross-dressed heroine Viola also states that she is only able to marry Orsino when she is dressed as a woman—in her own clothes that are left with the sea captain. Her real dress is her essence, and a borrowed dress by Olivia will not do for her to marry (Orgel 1996: 104).

This quote shows how fragile the essence of gender construction is and how changeable common human "sinful nature" might be. Orgel even goes so far as to ascribe the huge popularity of Ovidean metamorphoses to this deep anxiety of a mutable essence in the thought of the age.[200] Cross-dressing in the theatre was considered to be a danger to the male gender that could lead to effeminacy.[201] If women could work up bodily heat and turn into men, men could theoretically also loose their bodily (and socially) superior standing by not keeping up their body heat.[202] This is a contrast to "the ancients" who, according to Crooke, "haue thought that a woman might become a man, but not on the contrary side a man become a woman."[203] Renaissance men feared that the subversive and dark power of the female could deprive them of their sex if they did not uphold their maleness constantly. Thus they could lose their status, social role, and eventually their essential being.

The one-sex model was one of the physiological bases that established critical orthodoxy of the time, a view that was also fixed by Stephen Greenblatt's book *Shakespearean Negotiations*. Nevertheless, Janet Adelman collected evidence[204] that the one-sex-model was not as unchallenged as it might appear in Greenblatt.[205] She found that medical discourse of the sixteenth century was either not interested or ignorant of the one-sex model.[206] The French physician André Dulaurens, who lived from the mid-sixteenth century to 1609, argues in his book *Controverses Anatomiques* that Galen's one-sex model was "[held] for certain" by "almost all physicians," but that "the genitals of the two sexes are different not only by location but also by number, form, and structure."[207] Helkiah Crooke adapted these views nearly word for word in his *Microcosmographia. A Description of the Body of Man* (1615). He specially mentions the one-sex model to reject it later in detail.[208]

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[200] Orgel 1996: 27.

[201] Thompson and Whelehan 2001: 126-127. This analysis will not deal with cross-dressing in detail. There are many works that provide information on the issue, especially about cross-dressing in the Elizabethan theatre. See Howard 1994: 93-128 and Howard 1988a.

[202] Smith 2000: 15.

[203] Crooke 1615: 249. See also Laqueur 1990: 141-142.

[204] Other medical texts like Thomas Vicary's *Anatomie of the Bodie of Man*, do not speak of a sameness, but of an analogy between the male and female sexual organs. However, there are hints that his work was not widely known and received; Raynold's *Byrth of Mankynde*, immensely popular and reprinted various times from 1545 to 1634, also never mentions the Galenic one-sex model. To the contrary, he expressly takes sexual difference as anatomic difference. Every sex has functions that are perfect in their own right. Thus Raynold does not share the orthodox ideology that women are imperfect and inferior to men (Adelman 1999: 26-27; 32-36; 45). For further theories of sexual differentiation, see Adelman 1999 *passim*.

[205] She declares that the male body was the "gold standard" against which the female body had to be defined (Adelman 1999: 26). But as the male body was first female and had to keep its "male" humoral balance via rational and bodily control, this statement has to be rebuked. It is rather the female body against which the male body has to defend itself, otherwise it is threatened with the regression to the female stadium.

[206] Schleiner 2000: 181, 188.

[207] Schleiner 2000: 184. On Dulaurens see also Orgel 1996: 24.

[208] Crooke 1615: 249-250; Schleiner 2000: 181, 188; Smith 2000: 15. Like Raynold in *Byrth*, Crooke does not consider women to be imperfect (Adelman 1999: 36-39; Orgel 1996: 21-25).

The coexistence of differing models and ideas explaining the world and nature is symptomatic of the Renaissance.[209] This ambiguity is a result of humanist training of thought to see both sides of an argument and to try and find a synthesis; but it is also due to the different theories in medical tradition that evolved between the late fourteen and sixteenth centuries.[210] Each of the arguments was valid and authoritative, and each explained gender, behaviour, and physiology to a certain extent from a different perspective. Truth or falsehood are not an issue as the arguments are not competitive.[211] Medicine, like other domains of natural science, was developing different schools of learning; physiology and anatomy were part of natural philosophy as well as of medicine and religion.[212] Renaissance argumentation does not follow the same reasoning as modern thought, so the meaning of the arguments must be found somewhere in the middle.[213] Most physicians of the time probably believed Galen's one-sex model to be true, and with them the largest part of the Renaissance population. Although academic dispute was going on, the one-sex model still had a strong impact on the early modern perception of gender.

The one-sex model itself reflected only the medical standards of its time that were based on humoral pathology; the model was the basis for all perceptions physical and psychological as well as the working mode of both the body and the soul that determined gender and behaviour and had an influence on all aspects of life. To understand the connection between rationality, masculinity, and the one-sex model, the working principle of humoral pathology has to be examined more fully.

2.1.3.2 Humoral Pathology

Humoral pathology was the principle that organised the Galenic body. It was the cause of emotions, disease, lust, the mind, the psyche, and how these factors interacted. The four humours were the agents in the one-sexed body that determined the physical quality of being, gender, and the personality of a person; they reacted to both outer and inner influences and were interdependent.[214]

Each fluid was thought to originate in the liver, which "cooked" the digested food and thus produced the humours blood, black bile, yellow bile, and phlegm.[215] Then, the four humours were dispersed through the body and retained in different organs: choler or yellow bile was stored in the gall-bladder; blood in the heart; phlegm in the stomach

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[209] See chapter 2.4 on the organisation of Renaissance thought.

[210] Orgel 1996: 22; Altman 1978: *passim*; Siraisi 1994: 188, 189-193. On the differences between Aristotelian and Galenic approaches to anatomy and Arab influences, see Siraisi 1994: 3-7, 10-13, 81-82 and *passim*.

[211] Orgel 1996: 24.

[212] Siraisi 1994: 15-16, 79.

[213] Orgel 1996: 22.

[214] Siraisi provides a detailed and concise account of the medieval physical system based on humours that was still prevalent in the late sixteenth century (Siraisi 1994: 101-114).

[215] The liver was also believed to be the centre of the cavity connected to the body's "vegetative" parts, the organs engaging in nutrition, growth, and reproduction. The "middle ventricle" organised the "vital" bodily activities like respiration and pulse via heat. The superior, or "animal" ventricle, structured what today is the nervous system and was located in the brain. This function was also linked to *anima*, the Latin word for soul (Smith 2000: 14; Babb 1959: 2).

or the brain (authors differ on this); and melancholy or black bile in the spleen.[216] The red liquid running through veins was called blood just like the humour, but it was imagined as a concoction of all the four humours. People thought that if this mixture was collected in a glass and allowed to stand, each humour would form a distinctive layer and evaporate.

Each person had an individual balance of his or her humours that circulated through the whole body, building up a particular "complexion" or type. This *complexio* delineated the balance of humours, the individual temperament.[217] Diseases were thought to originate in an imbalance of the humours, which corresponded to the four elements.[218] Any excess caused instability in the body and mind of an individual; triggers could be the diet, strong passions, sleep, thoughts, or the weather—so anything could be the cause for humoral excess and thus mental or physical disease. The body influenced the psyche and the psyche manifested itself in the body; they were inseparable.[219] Severe changes in body chemistry therefore modified the way a person was bodily made up,[220] so the essential connection between body and soul could change dramatically as well.

Time could also induce change. The concept of life as a series of stages with different qualities derived from the Greeks; Galenic medicine and Ptolemaic astrology provided the two most important models that structured the main ideas on the correlation of time, elements, planets, and the life of man. Ptolemy's model paired planets, certain characteristics, and the corresponding age of man. The planet moon reigned over infancy, which was characterised by chastity and purity. Mercury then guided childhood and endowed it with eloquence and learning. Adolescence, then, was characterised by softness and sensuality, overshadowed by Venus. Young manhood was associated with power and substance by Sun and Mars. Jupiter then reigned over mature manhood with anger and ferocity. Old age, finally, was Saturn's realm who endowed it with heaviness and gravity. The planets guided the ages, moving further away from the earth as the life age of a man moved on.[221] Furthermore, Galenic medicine correlated the humours, the elements, and the seasons with the life ages of a man. Blood, being hot and moist, correlated with spring and air. They characterised the earliest age of man, infancy. The following age of youth was hot and dry, correlating to summer and fire. This stage in the life of a man was ruled by the humour choler.[222] Maturity, then, corresponded with autumn and its cold and dry qualities. The element that ruled this stage of life was earth, the corresponding humour was black bile. The last stage in the

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[216] Smith 2000: 13.
[217] Smith 2000: 13; Siraisi 1990: 79, 101-104, 106, 109-110.
[218] The four elements water, earth, fire, and air compose the texture of life. The heavier of the four, earth and water, tend downward, the lighter two, fire and air, rise upward and outward. These four elements also form the basis of the four humours—fire is the basis of yellow bile which produces choler; air is the basis for blood, water of phlegm, and earth of black bile that produces melancholy (see Smith 2000: 13; Siraisi 1994: 115-152 for detailed information about disease and its treatment).
[219] Breitenberg 1996: 37, 53; Siraisi 1994: 131.
[220] Smith 2000: 18.
[221] Smith 2000: 72. For an overview over the female life stages, see Wunder 1992: 33-56.
[222] Youth or young manhood was often associated with boldness and being quarrelsome (Smith 2000: 80).

life of a man—old age—was ruled by phlegm. Its cold and moist qualities were ruled by water and corresponded to the season of winter.[223] The humours changed accordingly during the life of a man: during childhood, his body warmed up continuously, reaching its "hottest" stage during youth, and then cooling off again when aging.[224] The two models, based on the cosmic Ptolemaic and the humoral Galenic structures, infused early modern men with a sense of change in their bodies due to proceeding time. Sir Walter Raleigh summarises and merges these two concepts strikingly:

> Whereof our Infancie is compared to the Moone, in which we seeme onely to liue and growe, as Plants; the second age to *Mercurie*, wherein we are taught and instructed; our third age to *Venus*, the dayes of loue, desire, and vanitie; the fourth to the *Sunne*,[225] the strong, flourishing, and beautifull age of mans life; the fifth to *Mars*, in which we seeke honour and victorie, and in which our thoughts trauaile to ambitious ends; the sixth age is ascribed to *Iupiter*, in which we begin to take accompt of our times, iudge of our selues, and grow to the perfection of our vnderstanding; the last and seuenth to *Saturne*, wherein our dayes are sad and ouer-cast, and in which wee finde by deere and lamentable experience, and by the losse which can neuer be repaired, that of all our vaine passions and affections past, the sorrow onely abideth […].[226]

As the humoral body was embedded in the microcosmic and macrocosmic influences of anything ranging from emotions to planets, men never really had free will or had entirely free control of their bodies; distinct features ruled spans of their lives and influenced their bodies, which were never essentially the same. Likewise, character was believed to change with time as it influenced the humoral balance—in the dimension of time, there was no stability to being a man. The move from a hot and moist temper to a hot and dry state to finally a cold and moist humour show the way these humoral states were thought to affect the way a person thought, acted, felt, and looked like, so humans were more or less determined and classified in fixed types. Even the part of the world where one lived influenced personal character.[227] The French philosopher Jean Bodin commented on the inhabitants of the northern sphere:

> Because the Skythians are less suited to contemplation, on account of the supply of blood and humor (by which the mind is so weighed down that it hardly ever emerges), they voluntarily began to take an interest in those things which fall under the senses, that is, in the exercise of the arts and fabrication. Hence from the northerners come these objects called "mechanical" engines of war, the art of founding, printing, and whatever belongs to the working of metals […]. It should not seem remarkable that Italians and Spanish are accustomed to seek aid from Germans and Britons because by some celestial gift they know how to find the hidden veins of earth, and, when found, to open them. Likewise the same sons of Mars in former times always cultivated military discipline and still do with incredible enthusiasm.[228]

Despite the description of the English as warlike Northerners, it was a topos in Elizabethan England that this English quality was endangered by the lack of military

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[223] Smith 2000: 72. Esler identifies the "late thirties and early forties" as the "'autumn' of human life by Elizabethan standards" (Esler 1966: 231).
[224] Smith 2000: 21; see also Siraisi 1990: 109-110.
[225] Sun imagery often denotes kingship and rule (see Suerbaum 2003: 499).
[226] Raleigh 1614: 31 [sig.D4r].
[227] Cahill 2008: 42-43. See also Paster 1993: 9-10.
[228] Bodin 1969: 111-112.

discipline and exercises.[229] The geohumoral characteristics were likewise not fixed but subject to fluctuation; to keep them, they had to be exercised and guided. English men were not thought to be as potent[230] as they once were, so more military exercise would provide them with more virility.[231] This concept will also be treated in the history plays, where the English have to assert themselves against the French.

The natural balance of the humours did not only depend on age; differences in social status, gender, and even sexual desire had a material basis in the body.[232] However, this natural balance was as fluid and malleable as the humours themselves—and thus constantly threatened by change from the outside. Consequently, every individual had the potential capacity to be anyone, to be anything, to do anything—the varying infinite possibilities of balances or imbalances of the humours made this possible. It might seem strange that Elizabethan social theory claimed that inherent and even innate differences were God-given. This contradiction is a faultline in early modern thought about physicality. As the body was influenced by anything from the outside, the body as such was politically and socially constructed.[233]

Early modern medical discourse based psychological and somatic conditions on imbalances of the four humours, so the psychology of an individual reflected his bodily constitution.[234] Subjectivity and individuality were consequently a material result of the bodily makeup of a person and therefore influenced by the *physis*, status, and social discourse.[235] Due to this concept, the psyche was attached to and influenced by the bodily conditions of its bearer; the mental and physical parts of being human were closely intertwined and always correlated with status, gender, and social position as well as personal desires, and thoughts. The modern notion of the psyche as an entity that is distinct from the body was an unknown concept in Renaissance medicine; the psyche was never thought of as separate but as intrinsically linked to all other factors that influenced the body. To consider an individual psyche as a product of social factors

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[229] In the 1590s, the state English masculinity could be found in was apparently not very favourable. McCoy cites Samuel Daniel's lamentation that the rule of the Tudors was "a time not of that virilitie as the former but more subtile, and let out into wider notions, and bolder discoveries of what lay hidden before. A time wherein began a greater improvement of the Soueraignitie, and more came to be effected by with then by the sword" (McCoy 1989: 9). For Daniel, virility and combat go together, and between the lines the reader can guess that he thinks his own Tudor time rather effeminate as it favours mental activity instead of the sword. Elizabeth's rule made the diminishing of "virilitie" even more poignant as men had to subordinate themselves under a female monarch. In the seventeenth century, then, gender anxieties increased due to corruption at court and the appeasement policy towards Spain (McCoy 1989: 9).

[230] Rather, "English bodies, and in particular English brains, were thought to be excessively porous," (Sutton 2007: 14), a hint that men could probably not exercise their rationality properly anymore and consequently could not control effeminising influences effectively.

[231] Cahill 2008: 43-44, 55. Cahill quotes Thomas Proctor's statement that "effeminatenes" is "contrarye to force & manlynesse" (Cahill 2008: 55). On the specific qualities of the English humoral body, see Sutton 2007: 14-34.

[232] For more information on emotions in the humoral body, see Paster 2004, *passim*. Esler claims that the upper classes of Elizabethan society were fascinated with the "psychology of humors" during the 1580s and 1590s (Esler 1966): 232.

[233] Breitenberg 1996: 38; see also Paster 1993: 3-7.

[234] This is one reason why psychoanalytical analysis of Renaissance literature is a massive anachronism.

[235] Breitenberg 1996: 36-37.

like education, upbringing, and institutional influences was unheard of.[236] Because of these correlations, mental and physical health was one and the same.[237] Since everything was intertwined and informed all the other physical components at the same time, social struggles were also fought out via the body, and cultural contradictions would show up both psychologically and somatically.[238] Just as the macrocosm influenced the microcosm and vice versa, there were no separate units, only resemblances, analogies, and similarities.[239]

According to humoral theory, masculinity was the result of a regulated normative state of somatic humours. Whatever left or entered the body had to be controlled: all bodily functions had to work according to an assigned blueprint, the male norm, so that no outside influences could get their hold on the male body.[240] Masculinity was a functional result of body chemistry, so masculine balance and purity had to be artificially maintained in a body that was essentially female.[241] As a highly normative and regulated state, maleness was always threatened by imbalances, malign influences, or improper behaviour. As the state of a person was fluid, anything could threaten the normative male body makeup. The masculine values of rationality, self-possession, and mental strength were consequently needed to keep off excess and thus imbalances in body and mind. However, the humours that constructed masculinity were also its threat as the male body was always on the verge of becoming feminine, always in danger of being overrun by its own passions and lusts. Men had to be always carefully aware to control and balance their unsteady fluidity with their reason.[242] This balance of somatic humours and the discipline of the body by the brain were needed to achieve and maintain this unstable state of maleness.[243]

To fend off detrimental influences on his senses, his body, and his mind, a man had to prove himself a man through his actions and comportment—being born with a penis was not enough.[244] Masculinity, therefore, was not founded on sexual organs but in the total behaviour or "performance" of being a man. The penis was merely an outer sign and not a constituent of maleness; maleness was grounded in the hot and moist quality

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[236] Breitenberg 1996: 38, 63.
[237] Breitenberg 1996: 52.
[238] Breitenberg 1996: 38.
[239] See Foucault 1970: 17-30. If characters in the plays relate their bodily organs to their speech or actions, they indicate the influence of humoral pathology; the stomach, for example, was seen as the "inward seat of passion, emotion, secret thoughts, affections, or feelings" (*OED* 6.a). To "speak from the bottom of one's stomach," then, was to "disclose one's innermost thoughts" (*OED* 6.b). What today might be understood as a metaphor were expressions of identity and personhood for the early modern stage characters who vent them (Smith 2000: 11-12). Therefore it is difficult for post-modern readers to discern where a metaphor ends and where a statement about physicality is made (Smith 2000: 13-14), so both meanings have to be taken into account when the texts get looked on later on.
[240] Breitenberg 1996: 38-39.
[241] Smith 2000: 15. In a time that knew no hormones or genes, the conclusion that bodily make up is a result of chemistry of some sort is already quite developed, however strange the implications may seem today (Breitenberg 1996: 53). About the essential femininity of the body see chapter 2.1.3.1.
[242] Breitenberg 1996: 66, 67. Rationality is often still perceived of as male as opposed to female emotionality (Connell 1995: 164).
[243] Breitenberg 1996: 52-53.
[244] Doyle 1983: 188.

of a man's humours.[245] Gender was perceived as an essentially sociological status that showed up in the body rather than the body dictating gender. Laqueur explains that "[t]o 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."[246] The idea of what it takes to be a man or a woman is therefore more of a social concept than a biological one in the Renaissance. What concerns the body and gender of a person always influences the social as the Galenic body as microcosm is closely interrelated with society as its immediate macrocosm.

Since being male was always a struggle to have the inner and outer converge, the ideal balance of masculinity was an achievement, a success through rationality and sheer will to have warded off the threat of "regressing" into female shape. The elements fire and air, forming blood and choler, were the essential male features in a body. The uplifting, "higher" and hotter humours made what it took to be a man and ejected the sexual organs from within the body.[247] As a result of the predominance of blood and choler, men were thought to be more inclined towards rationality and prowess.[248] In turn, rational temperance of the humours would lead to a temperate body that was considered virtuous. This would accordingly show on the outside—a temperate man would be "tall, well-proportioned, fair of face, golden-haired, and blue-eyed, with a gentle, noble expression, a majestic gait, a commanding glance, and a harmonious voice."[249] However, this perfect balance was rarely or never achieved—Lemnius mentions Jesus Christ as the only person who ever reached this state, exposing how speculative the ideal of this balance was.[250]

As perfect temperance was not achievable, an acceptable substitute was a male organism dominated by blood as the main constituent of masculinity together with choler.[251] However, these humours were not unproblematic: unbridled excess of the sanguine humour could lead to amorous passion and bloody destruction; "masculine reason" would be eclipsed by passion and blind revenge.[252] The "manly" humours,

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[245] Smith 2000: 106.
[246] Laqueur 1990: 8, italics in the original; Franceschina 1997: 28.
[247] Smith 2000: 15.
[248] Blood was associated with the planets Mars and Venus, both being connected both to amorous passion and material valour. So a person having an inclination to being "bloody" could be either turn out to be a cruel person (like Richard III), a passionate lover (Romeo) or both (like Othello). Smith 2000: 18-19.
[249] Harmony and temperance were often ascribed to music. The harmony of chords and music was thought to be analogous to a temperate state of the body (and therefore the mind). Musical harmonies and the balance of the physical elements were thought to be similar (Smith 2000: 19-20; Lemnius 1576: 32r-32v; Siraisi 1994: 103). These attributes show that temperance and thus bridling one's inner passions and "humours" have something to do with inner majesty and the ability to reign (commanding glance). The idea of rule as active freedom is closely connected to the notion that temperance is an originally masculine virtue. In ancient Greece, free men both ruled in their households and in the polis. This was a male prerogative—and therefore men should be able to govern themselves, if they wanted to rule others. Temperance, therefore, means the way to be a man against oneself, to be the master of the house in oneself (Foucault 1985: 82-83, 78-93).
[250] Lemnius 1576: 33v-35v; Smith 2000: 20.
[251] Smith 2000: 20.
[252] Smith 2000: 21. Women were moister and colder and thus more prone to melancholy and phlegm (Smith 2000: 16). Melancholy or phlegmatic men were therefore emasculated and effeminate—without

blood and choler, did not produce supermen but tyrants. Choler in excess made a man "bold, valiant, warlike, rash, ambitious, quarrelsome." Levinus Lemnius described how superfluous choler turned men into a "boiling cauldron,"[253] making them unable to be rational and controlled:

> For Choler is of that nature that yeldeth out a fiery force, whose motion (as it were a fier brande) stirreth up and incéseth our minds to hasty moodes and furious rages. And for this cause Angre is defined to be a heate and certaine boylinge of the Bloud aboute the Heart, wherewith the Braine also beinge excyted by Choler, is set in a heate and testines, desyrous of reueng, whensoeuer any injury is offered.[254]

Interestingly, the very matter making up physical masculinity can turn into the enemy of self-control that is needed to construct the male. This is a trap men could not escape and constitutes a conceptual faultline in this masculinity concept. A compromise was sought by the attempt to construct revenge as an "active passion," strict justice in action.[255] Thus, it became a more desirable conjunction of justice, which is based on ratio and morals, and action as male activity.[256]

Excess and the ensuing loss of rationality, control, and impermeability of the body were perceived as a threat: the Other, the not-male, the non-normative, the demon. This is a probable reason why early modern discourse sees melancholy as an emasculating feature[257] that destroys the core of male identity norms. Melancholy was also seen as a symptom of the lack of virility by Renaissance literature and culture, caused by too much black bile in the spleen and thus threatening the stability of the male self.[258] Melancholy was therefore a humoral excess and materially linked and causally related to the body, not to the psyche. To purge the body of the melancholic humour, Lemnius advises a good laxative as a cure to regulate the bodily fluids via elimination.[259] The body should be cleansed of excessive humours by bloodletting and other sorts of purges to be brought back to a temperate mode.[260] This conflict was not only a question of male and not-male, of the subject or the other, norms and excess but had rather cosmic dimensions of order and chaos, reason and madness.[261] The analogy between the humoral balance of the individual and the political well-being of the state that mirrored

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necessarily behaving in a very female way otherwise. Their body chemistry tipped towards the female end of their one-sex model makeup, thus threatening their very existence as men.

[253] Smith 2000: 18.

[254] Lemnius 1576: 128r.

[255] Altman 1978: 223.

[256] While most of the history plays negotiate activity and passivity, *Richard III* explores the issue of hypermasculinity due to a humoral excess in depth (see chapter 3.3.2).

[257] Breitenberg 1996: passim.

[258] Lemnius 1576: 142r-143r; Smith 2000: 16-17. A great summary of the discourse of melancholy in Burton can be found in Sedlmayr 2009: 27-35. Breitenberg, however, locates the origin of black bile in the liver (Breitenberg 1996: 51, 37, 39).

[259] Lemnius 1576: 152r.

[260] Smith 2000: 22. Smith even goes so far as to state that the on-stage deaths of pathologically excessive heroes like Richard III, Hamlet, Othello, Coriolanus, and Hotspur are a kind of Galenic blood-letting therapy (Smith 2000: 22). Another remedy against black bile is also supposed to be merry company, so that the influences from outside balance the tipped-off body chemistry (Smith 2000: 23). For further information on the practice of bloodletting as a general medical cure, see Siraisi 1994: 137-141.

[261] Breitenberg 1996: 45.

each other—especially in the person of a king—was threatened by excess of any sort.[262] Burton draws the parallel between the state of the land, its inhabitants, and the commonwealth in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*:

> But whereas you shall see many discontents, common grievances, complaints, poverty, barbarism, beggary, plagues, wars, rebel lions, seditions, mutinies, contentions, idleness, riot, epicurism, the land lie untilled, waste, full of bogs, fens, deserts, &C., cities decayed, base and poor towns, villages depopulated, the people squalid, ugly, uncivil; that kingdom, that country, must needs be discontent, melancholy, hath a sick body, and had need to be reformed.[263]

Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, itself an excessive tome about the humoral causes of male melancholy, anatomises desire, passion, and jealousy.[264] Melancholy, for Burton, is *the* most dangerous threat to the male subject; Breitenberg however argues that it was also a constituent of male subjectivity in the English Renaissance.[265] The male body Burton scrutinises is anxious, always under a possible assault of external or internal forces—the Other—that threaten his humoral balance and thus his sanity and health, he is nervous about his orifices, torn between desire and rationality.[266] The inconstancy of the body fluids mark them as "female" and subversive to order and the male principle of rationality. Melancholy was a very vaguely described illness whose symptoms could apply to nearly anyone in their broadness, and melancholy has rightly been called an "almost ubiquitous Elizabethan disease"[267] as any affliction of the mind could qualify as "melancholy" at the time.[268]

Likewise, desire was an excess or an imbalance of the body humours: the excess of blood, thought to be the origin of semen,[269] led to obsession with a pleasing form. If desire was not fulfilled, the result was lovesickness or erotomania. The male body inundated itself with the humour and ran over both with semen and disease.[270] Therefore, males had to let their reasons rule against all allurements to fight any bodily pleasures that attacked male reason from the outside that were often constructed as feminine. As women were believed to succumb to their passions without the governance of reason, the surrender to one's lusts – the lack of masculine self-control – was "feminine," no matter what the sex of the subject or the target of lust may have had.[271]

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[262] Breitenberg 1996: 41. See also chapter 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 with its subchapters as well as the analyses of *1* and *2 Henry IV*; see 3.1.2, 3.1.4, and 3.4.3. As women were believed to be unable to control their bodies because they were believed to lack rationality, they could consequently not build up an independent subjectivity.
[263] Burton 1850: 52.
[264] See Burton 1850; Breitenberg 1996: 35. The work itself was quite a success as the consecutive editions show (Babb 1959: 1-2). For more information about Burton's approach, the reception of his work, and further information, see Babb 1959.
[265] Breitenberg 1996: 36. Esler comments on the causes and the common cultural phenomenon of melancholy in late Elizabethan England, linking it explicitly to the aristocracy (Esler 1966: 230-235).
[266] Breitenberg 1996: 47-48.
[267] Whitman 1973: 100.
[268] Keller 1993: 2; see also Babb 1959: 2.
[269] See chapter 2.2.1.4.
[270] Belsey 1992: 93.
[271] Breitenberg 1996: 64-65.

Desire was therefore one of the main reasons for the loss of control[272]—Burton writes of "filthy, burning lust," that is clearly associated with uncontrolled, irrational excess, and of "pure and divine love" that represents reason and order (and very probably procreative marital sex devoid of passion).[273]

For Burton, the loss of reason and self-control is a loss of status and a reversal of hierarchy as a lover becomes the slave of his beloved. Besides, love and passion were ascribed to the female—therefore a man in love is always an effeminate man for Burton, no matter what the object of the lover's desire may be.[274] While love and passion may be very close, they are different, however closely related; desire is the end of love and love is the end of desire. Apparently, there cannot be love and desire simultaneously, as they always chase and follow each other restlessly.[275] Sexual desire is a paradoxical matter: it drives the masculine subject towards consummation and possession but also threatens to dissolve his subjective male identity due to the desire incited during intercourse. Since the subject that desired in the first place becomes annihilated eventually by desire, desire and being are inseparably connected because desire locates the individual in different relations to others and things – it understands and negotiates the world through this connection.

Valerie Traub elucidates the relationship between desire, the individual and the world. She states that

> desire is always (1) a matter of both bodies and minds; (2) implicated in interpretative networks, signifying systems, discursive fields; and (3) substitutive, founded on a lack, and hence, always the desire of an other.[276]

This definition makes clear that desire is not only the longing for something or someone not present but rather the very basis of socially and culturally constructed subjectivity. When desiring, a man is aware of himself—more than in the act of consummation. So if desire is embedded in the discursive mechanisms of acculturation, desire is the moment when the self is discovered as a culturally constructed subject.[277] Burton argues that, for him, desire also defines the subject. Desire locates the individual

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[272] But not only. A telling example is Lear's loss of masculinity that is linked to his loss of sanity and control, in the following quotation: "O, how this mother swells up toward my heart! / Histerica passio down, thou climbing sorrow; / Thy element's below." (*Lear*, 2.2.225-227). This passage is quite telling, as Lear genders his passion as "this mother," that should stay in the nether parts of the body, but has no business "climbing." The Greek word *hystera* means womb, and in Galenic medicine the womb was imagined to wander through the whole body, thus producing hysteria. Thus, not only the genders themselves are divided and evaluated differently, but also the body of a man proper was divided: the upper parts belonged to the purer spirit, rationality, and was considered to be the "seat of reason." It was closer to God and the angels, whereas the nether parts of a man's body were closer to the Devil, stained with passion, and thus debauched. Lear's loss of reason therefore is the victory of his female, debased part that took both his masculinity as well as his self-control (Smith 200: 1-2). On the wandering womb and hysteria, see also Fletcher 1995: 67-68.
[273] Breitenberg 1996: 60; Burton 1850: 429.
[274] Breitenberg 1996: 65; Burton 1850: 456, 568.
[275] Breitenberg 1996: 66.
[276] Traub 1992: 7.
[277] Breitenberg 1996: 98.

as it puts him or her in relation to other people and other things and thus constantly renegotiates the individual world.[278]

The ultimate moment of masculinity and desire—ejaculation—contains both the essence and the dissolution of the male principle. Ejaculation *ejects* the male principle and thus disempowers males during the height of their masculinity. Thus, the male orgasm both produces and destroys its essence and masculinity at the same time.[279] Ejaculation also has a "female" element to it: it negates all control and male rational agency over one's bodily fluids—consequently, male orgasm has an effeminising effect. While sexual consummation may be wished for, it effectively leads to the dissolution of the male principle.[280] Thus, the consummation of desire is not-being.[281] This construction of relation to the self and the world is one cause of male anxiety in relation to sexuality.

Decidedly masculine desire in Elizabethan England seems to contain a mixture of both self-assertive will and the complete loss of self-control in excess. While male desire is constructed as dominance, conquest, and possession, it is one of the main causes for the loss of rationality that succumbs to destruction and the loss of self.[282] Thus, desire contains both male activity and passivity; the desire to possess leads to being possessed of one's own desire. This paradox is often enacted on the bodies of women. The internal masculine conflict is projected on women and male-female relationships.[283] Desire and its production of instability in the male self turned into anger against women and their allegedly vicious sexual lure. Men did not perceive this void within themselves but blamed women for the dissatisfaction that the tensions within their male sexual gender construction produced.

Jealousy is probably the worst example of the overthrow of reason and therefore for Burton the worst passion related to excess. Sexual jealousy constitutes an inevitable part of love and desire, as jealousy and melancholy are inextricably linked in his discussion of male body fluidity; however, he is unable to say which is cause and which effect.[284] As women were seen as a property that was meant for the exclusive "use" of their

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[278] Breitenberg 1996: 128. Consummation, however, leads to the dissolution of the artfully crafted male individual as in consummation it loses control and is overwhelmed by its excessive, female fluidity culminating in orgasm, the "little death" that dissolves the construct of male self-control.
[279] Breitenberg 1996: 50, 132.
[280] Breitenberg 1996: 50.
[281] Breitenberg 1996: 128.
[282] The metaphor of conquering and possessing a woman like a beleaguered city or country is very old and can even be found in the Bible. Havrelock comments that the Israelites may "penetrate" the land, which is categorised as female (Havrelock 2008: 692-693). The imagery of land as female that might be conquered or penetrated was used over and over again, especially evident in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* and Henry V's speech before Harfleur. The verb "to possess" encompasses this whole imagery very well, meaning "to know someone sexually" (*OED* I.3b), "to seize something or someone" (*OED* I.3a), "to control" (*OED* I.5a), "to own" (*OED* I.2a), or "to occupy" (*OED* I.1). See Smith 2000: 105-106.
[283] Breitenberg 1996: 99, 67. See also chapter 2.2.1 and its subchapters on male-female relationships.
[284] Emilia observes in *Othello* that "They [jealous souls] are not ever jealous for the cause, / But jealous for they're jealous. It is a monster / Begot upon itself, born on itself," (*Othello*, 3.4.155-157). Thus she already detected the self-referentiality of male jealousy that is not founded on "ocular proof," as Breitenberg calls the last chapter of his book, but on the male "invention" of the female that is a projection of all their anxieties (Breitenberg 1996: 176-177).

husbands, the exclusivity of sexual possession is a factor that induces jealousy in men. Benedetto Varchi writes on jealousy in 1615:

> Jealovsie springeth from the Propertie or Right that wee haue, when we (enioying our Lady or Mistresse) would haue her soly and wholy vnto our selues; without being able (by any meanes) to suffer or endure, that another man should haue any part or interest in her, any way, or at any time.[285]

Jealousy is a one-way road here—the object of jealousy, the wife or mistress, does not seem to have any will of her own or any part in the whole construction. Jealousy is an affair between men, expressed in legal terms of possession and rights. Male identity is discursively linked not only to the control of the individual male body but also to the control of female sexuality.[286] As jealousy is connected to romantic love and to sexual relationships with women, it is a constituent part of patriarchy and the rule over the female. However, jealousy is explicitly defined as an excess of bodily humours in males and a failure of male reason to control this bodily excess. Thus, the economy of gender relations both enables and constricts men as agents within this structure, leaving them trapped by the construction of their sexual and biological discourse.[287]

Men had to define themselves by controlling and governing female sexuality and chastity as well as their own desire, lust, and feelings. Men perceived themselves as split, as incomplete, as not being able to love themselves qua themselves and as struggling to control their bodies and impulses.[288] This likely resulted in a feeling of a void deep inside themselves. This abyss within men is well expressed in Iago's exclamation: "I never found man that knew how to love himself," (*Othello*, 1.3.311).[289] Rather, lust and desire created a void in the construction of male subjectivity that is intrinsically linked to the male body. The instability and fluidity of the temperate male body always has to guard itself against effeminising influences from outside. How the male individual constructed his own subjectivity in the world despite the close-knit connection to the body will now be presented.

2.1.4 The Self and the Soul

After the Reformation, people found themselves in a social and personal void; the new religion had eroded a lot of old social and psychological supports that medieval man had had at hand: iconoclasm had shattered images and relics people had turned to for help; masses were not sung for the dead any longer; confessions were illegal; purgatory had become obsolete; religious processions, saint's days, and ancient rites like mayday festivals were denounced as pagan. There was nothing between the individual believer and God anymore: nothing but the Bible, preachers, and his conscience. Old psycho-religious rituals that could relieve the soul were gone.[290]

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[285] Varchi 1615: 19.
[286] Breitenberg 1996: 175. See also chapter 2.2.1 and its subchapters on male-female relationships as well as Sedgwick 1985: 23-26.
[287] Breitenberg 1996: 175-176, 186.
[288] Breitenberg 1996: 185.
[289] Breitenberg 1996: 185.
[290] Stone 1995: 103-104.

The psyche was not yet severed from its physical basis[291] in the Renaissance. There were no "egos," "psyches," "personalities" or "individuals" in early modern thought denoting who or what one is. Many of the words that nowadays describe the self and self-consciousness were not yet used in the English Renaissance or meant something different. Words used for interiority at the time were "individual," meaning to be undividable, "the closet of the heart,"[292] "secrets," or the distinction between "inward" and "outward" behaviour. However, these terms are orientated towards a rather more physical entity of what modernity perceives of as *self*. This kind of thinking points to the entity that is called today "my self" instead of "myself."[293] The use of the term *self* as "a permanent subject of successive and varying states of consciousness," (*OED* C.3) only came into use at the end of the seventeenth century. In the Renaissance, the word *self* meant "that very one" (*OED* A.1) or was used as a synonym for "one and the same" (*OED* B.1). However, if stage characters speak of their *self* (*OED* C.1), it might also mean a "synecdoche in which the body stands for one's entire being, past, present, and future."[294]

The relation of the self with and to the world "out there" also changed. Early modern people perceived themselves as integrated into various concentric circles with the world around them. The centre of their soul, therefore, was the centre of their world—or the centre of the world in general, as everything was woven together into an inextricable net of being.[295] Walter Raleigh describes this web of microcosm and macrocosm and man's place as a binding element of the upper and nether worlds:

> Man, thus compounded and formed by God, was an abstract or modell, or briefe Storie of the Vniuersall […]. And whereas God created three sorts of liuing natures, (to wit) Angelicall, Rationall, and Brutall; giuing to Angels an intellectuall, and to Beasts a sensuall nature, he vouchsafed vnto man, both the intellectuall of Angels, the sensitiue of Beasts, and the proper rationall belonging vnto man […]: and because in the little frame of mans body there is a representation of the Vniversall, and (by allusion) a kind of participation of all the parts thereof, therefore man was called *Microcosmos*, or the little world.[296]

The human—and especially the male human—is the connecting link between the spiritual and the animated world, having a share of both spheres, interwoven as the incorporation of all being. The emphasis on rationality in men points to the idea that with "man" males were meant who thus become not an image of the world but *the* little world. Smith suggests that the human self here is imagined as an actor moving through the world, not being a closed entity but the centre of the world.[297]

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[291] The physical nature of self might also be underlined by the homophony of the words "I" and "eye." Not only puns or double entendres connect these two words—but the "I" perceives the outer world through the senses, the "eyes." So the eye is what forms and informs the "I," connecting the inner and outer world. On the connection of "I" and "eye," see also Smith 2000: 103.
[292] Ferry 1983: 45-55. The heart was perceived of as the seat of feelings and virtues (Storl 2009: 31-52, 53-79 and *passim*).
[293] Smith 2000: 8; Ferry 1983: 31-70.
[294] Smith 2000: 7.
[295] Smith 2000: 24-25.
[296] Raleigh 1614: D3v.
[297] Smith 2000: 25.

Thus, to know oneself meant to know one's own body—to know how to read it like a text such as the book *The True Knowledge of a Man's Own Self* by Philippe de Mornay from 1602 that was translated by Anthony Munday. The work is not about psychology but rather about physiological knowledge, regarding both the external and internal makeup of the body.[298] The agent within the body reading itself as a text was considered to be the soul. This unity between body and soul (Smith calls it a "soul-in-the-body") probably most closely resembles the Elizabethan idea of *self*—which hardly made people feel unique, as everyone had a soul within his or her body. Rather, the self and identity could be read from the outside; it was an exterior performance of the soul that worked inside the body. Smith writes that the ideas of "physical body, agent, personage, actor-on-stage" are an approach to masculine identity that closely approximate what Shakespeare might have understood as "person."[299]

The soul, then, is the agent of personality.[300] It is the force with the power to control the physical body and temper its humours and thus stabilise an otherwise shifty and fluent self. The soul is not to be confused with an "essence" in this context; rather, it is congruent with the modern idea of self and identity, the being that says "I" and forms the body it resides in according to its own rational willpower. Lemnius describes the soul as a "spirit incorporeal" working both through the organs of the body as well as apart from them. While the soul needs the body to control "vegetative" functions like growth, nutrition and reproduction, the soul acts independently in mental activities.[301] Rationality as a movement of the soul can be obstructed by humoral excess, so the soul is not autonomous in the physical system. The agent of the self—the soul as constituent of the "I"—is based on the body as the outlet for its activity. Early modern thought locates the "soul" everywhere in the body as "animal spirits" that enable communication between the brain and the body and thus functions as the centre of selfhood.[302] Through these animal spirits, the soul is able to perceive the world through the senses, and the soul may act via the body through rationality and action—"*wit* to know and *will* to do" through these two functions personality can express itself in the Renaissance.[303]

The soul—and thus the personality—becomes tangible through action, rationality, and the determination to achieve something.[304] The soul, then, is the main agent and

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[298] Smith 2000: 7; see also Ferry 1983: 39-45.
[299] Smith 2000: 8-9.
[300] Smith 2000: 24. Strier criticises the new historicist approach in so far that it "gives us selves without giving us agents" (Strier 1995: 78). In this construct with the soul as agent, as moving giver of order and meaning within a person, his criticism might be repealed.
[301] Lemnius 1658: 40; Smith 2000: 25-26.
[302] Smith 2000: 26. This conception comes close to the function of nerves, neurotransmitters, and hormones that modern medicine discovered.
[303] The close connection between the eyes and the self may spring from this connection, among others (Smith 2000: 26, italics in the original).
[304] Activity was conceptualised as a very male domain, so this process of identifying the soul is mainly focussed on males. During the sixteenth century, it was debated whether women were humans endowed with reason and if a woman had a soul (Stone 1995: 137). The question if a woman had a soul is closely related to the question whether she has reason. The soul is the agent within the Galenic body that keeps the individual under control from within and structures the self.

controller within the individual and constitutes the self by acting as a master that exercises power over the body. In the male body, the soul should strive for a regulatory ideal (a "normative and normalising ideal," as Judith Butler calls it).[305] The soul is thus the origin of subjectivation and fosters and maintains the self, even though it is trammelled by the influences of humoral pathologies and can be overthrown by them.[306] If to know oneself was to make the soul read one's body, individuality was not fixed from a Galenic perspective. The body could be controlled by willpower to a certain extent but eventually an individual balance of body fluids defined physical and psychological "health." Samuel Johnson stated that Shakespeare's characters could claim a certain universality due to their typicality:

> His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole system of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species.[307]

This citation shows how the Galenic image of the body influenced individuality in drama, exposing the paradigm shift regarding subjectivity between Johnson's and Shakespeare's age, given that late Tudor stage characters were modelled on types rather than individuals.[308]

Even the stage actor as conscious performer had to hone the ability to switch between alternative selves in his body. The spirit of his role was thought to take hold of his animal spirits (which are the seat of the soul) and the actor thus became a vessel for the spirit of the role, its actual body.[309] His body expressed the impersonation of his role via his actions like gestures and speech. The actor's special ability, then, was to discipline and control what would otherwise wipe out his own self.[310] The actor's interaction with other characters on stage helped to develop the plot and the dynamics of the play; in response to and as reaction to other personae, character is as much self-expression as it is a constant process of self-adjustment to what is going on outside of the protagonist. Thus, the played character does not only reside within the actor but is also revealed by the other figures on stage.[311] While the self on stage can internally agree with what goes on in the soul, it can also distort it completely—just as in real life. As a protection against dissidence in a society in which censorship, coercion, and torture secured social coherence, the inner and outer could be severed from each other. Dissidence was a dangerous position, especially in a setting like the royal court.

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[305] Butler 1993: 33.
[306] Butler 1993: 33; Foucault 1979: 30.
[307] Johnson 1969: ix.
[308] See also chapter 2.1.4.
[309] Actually, the image of being a vessel would mean effeminisation. Males were not perceived to be receptacles—this was a feminine concept (see chapter 2.2.1.2). For more information and sources on stage players, see Wickham et al. 2000: 157-190.
[310] Smith 2000: 35-37. Lemnius even thought that maleness helped in acting via the voice and the face—warm-bloodedness assists in balancing tempers and copying balanced characters (Lemnius 1576: 45r-45v). The bodily qualities that make up good men therefore also produce good actors (Smith 2000: 37). However—male actors impersonating female characters plausibly might be the epitome of masculine ability, as he then had to control all the passion a woman was thought to embody (Smith 2000: 133).
[311] Smith 2000: 102-103.

Personal advantage, promotion, and patronage were motivations that made this self-protection necessary. This consciousness helped to shape the new Renaissance concept that the self was malleable. The willpower that could strengthen the soul could likewise be directed to influence the outer behaviour to appear in a pleasing or more favourable way; thus, the inner being of a person would be influenced as well. The idea that the self of a person could be formed evolved due to humanist ideas and education; these emphasised the concepts of temperance and the power of the mind.

2.1.4.1 Self-Fashioning

As Elizabethan society had a sense of the *self* as well as of this self being *fashionable*[312] in different ways, there was a shift in *structures* governing these early modern identities.[313] Institutions imposed a far greater discipline on the upper and middle classes in the sixteenth century than before; personal convictions, will, religion, and the state were forces working on the self.[314] The Reformation was one such influence that had a big impact on the self through enhanced self-awareness.[315] The Protestant believer was thrown back on his own judgement and consciousness, building a personal relationship to God through the Bible and his belief. However, in times of religious persecution, many had to disguise their true beliefs and thus split their selves into an outer and an inner that did not necessarily correlate.[316] The institutional influences on self-fashioning imply material ideologies such as the practice of parents and teachers, and manners particular to the elite that could further hypocrisy and deception, an outer mode of *appearing to be*, an outwardness.[317] This was especially the case in official and highly politicised settings like the court. The separation of the inner and the outer leads to a split within the personality; self-fashioning therefore is a form of outer representation, of fictionalising the self, of shaping one‘s own identity as well as being moulded from outside forces[318] – a cross-section of power structures that are both internal and external. However, as the inner and outer corresponded with each other in Renaissance thought, outer behaviour can also influence the inner self. Howard stresses that it is in the history plays more than in any other genre that identity and social performance are most important. The “counterfeitability of identity” is a crucial point, as the stability of the state depends on the person of the monarch[319] as the

[312] In the sixteenth century, the verb *fashioning* got the new meaning of forming one‘s self. This can be meant physically as well as psychologically—this meant a distinct personality and a consistent mode of perceiving and behaving (Greenblatt 2005: 2). That Greenblatt analyses exclusively six males and their self-fashioning strategies in his book is also a hint at this being a predominantly male activity.
[313] Greenblatt 2005: 1, 4, 5.
[314] Greenblatt 2005: 1.
[315] Strier thinks of the Reformation not only as a desacramentalisational process but rather an “internal, non-ritual experience” (Strier 1995: 73-74). He goes on to criticise new historicism for its tendency to “equate religion with ritual.” He argues that this is not the case and that the abandonment of old socio-religious practices like pilgrimages or masses for the dead did not produce stress for people having to find new ways of personal worship (Strier 1995: 73-75). This argument can be debated.
[316] Hebron 2008: 104. Hebron does not comment on the implications this split had on their interior makeup.
[317] Greenblatt 2005: 3.
[318] Greenblatt 2005: 3.
[319] Howard 1994: 129-130.

monarch and the state are intrinsically connected. Thus, sometimes a king had to pretend something he was or felt not for the reason of state. More's example shows that theological self-fashioning (the power of the book over identity) and secular self-fashioning (the power of political and sexual power games at court) were usually bound together. The Church of England had become a part of state administration: God and king were intertwined and resembled each other.[320] Greenblatt therefore implies power[321] as a main factor of self-fashioning and its control – to shape one's own identity is an act of power just like controlling others.[322] This power was due to new alternatives – and therefore the control (or destruction) of these alternatives was ever more important in the ruling ideology at the time.[323]

Courtesy books were one of the tools that helped to shape one's self according to the governing discourses.[324] They were mostly handbooks for acting and very closely related to the rhetoric books also in fashion at the time. Greenblatt calls the courtier manuals "an integrated rhetoric of the self" and a guide to an artificial identity, as they taught dissimulation and feigning as important skills.[325] The very presence of these books suggests that acting and looking like a gentleman could be learned, that these traits were not qualities innate to a certain class. Thus, the courtier books helped further social mobility and suggested the illusion of social upward movement despite their initial intent to suppress this very mobility.[326] Part of all this masquerading at court was the practice of *sprezzatura*[327] – everything should look effortless and graceful.[328] The calculated mask behind the seeming ease is a key Renaissance concept to moulding and

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[320] Greenblatt 2005: 116.

[321] For Greenblatt, identity is achieved, when an absolute authority (as, for example, the church) and a demonic Other intersect (Greenblatt 2005: 76). Butler argues, following Foucault, that the subject is rather produced by exclusionary practices that lie beneath social surfaces. Exclusion and legitimation by the discourse are the forces for her that shape the "political" subject (Butler 2008: 3).

[322] Greenblatt 2005: 1.

[323] Greenblatt 2005: 2. However, people can only choose from alternatives that are accessible and knowable to them. While actions are often based on previous subjective experiences, outer influences like politics, laws, and expectations further bias the individual in his decision-making.

[324] In the sixteenth century, conduct manuals like Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1513), Castiglione's *Courtier* (1528), Erasmus' *Enchiridion militis Christiani* (1501) (see Greenblatt 2005: 87, Schruff 1999: 17, 18-23), *The Court of Civil Courtesy* (see Greenblatt 2005: 163), and Elyot's *The Book Named the Governor* (1531) widely influenced aristocratic society. These major guides to conduct want to form the individual at all levels. On this, they depend on secular power, theological doctrine and social common definitions of the alien and the devilish (Greenblatt 2005: 89). All of the humanist courtier books believed in the formability of the human mind that would then result in perfection according to education and discipline (Schruff 1999: 19). The courtier manuals, therefore, were mostly handbooks for acting and very closely related to the rhetoric books also in fashion at the time. As the pressure at court became fiercer the closer one got towards the centre of power, even frustration and hostility were clad in worship and subjection—so criticism was transformed into a theatrical attitude (Greenblatt 2005: 164-165). While conscience was one of the choicest products of humanist education, it was difficult to maintain at court where the basic principles of it were constantly violated (Greenblatt 2005: 164).

[325] Greenblatt 2005: 162-163. Esler claims that the Italian courtesy tradition is—along with chivalry—one of the main ideals to obtain honour; he writes that they were "[t]he formal moulds into which these young men poured their natural desire for distinction[.]" Besides, both the Italian tradition and chivalry gained momentum from 1585 onwards as a guidance for the behaviour of courtiers in war (Esler 1966: 105, 110; 105-112).

[326] Howard 1994: 35; see also Greenblatt 2005: 256 and Whigham 1984: 5.

[327] Whigham 1984: 93-95; Strier 1995: 87.

[328] Greenblatt 2005: 189. On sprezzatura see Rebhorn 1978: 33-41.

forming given facts into a new social fiction as part of the new mental mobility.[329] Calculated recklessness served as a means for sexual and political survival, as Machiavelli very well observed; literary bravado, especially in court circles, was always calculated.[330] While the Protestant ethic emphasised hard work heavily as a virtue, *sprezzatura* aimed at eradicating all signs of effort as a kind of "aesthetic magic"[331] that should conceal hard work behind a mask of ease. This mask could be considered to be a form of deceit. The willingness to play a role facilitated improvisation; and someone improvising for his own gain has to see through others' constructs and truths. Dismantling other ideologies and recognising them as fictions requires the ability to see certain structural similarities to one's own ideological set of beliefs.[332] While many were not able to see their own set of beliefs as a construct,[333] others like Marlowe[334] did detect the orthodoxies of their own culture and exploited them for their own ends.

Literature was an important tool of expressing and shaping this process of self-fashioning. It is both a willing and conscious act of its author as well as an expression and a reflection of the discourses that shape and influence these codes.[335] Literature is therefore not an activity of an individual exclusively but is embedded in distinct social circumstances, communities, and structures of power.[336] Language, self-expression, and representation were decidedly masculine means of self-fashioning. Emig challenges Greenblatt's assumption that the fashioned subject forms itself against binary opposition.[337] Emig criticises that Greenblatt

> privileges the self as given (if only as potential) and, once established, as whole (although threatened). […] In contrast to this, it might be more profitable to locate subversion and destruction at the heart of the self-fashioning enterprise itself. Then it would be possible to ask why all of Greenblatt's self-fashioning examples are male – without resorting to the standard answer that women were generally marginalised. […] The gender problem of inflationary and contradictory masculinity that finds its extreme expression in self-destructive emulation would then appear as the fatal flaw in the blueprint of Early Modern subjectivity itself.[338]

By trying to fashion the self, a man needs role models to emulate; in the process the subject is active but it also mirrors role models and does not form a genuine *self*. This process of adaptation to outside role models can be inherently self-destructive and thus eventually detrimental to the individual.

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[329] Greenblatt 2005: 227.
[330] Greenblatt 2005: 139.
[331] Greenblatt 2005: 190. Tillyard calls sprezzatura the "mean between a heavy and affected carefulness and positive neglect" (Tillyard 1944: 279).
[332] Greenblatt 2005: 228.
[333] Greenblatt 2005: 229.
[334] Marlowe was more radical than Shakespeare in both his theatre as in his life and attitude towards authority. In a document called the "Baines note" that appeared shortly after Marlowe's death, he is said to have declared Moses to be "but a juggler," the wandering in the wilderness to be the founding of "everlasting superstition […] in the hearts of people," St. John the Evangelist to have been "bedfellow to Christ," and labelled Christ as a bastard and his mother "dishonest." His dissident readings and interpretations of the Bible and Christianity itself go on and on (Baines 2003: xxxiv-xxxv).
[335] Greenblatt 2005: 4.
[336] Greenblatt 2005: 7.
[337] Emig 2009: 60.
[338] Emig 2009: 60.

Models for the self could also be found at the theatre. Thomas Heywood reasoned that all fiction should teach ethics and good behaviour by offering good examples to be copied and bad ones to be avoided; for him, historic heroes offered male role models for imitation.[339] Heywood was sure that the characters on stage could "new mold the harts of the spectators and fashion them to the shape of any noble and notable attempt."[340] Other more despicable or tragic characters, in contrast, were thought to "terrifie men from the like abhorred practices."[341] This idea was questioned by the critics of the theatre like John Stubbs, who argued in *The Anatomy of Abuses* that the acts performed on stage would actually incite the audience to follow the examples shown, not deter them.[342]

But discursive forces from outside the body were not the only influences creating the self. Submitting the body to discipline brought about self-knowledge, which was a principle of Renaissance child-rearing and educational practices.[343] Books for educational purposes like Elyot's *Book Named the Governor* or *The Education of a Christian Prince* prove this point. The mind always had to be disciplined, and moral norms had to be the foundation of all decisions. Thus, the soul as agent of the self could be strengthened against bodily forces. This concept dates back to Greek traditions, where to be a free man in the Greek polis meant that one had to be able to moderate and bridle oneself. Self-restraint was a means to be "a man with respect to oneself."[344] To fashion oneself as a moral subject means consequently to subject oneself to a structure of masculinity and activity. Whoever is able to be a man against oneself will also be able to control and govern others.[345]

The identity of men is most clearly visible in their relationships and interactions with women; in this arena gender differences and the faultlines of their construction show best, so the following pages focus on the male self and its formation against the female.

2.1.4.2 The Male Self and the Female Boundary

Because of the fluid nature of men's humoral bodies, they had to assert the outward signs denoting masculinity constantly against the threatening "female" to eventually stabilise their male identity. The discourse of gender and the formation of the self related to something outside oneself; many tried to relate to something perceived of as alien, strange, or hostile. The female often took the part of threatening Other that had to be attacked and destroyed in order for a man to assert his own masculinity. The female was a part of an "ascending triad of wickedness" adverse to the male and civilisation itself that consisted of the feminine, the bestial, and the demonic.[346] This is why the

[339] Heywood 1973: F3v, sig. F4v-G2v; Smith 2000: 40.
[340] Heywood 1973: sig.B4r.
[341] Heywood 1973: F3v.
[342] Smith 2000: 41.
[343] Greenblatt 2005: 125.
[344] Foucault 1985: 82-83.
[345] Foucault 1985: 83. On the concept of *necessità* in this context, see Kluxen 1967: 31-49.
[346] Greenblatt 2005: 9, 65. The concept of depicting allegorical Vices as women is quite old (see Smith 2000: 104).

female was seen as the opposite of the male, just as traitors, vagabonds, homosexuals, and thieves were the opposite of civilisation. In order to be ejected from ruling discourse, the Other had to be given an identity and a name – and by its destruction, it was incorporated into the whole again. Masculine subjectivity, then, formed itself by the subordination of these Others it had constructed in the first place.[347] But because male identity lay in trying to overcome them or to be different, they became part of the male identities again. Smith identifies four alternative points against which early modern hegemonic masculinity defined itself in England: women, foreigners, people of lower social rank, and sodomites.[348] So, hegemonic masculinity comprised active maleness (that also encompasses not being effeminate or too "soft"), being an Englishman[349] (a topos that resonates again and again in the history plays), belonging to the nobility, and being sexually active with women.[350]

However, this gender stability often proved to be a mere chimera; the more male rhetoric condemned women, the more the inherent instability of male gender construction showed.[351] Ideology therefore had to gloss over this faultline. The lack of clarity regarding masculinity construction is further exposed by the definition and experience of masculinity regarding male others. Masculinity can be anything between the "not-female" and the "other male."[352] These influences may form inherent contradictions in the construction of a male's self; not only the instability of this construction but also the fear of desire's consummation can trouble the male self with self-torture.[353]

As the self was not based on an essentialist, biological basis, identity expressed itself by outward signs that manifested delineations, social borders, and external constructions. Therefore, the theory of performativity in the gender construction of the early modern period is crucial, and the "reading" of outward signs is essential for constructing and deconstructing male identity in the English Renaissance.[354] These signs gained importance because of the potential sameness of men's and women's humoral bodies that posed an essential threat to male hegemonic identity. This unsettling juxtaposition of male and female sexualities revealed the discrepancy between the construction and the realities of sexuality.[355] The effeminisation ensuing from desire for

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[347] Greenblatt 2005: 201, Breitenberg 1996: 96.
[348] Smith 2000: 104.
[349] Early moderns defined the idea of Englishness in both time and space. Space was related to "nation," a community formed by being born in the same place. Time constituted "race"—then not understood as a biological or racist feature, but by sharing a common lineage or genealogy over time (Smith 2000: 114-115).
[350] There is a problem with binary oppositions, however: they are arbitrary, but very closely linked. This link might be subverted—and what seemed so clear-cut at first could also prove to be something else. A stranger might turn out to be you, a comrade-in-arms might appear as a male whore, a man might need a woman to define himself against her, defying the feminine that might erupt from within. The opposites are closely interconnected in this kind of thinking and might not be as clear-cut or stable as thought at first sight (Smith 2000: 127-128).
[351] Breitenberg 1996: 97-127.
[352] Smith 2000: 104.
[353] Breitenberg 1996: 125-126.
[354] Breitenberg 1996: 152.
[355] Breitenberg 1996: 153, 178.

and sexual consummation with women destabilised masculinity at its core and exposed the essence of masculinity construction as a void. That self-fashioning potentially split the male self into an inside and an outside further shook the grounds of masculine self-construction. Man was perceived of as the centre of the world, mediating between the microcosm and the macrocosm; men represented both the centre and a void, a puzzling and contradictory result of Renaissance ideology.

2.2 Males in Relationships

The previous chapter focussed on the construction of the male self and how it related to its male body and its surroundings. This personal perspective will now be enlarged to an interpersonal level. Men were no entities detached from society or one another; they acted, reacted, and interacted within the web of the people they lived with. Their private and social contacts confirmed and negotiated their status as men in an external frame wherein they had to place themselves. The interaction with others adds a dynamic moment to self-construction that depends on circumstance, the exposure to different settings, and encounters between the genders, so the following pages will examine how men were positioned within social relationships and how they influenced their status as males. First, male-female settings will be scrutinised from the perspective of patriarchy, centring on the family, marriage, and sexual contacts. The focus will then shift to male-male relationships that range from friendships to what now are called "homosexual" encounters.[356]

2.2.1 Male-Female Relationships

The family formed the basis for social status and interaction within the social web; however, the term exceeded mere blood relations. Stone defines several gradations of what "family" could comprise. "Family" meant those members who were blood-related or had married into the clan who lived together under one roof; the "household" encompassed everyone living in a house, including servants, boarders, apprentices and others. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this conglomerate of people was also known as "family" as everyone was legally and morally subordinated under the head of the household and therefore not a free person.[357] "Lineage," on the other hand, was used to describe all relatives, either by blood or by marriage, living or dead, who together formed a "house." Lineage provided a man with a social structure without which he would simply float in social space and was especially important for the identity-formation of upper-class society. "Kin" were only living relatives of a lineage who had a claim to special loyalty, obedience, or support due to their relations.[358] At the lower end of the social ladder as well as in the bigger cities, the concepts of kin and lineage—bases for values like honour and faithfulness—lost more and more of their

[356] The term "homosexual" will be used to denote same-sex sexual activity, even though it is an anachronism just like its counterpart, heterosexuality (see chapter 2.2.2.3).
[357] Stone 1995: 28. On the formation of the family as well as the relationship between spouses and children, see Wrightson 1982: 66-88, 89-118. For more on marriage and the household, see Youings 1984: 361-384.
[358] Stone 1995: 28-29.

importance.[359] The duty towards family, friends, and kinship, and striving for honour in the community conflicted more and more and thus showed that the private and the public spheres had already begun to separate.[360]

A major feature of the early modern family was its transience due to high mortality rates among young adults, infants, and children. The Tudor family was often a patchwork family; due to the early death of a spouse, remarriages were common.[361] As about twenty-five per cent of the upper social echelons remarried in the late sixteenth century, about a quarter of English aristocratic children had lost a parent before they were fourteen.[362] Therefore, the family was very open and absorbed influences from outside like the kin and the "good lord"; they had a say in family matters for the upper classes; as the nuclear family did not have strong boundaries to the social space outside of it, it was socially relatively permeable.[363] As families were economic and political units that were tied together by values like obedience to authority, normative rules of behaviour that did not originate from within the family were usually followed.[364]

These structures transformed between 1500 and 1700. The nuclear family became more self-centred and developed more boundaries with respect to its social surroundings, causing the influence of kin to decline. Besides, the marital bonds between husband and wife were strengthened. Different interrelated social developments triggered these changes in the sixteenth century: not only did the old feudal organisation of the landed upper class disappear, but the state was also implementing its centralising power. Economic and social functions that had previously been organised on a local level by the family and kin now had to give way to national loyalty. Another important influence on family life was the rise of Protestantism that stressed the sanctity of marriage and made the family a surrogate of the parish to a certain extent. Simultaneously, the position of the patriarch within the family was intensified. These changes did not take place at once but overlapped and even coexisted among the upper and middle social strata for a long time.[365] To further understand the

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[359] Stone 1995: 29.
[360] Emig 2009: 49. On the gentry and honour, see Fletcher 1995: 126-153.
[361] Death was an omnipresent feature of early modern life. Even though the death rates sank somewhat in the last two thirds of the sixteenth century, they were much higher than today. Death did not only "happen" to the old, it could get anyone, but especially infants and children (Stone 1995: 54-55, 57). However, members of the elite who lived in comfort, especially those who lived in the countryside or had the option to flee epidemics, had a much higher life expectancy. If a member of the higher classes survived to twenty-one, he could expect to live to his early sixties (Stone 1995: 57). Women had the additional risk of pregnancy and birth complications that often enough shortened their lives. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, seventy-five per cent of all first marriages among the squirearchy that ended early were ended within ten years by the death of the wife, usually due to childbirth complications (Stone 1995: 64). See also Houlbrooke 1984: 202-227.
[362] Stone 1995: 46-48.
[363] Stone 1995: 69. The publicity of private life led to a big influence of neighbours and church in the field of morals. Thus, parish members were pushed to conform to social ideas of sin and how to live life (Stone 1995: 105).
[364] Stone 1995: 88.
[365] Stone 1995: 93-94. Kinship and clientage were still a factor to reckon with in the 1590s. These connections were more and more restricted to closer blood relations, however, but were still used for economic and professional help. That these ties were weakening was indicated by the decline of hospitality that was regarded more and more as a burden to the aristocracy as well as the gentry. This is

basis that ruled male-female social contacts, it is essential to look at the concept of patriarchy first. Its implications for interfamilial relationships—between spouses, siblings, or parents and children—were far-reaching.

2.2.1.1 Patriarchy

One of the main discourses that fundamentally shaped the relations between men and women was patriarchy, or the rule of the father. This set of beliefs, values, laws, religion, and economics can be traced back to a time before the emergence of Greco-Roman culture.[366] Early Christianity already advocated that the male as the image of God the Father was to be the authority in all matters spiritual and secular. Women had to subjugate themselves to men,[367] as was demanded by Saint Paul's letter to the Corinthians:

> For a man oght not to couer his head: for asmuche as he is the image and glorie of God: but the woman is the glorie of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. For the man was not created for the womans sake: but the woman for the mans sake (1 Cor. 11:7-9).

Men were thought to be superior to women and expected to loathe females who were linked to sexuality and evil.[368] Women were thought to be close to sin and sexually insatiable.[369] Following earlier traditions of seeing women as the source of evil (like the biblical conception of Eve or the Greek tale of Pandora), the early Church Fathers portrayed women as responsible for humanity's downfall and sinfulness.[370] Christian religious discourse underlined the resulting sexism by depicting Eve as the source of Evil or by St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians already quoted above.[371] Christianity thus

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an indicator that the upper classes began to be oriented towards a more privatised way of life due to the decline of lordship and kinship that was accompanied by different patterns of consumption as well. Families got more and more focussed on themselves, but the loyalties towards the state and church increased (Stone 1995: 94-95, 107).

[366] Plato also states that if the (male) soul is not able to master its appetites, it will come back as a woman and then as an animal. Not only are women likened to animals and thus unmastered, uncultivated, and wild, but they are thus devalued essentially (Butler 1993: 43). For a more detailed account of the history of Western patriarchy, see Bullough 1973: 19-49; for more on the sources of misogyny, see Fletcher 1995: 27.

[367] Doyle 1983: 27.

[368] The *Malleus Maleficarum*, one of the most misogynist texts of the early modern period, quotes the most extreme classical and biblical vilifications of women (such as portions of Ecclesiasticus 25:13-26). According to the authors Institoris and Sprenger, women had an insatiable carnal desire and an immoderate lust for power that drove them to pacts with the devil. They saw a strong link between midwives and witchcraft, domains in which women could experience a certain amount of independence and empowerment (Karent-Nunn 1998: 193). Their work explicitly links lust, women, and sin: "The many lusts of men lead them into one sin, but one lust of women leads them to all sins," (Institoris and Sprenger 1928: 43). Further, they claim that the root for witchcraft lay in woman's sexuality as "she is more carnal that than a man, as is clear from her many carnal abominations" (Institoris and Sprenger 1928: 44).

[369] However, there were also voices that declared men's lust as insatiable as well. Joseph Swetnam for example wrote that male desire was also never quenched; consequently, men easily fall for women's ensnarement (Swetnam 1615: F3r).

[370] Doyle 1983: 27.

[371] Doyle 1983: 106.

cemented patriarchy into its worldview.[372] Contrary to Christ's teachings, the early Church Fathers adopted the classic concept of the separation of the sexes, thus reinforcing gender division with distinct roles for them. The Church Fathers believed in a causal link between sexuality and sin, so the ideal Christian man, especially one called to the clergy, should renounce the flesh and thus avoid women and sexuality. Celibacy, spirituality, and a renunciation of worldly pleasures were a high early Christian ideal.[373] For them, woman was "the source of all male difficulties."[374] The authority of God or nature and the unequal creation of men and women in Genesis often justified differences in status and power relations.[375] Eve was made responsible for the Fall of Man and therefore for the corruption of the whole world, an argument used to consign women to their place and keep them silent.[376]

In Tudor England, relations between men and women were not based on cultural or legal equality due to these assumptions. Rather, English common law gave husbands the right to chastise their wives if the wives displeased them, harking back to the much older Greco-Roman concept of patriarchy according to which the life of a daughter was completely in the hands of her father. From this time on, women were regarded as property of men.[377] Consequently, asymmetries of power prevailed in male-female relationships; in the family, the husband was the authority as *pater familias* who had to be obeyed by his wife and the children.

In addition to gender, age also determined a person's status in society, in the family, and in a relationship.[378] Gender difference and hierarchy were reproduced and secured by ideology or, if need be, even by physical force. As women were not seen to be substantially different in Galenic anatomy from men, the main difference was their lack of masculine perfection. They were considered to be softer, weaker and less hot, and could be therefore subordinated socially.[379] Howard states that in early modern England

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[372] Doyle 1983: 152. For a general overview on women, sex, and Christianity, see Bullough 1973: 97-120.
[373] Doyle 1983: 27.
[374] For a history of misogynist attitudes in various cultures see Bullough 1973.
[375] Breitenberg 1996: 153.
[376]The pamphlets of the *querelle des femmes* exemplify that the authors of the tracts already knew about this dynamics that misogynistic texts revealed more about their authors than about the subject of the texts. Jane Anger writes in her *Protection of Women* (1589) "I would that ancient writers would as well have busied their heads about deciphering the deceits of their own sex as they have about setting down our follies" (cited from Breitenberg 1996: 154).
[377] Doyle 1983: 192-193. However, excessive brutality and noisy "chastisements" were not approved of publicly as they disturbed the peace of the parish. This understanding did not touch the husband's power over his wife nor did it approve of women's scolding (Stone 1995: 106).
[378] De Grazia 2000: 99.
[379] Following 1 Peter 2:7, the urn was a symbol for the female as sixteenth and seventeenth century thinkers and preachers referred to women as the *weaker vessel* (Karent-Nunn 1998: 177). The idea of a woman as a mere receptacle is very old. Plato's *Timaeus* states that the woman "always receives all things, she never departs at all from her own nature and, never, in any way or any time, assumes a form like that of any of the things that enter into her," (Butler 1993: 49-50). This notion was also assisted in the belief that men's hotter and stronger bodies were closed by a foreskin, whereas women's weaker and colder bodies were more "open." This not only led to the usual depreciative evaluation of women's bodies, but also made women "leaky vessels" (Paster 1993: 23-112). Being "leaky" also implied being chatty—the connection between an open body and an outspoken mouth is further commented on in

as much as today, gender relations, however eroticised, were relations of power, produced and stabilised by cultural effort in the interest of the dominant gender.[380]

The essential sameness of gendered bodies posed a threat to patriarchal hierarchy and a social structure based on subordination. Not masculinity as such was at stake, but rather questions of status and power.[381] To secure their state, men not only subordinated women and children but also defined themselves against other men, who could be both their superiors and their inferiors.[382] Given that men conferred and acknowledged the status of other men, the question of honour and rank had to be affirmed and approved by others. Thus, men functioned as mirrors for each other, reflecting the performance of gender and power of others.[383] This confirms that masculinity—in contrast to biological maleness—was a rational and cultural achievement that required outside approval.[384]

Apart from gender inequality, patriarchy rested on the principle of primogeniture. It helped to preserve the inherited property undivided but had a big social impact on families, power, and personal relations. First of all, the oldest surviving male heir was married earlier than his sisters and younger brothers to secure the continuation of the male line.[385] Primogeniture did not confer property on women, so fathers of women in this situation often made arrangements for their inheritance, which resulted in an undesired division of property.[386] This system put pressure on both the older and younger siblings. The younger children were more downwardly mobile, as they inherited neither estate nor title and usually had to earn their own living. Some younger sons were even kept around the estate as a "walking sperm-bank," as Stone called them, to replace the oldest brother in case he might die childless. The oldest son, however, had to wait for his father to die to claim his inheritance.[387] Primogeniture separated upper-class siblings emotionally; the fact that the oldest son inherited everything and his younger brothers got nothing produced a lot of envy and bred the feeling of injustice. Sisters had no opportunity of inheriting either title or estates, so there were better chances of affectionate relationships between brothers and sisters.[388]

Medieval patriarchy that still survived in the aristocracy was connected to good and responsible lordship and therefore posed a threat to the centralist nation state that was

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chapter 2.2.1.3 (see Smith 2000: 15-16). Fletcher evaluates female inferiority because of being "weaker vessels" in Fletcher 1995: 60-82. See also 2.2.1.2.

[380] Howard 1988a: 423. There is also evidence, however, that English women enjoyed more freedom than their continental counterparts; additionally, Fletcher claims that English men liked strong and independent women (Fletcher 1995: 3-7).

[381] Breitenberg 1996: 159; Howard 1988a: 418.

[382] Smith 2000: 118.

[383] See Emig 2009: 53.

[384] Treadwell even goes so far as to state that men defined their masculinity in warfare—and sports as an equivalent of war (Treadwell 1987: 272). Up to the present, the military and athletics are the two institutions that are thought to make "real men" out of boys. Competitive sports as well as military service emphasise the winning ethics as well as physical strength, endurance, toughness, independence, emotional insensitivity, and self-reliance (Doyle 1983: 226, 222-223).

[385] Stone 1995: 71.

[386] Youings 1984: 113; Stone 1967: 274, 290; Strier 1995: 179; Houlbrooke 1984: 228-252.

[387] Stone 1995: 71.

[388] Stone 1995: 87-88.

emerging under the Tudors. The newly advocated form of patriarchy centred on the family and helped to cement order within the new nation state.[389] As the nuclear family developed at the cost of other social bonds during the Renaissance, patriarchy developed into a biased system where power and control via offices were not distributed according to merit but according to partial decisions. The oldest males held power at court, in every parish, and in every family, so there were efforts to win the favour of these most powerful individuals.[390] However, this nepotism began to compete with other factors like money or merit if someone wanted to obtain a post in a state or private office.[391] Although it was of course advantageous to be male in such a system, a man's status and position were neither constant nor unqualified. Fathers had more advantages than their sons, and older sons were much more privileged than younger ones. Conflicting hierarchical loyalties complicated the whole matter further, as various male figures—fathers, husbands, elder brothers—held authority over the same subjected members of the family. Finally, the patriarchy of the church and the crown was superior to all of them.[392] Anthony Fletcher suggested that patriarchy is an artificial and unstable formation, which has to be upheld artificially—and is therefore constantly challenged and in crisis.[393] And indeed, primogeniture and patriarchy did not go unquestioned or uncommented at the time. Starkey, a scholar during the reign of Henry VIII, already called primogeniture unnatural and unreasonable because it "semeth to mynysch the natural love betwixt the father and the child, and to increase envy and hate betwixt them which nature hath so bounden togydder." Despite this view, he argues (rather unconvincingly) that primogeniture is necessary to keep order and degree.[394]

2.2.1.2 Marriage

Marriage was a social institution that legitimated sexual intercourse between men and women, procured a higher social status, and provided legitimate progeny. The principal ideas governing this institution changed over time; the Reformation infused new ideas and norms of what the relationship between men and women in wedlock should look like. The old Catholic ideal of chastity for both men and women was replaced by holy matrimony as ultimate goal for all. Every Christian was now expected to marry. While the Catholic Church had seen marriage as a tribute to human frailty, Protestantism stressed the importance and holiness of marriage throughout the sixteenth century. Not only corporeal but also spiritual closeness and intimacy were advocated.[395]

Marriage regulated men's social interaction with women and influenced the lives of early modern men quite strongly; it was considered to be as final as death for

[389] Stone 1995: 110-111.
[390] Stone 1995: 73; Greenblatt 2005: 43.
[391] Stone 1995: 97.
[392] Orgel 1996: 14-15.
[393] Fletcher 1995: xvii; 83-84, 99-279, and *passim*.
[394] Altman 1978: 37.
[395] Stone 1995: 100-101. For a general continental perspective on marriage and love in the early modern period, see Wunder 1992: 65-88; for a general English perspective on the new concept of Protestant marriage, see Rose 1988: 2-11, 13-22.

Elizabethans and an important rite of passage that massively changed a man's status.[396] A married man became his own master and a *pater familias*. Additionally, he was a prospective father with duties, and was eligible for public offices like a juryman, reeve, or warden. From his marriage onwards, he also had to pay taxes and even changed his seating in church as a sign of his newly acquired status. Marriage was the last step for men to become firmly integrated into society as members with full duties and rights.[397] This heightened status of married men had many causes. One is the decline of relations with the kin and the closing in of the nuclear family that gave the *pater familias* more authority. The Reformation also strengthened the father's position as a head of the household and endowed him with religious duties towards his family. A third factor was the centralising power of the emergent nation state that emphasised obedience; the heads of the family also profited from this new approach to law and order. However, a household's final power distribution most certainly depended on the characters and dispositions of the spouses.[398]

A husband and his wife became one legal person in law that was represented by the man. If a woman could get the rights of her property secured in her marriage contract, she could hold or dispose of it—otherwise, all her private property became his and he could even lease out his wife's property and legally appropriate the revenues.[399] Women's economic status within marriage worsened during the sixteenth century when their rights deteriorated; it was even questioned if women were humans endowed with reason and if women had souls.[400] As preachers defined roles for women, they also defined men's in a marriage: men should earn a living so that the wife did not have to leave the house and work herself. If women earned money themselves, they might believe they had the right to tell men how to spend it; a presumption that sixteenth-century men wanted to prevent.[401] Besides providing materially for their wives, husbands had to love them but should always keep in mind that women were not as capable of rationality and virtue as men.[402] Often, solar imagery was used in wedding homilies to describe the husbands and lunar ones for wives—stressing that the moon only mirrors the brilliance of the sun.[403] The husband should, due to his superior status,

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[396] Death, however, as the ultimate *rite de passage*, was believed to reveal a man's interiority as he moved from one state of being to the next. This also indicated a higher level of knowledge; the Bible part Smith refers to is Corinthians 13:12 (Smith 2000: 91; see also Neill 1997: 1-42). According to this perspective, Gaunt's and Henry IV's dying speeches may thus also be interpreted as the expression of higher knowledge.

[397] Smith 2000: 86.

[398] Stone 1995: 141, 145-146.

[399] In medieval common law, a widow's right to a share in her private property was only effective in Wales, the City of London, and the Province of York. If women entered the labour market, they were at best paid about half of what men earned (Stone 1995: 136-137).

[400] Stone 1995: 137. The question if a woman had a soul is closely related to the question whether she has reason. The soul is the agent within the Galenic body that keeps the individual under control from within and structures the self (see chapter 2.1.4 and subchapters).

[401] Karent-Nunn 1998: 184. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, many women remained unwed and supported themselves as day labourers and servants. Officialdom did not appreciate this. From the mid-fifteenth century on, men began to exclude women from guild membership, and thus from the status and the remuneration connected to this membership (see Karent-Nunn 1998: 196-197).

[402] Karent-Nunn 1998: 184.

[403] See Wunder 1992: *passim*; Karent-Nunn 1998: 184.

control his wife and keep her from evil. To keep the peace in his house, he should not beat her, although it would be within his rights. Instead, he should accept that his wife is "the weaker vessel, of a frail heart, inconstant, and with a word soon stirred to wrath."[404] Still, he was allowed to chastise her if he saw fit. The ideal wife was "weak, submissive, charitable, virtuous and modest." Her main functions in a marriage were housekeeping, becoming a mother, and caring for the children. However, she also had domains of power in the household; certain tasks within the house were under her control: she could give or withhold sexual favours, and dominated childrearing. There is evidence that women addressed their husbands in a deferential manner, even though terms of endearment were also common. Very probably, many women accepted the elevated status of their husbands over them, especially in the upper and middle social strata.[405]

A marriage in the sixteenth century was often entered into because of economic, status, or property interests. Marriage was seen as an economic exchange. The concept of marriages based on mutual love as the cause for a marital union only emerged in the seventeenth century and was thought to lack a stable basis.[406] Before, marriage was a social institution connecting families politically and economically; the decision for marriage and the choice of a suitable partner were collectively decided on by the kin and the family council of elders.[407] The landed classes planned the marriage of their children according to family strategy. The three main foci of their decision were the continuity of the male line, keeping up the inheritance intact and undivided, and the accumulation of further property or strategic connections. These goals had many practical consequences: families had a large number of children to improve the chance that a male heir survived and married, so that the male line could survive.[408] A wife should be a good breeder, housekeeper, and a sexual partner—consequently any girl would do who fulfilled these requirements. Love as a basis for marriage was perceived of as a negligible factor in choosing a partner.[409] Due to reformatorial shifts in the episteme of Tudor England, love marriages emerged as a new ideological development.

Despite these new developments, relations between husband and wife were generally rather remote, especially in higher social circles. As marriages were often arranged for economic or political reasons, the spouses were functional parts of the economic unit of the household; a man and his wife had their own apartments and rarely

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[404] Stone 1995: 138.

[405] Stone 1995: 138-139. The subordination of wives was stronger in upper and upper-middle classes. The families of lower social strata worked more like an economic unit where everyone had their duties, but a wife had to be able to continue a husband's work if he was away (Stone 1995: 139-140).

[406] Stone 1995: 70, 72. Marriage led to the exchange of money and property as a dowry from the bride's family to the groom's, who in exchange then granted the bride an annuity in the case that she became a widow. Wives could also be "kept in line" by only granting her a small allowance, promising her better conditions on good behaviour. Because women were economically dependent on their husbands, this treatment was an effective means of control and exertion of power over women (Stone 1995: 72, 79).

[407] Doyle 1983: 267; Stone 1995: 70-71.

[408] This number was usually not as high as assumed. The average woman bore only four children or less in the upper classes and six to eight among the lower classes. Effectively, however, the richer people had more children as they married and remarried earlier than poorer people. Besides, a higher infant mortality rate among lower classes combined with bad food and little hygiene added to a lower fertility rate (Stone 1995: 52-54).

[409] Stone 1995: 128.

spent time in each other's company. People were pragmatic about happiness in marriage and did not expect their partner to make them happy. Due to high mortality rates, people emphasised the reproductive functions of a marriage rather than friendship or even regard or affection between partners.[410] Procreation played a crucial part in the social system of the Elizabethan state.[411] If a person died, the children usually had to fill their parents' role in terms of status and place in the chain of being. Procreation was the device that ensured the continuity of mankind and the family, and marriage was the legal institution that secured legitimate procreation—which everyone was expected to aspire to.[412]

There is evidence, however, that friendship or even love developed after marriage between a couple.[413] For princes and great nobles, the ideals of romantic love and sexual intrigue depicted by theatre plays and poetry of the late sixteenth century were more real. In this very restricted and small group, young people could mingle with the other sex without being under constant observation by their parents. At court, they had the freedom and the leisure to engage in romantic love while performing their duties as courtiers or tutors. Only there did the love poetry of the late Tudor period resonate with the reality of people's lives.[414]

However, both Catholic and Protestant orthodoxy envisioned fervent mutual love between husband and wife. Originally, Saint Paul's ideal life was celibacy. But for those Christians who were not strong enough, marriage was the only possibility to have legitimate sexual contacts. St. Paul's view on sexuality was the basis for Christian sexual ethics for two thousand years.[415]

> So oght men to loue their wiues, as their owne bodies: he that loueth his wife, loueth him self. For no má euer yet hated his owne flesh, but nourisheth & cherisheth it, eué as the Lor doeth the Church. For we are mébers of his bodie, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shal a man leaue father & mother, & shal cleaue to his wife, & they twaine shalbe one flesh. This is a great secret, but I speake concerning Christ, & concerning the Church. Therefore euerie one of you, do ye so: let euerie one loue his wife, eué as him self, & let the wife se that she feare her housband. (Ephesians 5: 28-33)[416]

As much as this text praises love, it is based on submission and power as a framework for marriage; the family became a little church.[417] Beginning with the Reformation, mutual love and partnership was the new ideal of Protestant marriage despite widespread cultural misogyny; the husband is ordered to love his wife not for what she is but for his own sake—for he "loueth himself" in her. Thomas Gainsford articulated that new ideal by stating that a woman was

[410] Stone 1995: 81.
[411] For more detail see chapter 2.2.1.4.
[412] See for example Shakespeare's procreation sonnets no. 1-18.
[413] Stone 1995: 82.
[414] Stone 1995: 81-85.
[415] Doyle 1983: 209.
[416] This part is also cited in the marriage liturgy of the Common Prayer Book.
[417] Greenblatt 2005: 241. For more on the Puritan concept of matrimony, see Haller and Haller 1942: 235-272.

> the wonder of nature: for shee maketh two bodies one flesh, and two hearts one soule: so that the husband and wife truely louing, so conspire in all their actions, that they haue in a manner but one motion: for loue maketh vnion, as hate doeth separation and deuision.[418]

That man and wife become "one flesh," as mentioned above in Paul's letter, is due to the wife—she is the one who gives the marriage union one soul. However, the marriage is still power-asymmetrical with the advantage given to the husband.

If relationships did not work out, there was no option of divorce and remarriage in Anglican Church law; the only feasible solution for a failed relationship was the separation of bed and board in combination with a monetary compensation.[419] This arrangement was called "divorce" but did not entail the right to remarry. Besides, the medieval option to obtain a nullification of a marriage was eliminated during the Reformation. After breaking away from Rome, there were only three causes that could annul a marriage: a former marriage contract with someone else, blood relations according to the book of Leviticus, or male impotence lasting over a period of three years, which was especially difficult to prove. If a wife or husband had been abandoned and had not heard from his or her spouse for seven years, they could remarry as the missing partner was assumed to be dead.[420] In case the husband or wife returned after seven years, either the first marriage counted or the woman could choose her preferred husband.[421]

It is difficult to define marriage in early modern England because the procedure to get married was not standardised for all until 1754.[422] However, for the propertied classes, marriage was already fairly defined in the sixteenth century. First, a written legal contract between the couple's parents settling financial questions was followed by the so-called "spousals"[423], a formal exchange of a spoken promise to marry in front of witnesses. Then, the banns were proclaimed publicly three times in church to allow for objections. The fourth step was the public exchange of vows during the wedding in

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[418] Gainsford 1616: Y3r.

[419] The Anglican Church was the only Protestant church that did not provide the option of a divorce and remarriage of the innocent party in case of adultery or severe cruelty within a marriage. During Elizabeth's reign, the question was never really settled, but was decided on in 1604 with the prohibition of "divorced" people to remarry. This was especially severe for the nobility, as a husband whose wife committed adultery could not divorce her, so the inheritance to a legal heir was an important question in this respect. As no divorce was possible, the church and ideology stressed the importance of an intimate and loving relationship with one's spouse (Stone 1995: 34,101). Wives who were mistreated by their husbands also had less recourse to help from their family and kin as family intervention decreased with the closing in of the nuclear family and the deprivation of priestly assistance (Stone 1995: 107, 111).

[420] Especially for the poorer classes, this was a viable option, as was bigamy. In a state with no police, it was easy to run away and start a new life somewhere else—or to simply get married where the previous marriage was not known (Stone 1995: 35).

[421] Stone 1995: 33-34.

[422] Stone 1995: 29-30.

[423] According to ecclesiastical law, the spousals were already as binding a contract as the church ceremony. If an oral exchange of vows in front of witnesses had taken place and was followed by living together as a couple, this union was regarded as a legal and valid marriage. In rural and isolated areas, many poor people regarded the betrothal ritual called "handfasting" still as sufficient for a marriage—even without the blessings of the church (see Stone 1995: 30).

church.[424] The final part that sealed the union was sexual consummation after the wedding ceremony.[425]

Most males in Shakespeare's England did not marry until they were about 28 or 29 years old—an age when they had accomplished apprenticeship and had been able to save the money to set up a household.[426] Often, men from the gentry and nobility got married much earlier and entered relationships their parents had chosen for them according to financial and political aspects.[427] It is important to distinguish between the younger sons and the male heir in the upper landed classes; in the late sixteenth century, the male heir married at about twenty-two. The younger brothers married at a considerably older age than their sisters and older brother, probably in their late twenties or early thirties. Their brides were usually about ten years younger.[428] As people married relatively late—upper class heirs excepted—and as life expectations were low, marriages were quite short, about twenty-two years for a first marriage in the upper classes.[429] Marriages were contracted from a very limited social and geographical scope. The importance of social class and the custom of the dowry led to marriages within one's own social and economic group. Only the high nobility had a wider pool from which to choose prospective spouses for their children.[430] In the late sixteenth and early seventeen centuries, religion split the aristocracy. Not only were lineage and status factors to be considered, but now also which religion a family followed. Consequently, religious endogamy developed due to the kinships' enforcement.[431]

While Catholics had long regarded women as having a greater sex drive than men and accused them of seducing men, Luther broke with this view. He stated that both women and men should marry to satisfy their mutual lust and advised that men and

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[424] The wedding in church became a sacrament as late as 1439, and it was in 1563—after the Reformation—that the Catholic Church required the presence of a priest for the wedding to be valid. The Anglican Church, however, did not care about these Catholic innovations. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Anglican Church advocated the wedding ceremony in church as the most important step in the marriage process, but lawyers still recognised the spousals before witnesses as binding legally. If it was an oral promise for the future followed by consummation, it was binding for life—if not, it could be legally broken by mutual consent later. If the spousals were formulated in the present, like "I do take thee to my wife," it was indissoluble immediately and even nullified a church wedding later to someone else (Stone 1995: 30-31).

[425] Stone 1995: 30.

[426] This meant that apprentices and workers had to control their sexual drive at the time of its peak. This could be a reason for the high levels of group aggression of male apprentices, but could also have helped to stimulate economic adventuresomeness for capitalist enterprises at the time (Stone 1995: 45, 408). However, as they were fostered out, they were free to choose their own spouses and even experimented sexually during the courting process (Stone 1995: 411).

[427] Smith 2000: 78; see also Wrightson 1982: 66-88; Houlbrooke 1984: 63-95. For the lower classes, early marriage often caused poverty. To reduce this risk, the Common Council of London decreed in 1556 that no one could be admitted as a Freeman before the age of twenty-four. This was an effective ban on early marriage, which was also implemented in the rest of the nation in 1563 by the Statute of Artificers. In the countryside, the age ban was twenty-one, in corporate towns twenty-four (Stone 1995: 44).

[428] Stone 1995: 41-42.

[429] Stone 1995: 45-46.

[430] Stone 1995: 50-51. The system led to strong class endogamy, as marriages were an economic affair and no one wanted to marry below his or her own class and means (Stone 1995: 72).

[431] Stone 1995: 96.

women should provide mutual help and companionship for one another.[432] However, the reformers still thought that women were close to sin and Satan's cunning. Through their inheritance as "daughters of Eve" they were prone to sinful qualities like Eve's "desire to be like God." Whereas the Catholic Church had put the Virgin Mary next to Eve as a positive model of what women were capable of, Protestants ceased to follow the cult of the Virgin and replaced it by Old Testament figures like Sarah, Rebecca, Susannah, and others (but not Judith—she had slain a man!) as role models for women. To keep women in check, they should be bridled like horses in harness.[433] Often, the image of Argus was invoked in regard to keeping an eye on wives as a symbol for a husband's vigilance which he was expected to exercise to prevent infidelity and being cuckolded. He had to watch his wife constantly and should look out for any signs of her going astray. However, this attempt was usually perceived of as being futile.[434] So, women's actions and outer signs had to be "read" or deciphered by men like a text so that they could be dominated. The *Court of Good Counsell* defines the aspects that give away the truth about women: "a woman must take heede, that she giue not men occasion to thinke hardly of her, eyther by her Deedes, Words, Lookes or Apparell."[435] These four aspects that men should decipher are the media of the theatre[436]—so these means of self-expression construct the performativity of both female and male gender. In a sense, the pattern of keeping women under control in the Catholic cloister had evolved into cloistering women through marriage in the Protestant household—an example of how Protestant ministers carried on the misogynist attitudes of late medieval Catholic clergy. The new promotion of marriage for all still supported the belief that women had to be kept under control, but now marriage was the means to achieve this goal.[437] Despite this development, celibacy was still regarded as a special "gift" in the Edwardian and Elizabethan prayer books.[438]

2.2.1.3 "Heterosexual" Sex

The problematic discourse surrounding desire turned sex between a man and a woman into a delicate issue, even though the Renaissance generally understood sexuality as an internal and emotional phenomenon. However, sexuality was not considered to be a constituting feature of one's personality; sex was no abstraction but always a concrete act or behaviour.[439] This chapter will deal only with established discourse about sexuality between men and women; what actually happened between people in private can of course not be reported on. Even though the concepts regulating discourse could be contradictory at times, marriage secured legitimate sex and procreation between men and women as an institution. The church monitored the ideals and normative concepts regarding sexuality, morals, and procreation, so sex between

[432] Karent-Nunn 1998: 183.
[433] Karent-Nunn 1998: 183-184. Women who talked too much were also dunked into water on a cucking stool to silence their "incontinent" mouths (Boose 1991: 179-213).
[434] Breitenberg 1996: 148.
[435] Guazzo 1607: D3r.
[436] Breitenberg 1996: 187.
[437] Karent-Nunn 1998: 184.
[438] Levin 1994: 177, fn. 6.
[439] Smith 1991: 20-21.

men and women was ideally confined to legal wedlock. As everyone was supposed to strive for marriage and children, sex between men and women was a social norm.

As the early Christians and the Church Fathers permitted sexual intercourse only for procreative ends, any form of unprocreative marital sex and all forms of illicit or premarital sex were condemned. Sex as the expression of joy, love, and pleasure was strictly forbidden by early Christian theology. Thus, deviant sexuality was marginalised and repressed by the norms of social discourse.[440] The sixth-century Pope Gregory the Great even demanded in his work *Pastoral Rule* that married couples should not befoul "their intercourse with pleasure."[441]

However, people believed that an orgasm by both the male and female partner was necessary to conceive children; consequently, female erotic pleasure was an aim to be achieved despite Christian doctrine.[442] This idea clashed with the threat that sex with women posed to men; the desire for women was believed to drag men down to the females' lower level of base corporeality and thus threatened male transcendence and rationality. Besides, lust for women levelled out male hierarchies of gender and social status, so men were rendered vulnerable and threatened with effeminacy by having sex with women.[443] Lust was thought to help men overcome their "natural" repugnance of female insufficiency while women had to fight their fear of the pain and mortal danger of pregnancy. Interestingly, however, lust was also considered to be God's compensation for the expulsion from Paradise.[444] Despite this hint that sex between men and women could be a satisfying experience, women's bodies threatened men. Due to women's sexual insatiability and potential infidelity, men were exposed to the dangers of jealousy; falling for female charms and sexual seduction dragged down the male to female corporeality that was not controlled by rationality. Women's bodies were uncontrollable as they were overflowing with fluids; additionally, they lacked clearly defined borders that made it impossible to exert the control of female orifices.[445] Female

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[440] Stone 1995: 309-311, 313-315; see also Montaigne 1967 vol III: 72.

[441] Obach 2009: 55; Doyle 1983: 240. Augustine argues for example how Adam and Eve procreated in Paradise without carnal lust: "The man, then, would have sown the seed, and the woman received it, as need required, the generative organs being moved by the will, not excited by lust. […] Man, it is true, has not this power [like animals]; but is this any reason for supposing that God could not give it to such creatures as He wished to possess it? And therefore man himself also might very well have enjoyed absolute power over his members had he not forfeited it by his disobedience; for it was not difficult for God to form him so that what is now moved in his body only by lust shold have been moved only at will" (Augustine 1993: 472). Augustine goes on to describe how sex would have looked between Adam and Eve living in a paradisiac setting: "In such happy circumstances and general human well-being we should be far from suspecting that offspring could not have been begotten without the disease of lust, but those parts, like all the rest, would be set in motion at the command of the will; and without the seductive stimulus of passion, with calmness of mind and with no corrupting of the integrity of the body, the husband would lie upon the bosom of his wife. Nor ought we not to believe this because it cannot be proved by experiment" (Augustine 1993: 475). However, the only ones who would have had the chance to try out this "passionless generation"—Adam and Eve—probably never experienced this kind of passionless sex, as Augustine informs the reader that they were expelled from Paradise before they had a chance to try this out (Augustine 1993: 475; see also Greenblatt 2005: 242).

[442] Traub 2002: 16; Laqueur 1990: 1-3, 45-46, 49-52, 66-68, 99-103 and *passim*.

[443] Breitenberg 1996: 49.

[444] Greenblatt 1988: 83-84.

[445] Breitenberg 1996: 54. See also Fletcher 1995: 18-19.

sexuality—and the need for its regulation by men—was deeply important in reproductive terms. This control focused on three physical thresholds: the vagina, the mouth, and the doorway of the house. Talking or exiting the home was taken as a sign of female sexual wantonness. Therefore, the maintenance of chastity entailed the restriction of female speech and movement.[446] The threat of the female tongue was women's appropriation of the "male" medium of speech, of self-expression. Masculine identity had to voice its desires and express its will—but it therefore also depended on denying women this option of self-representation.[447]

Men had to beware of women's allurements; Joseph Swetnam warns his readers in his *Arraignment*:

> For women have a thousand wayes to entise thee, and ten thousand waies to deceiue thee, and all such fools as are suetors unto them […]: they lay out the foldes of their hare to entangle men into their loue, betwixt their breasts is a vale of destruction, & in their beds there is hell, sorrow, & repentance.[448]

In Swetnam's eyes, women literally have to deceive men to have sex with them as the females are appealing to but destructive for men. It seems as if the experience of "heterosexual" lust in men was thought of as unnatural since a man's erotic attraction to women was due to the woman's artificial appeal. Burton calls it a "mad and beastly passion," and thinks of a man's desire for a woman as "a kind of legerdemain; mere juggling, a fascination."[449] Despite this, he thought that wedlock was the only way of satisfying lust and desire; marriage thus becomes a necessary evil that prevents inordinate lust and excess.[450] Burton draws a parallel between an ordered sex life within the confines of wedlock to law and order in the patriarchal state.[451]

However, even marriage held dangers for men. As women were believed to be innately unfaithful, wives exposed their husbands irrevocably to cuckoldry.[452] Thus, the remedy for the excess of desire threatened the stability of masculinity by potential female infidelity or disobedience. To prevent women from disobeying or cuckolding their husbands, wives and their desire had to be controlled and bridled. Thus, marriage cannot contain the danger of erotic desire for Burton, even though marriage was supposed to contain all forms of inordinate lust.[453] That there is no way out of this

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[446] Swann 1998: 297, 301; see also Fletcher 1995: 12-14. Institoris and Sprenger also connect the female "slippery tongue" to their alleged inclination to evil (Institoris and Sprenger 1928: 44). For more on material practice restricting women's speech, see Boose 1991.
[447] Breitenberg 1996: 170; Strier 1995: 48-49. On the formation of male gender in Renaissance high literature, see Goldberg 1992: 29-101.
[448] Swetnam 1615: [sig. C4r]-[sig. C4v].
[449] Burton 1850: 452, 472.
[450] Breitenberg 1996: 57.
[451] Breitenberg 1996: 41.
[452] Breitenberg 1996: 42. The insatiable lust of women was also part of the discourse of tribadism—female erotic transgression by the "abuse" of their (enlarged) clitorises, also with other women (Traub 2002: 7, 8, 15-17). Interestingly, the clitoris was anatomically "rediscovered" in 1559 (Traub 2002: 10, 16). The new centre of female lust might have been another destabilising influence on the construction of male erotic dominance and thus may have furthered male gender anxiety—coinciding with the ascension of another queen on the English throne.
[453] Breitenberg 1996: 47; 58.

dilemma exposes a faultline in the construction of what marriage and sex between men and women should and could fulfil. Other thinkers like Michel de Montaigne challenged this view, claiming that "female" inconstancy could also be found in men; consequently, women should not be made to blame.[454]

> And those who wonder at it [inconstancy], exclaime against it, and in women search for the causes of this infirmity, as incredible and unnaturall: why see they not how often, without any amazement and exclaiming, themselves are possessed and infected with it? It might happily seeme more strange to find any constant stay in them.[455]

Montaigne also evaluated the erotic dynamism between men and women differently. He saw that women made themselves vulnerable by yielding to male sexual desire and finally consummation. He muses:

> Our mastery and absolute possession, is infinitely to bee feared of them [the women]: After they have wholy yeelded themselves to the mercy of our faith and constancy, they have hazarded something: They are rare and difficult vertues: so soone as they are ours, we are no longer theirs.[456]

Men's conquest and desire are potentially harmful to women who put themselves into men's "mercy." Montaigne hints at the abuse men can inflict on women by discarding them after they are conquered and possessed. In his argument, Montaigne follows the conventional line of thought that sexual consummation is not lastingly satisfactory for men; but instead of blaming the women, he sees the cause in men's desire to possess women. Usually, men projected their dissatisfaction onto women, often resulting in anger and even violence.[457] Montaigne further called the ideas connected to female chastity "ridiculous" and argued that men and women were rather similar if stripped of all social conventions.[458] He writes:

> I say, that both male and female, are cast in one same moulde; instruction and custome excepted, there is no great difference betweene them[.][459]

Despite Montaigne's arguments for the situation of women in the dynamics of sex, the assumption that consummation did not satisfy for long negatively affected the sexual relations between men and women badly. From the male perspective, this "dilemma" was described thus by Joseph Swetnam:

> [F]or the pleasure of the fairest woman in the world lasteth but a honny moone, that is, while a man hath glutted his affections and reaped the first fruit, his pleasure being past sorrowe and repentance remaineth still with him.[460]

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[454] Florio translated Montaigne's *Essays* as late as 1603, consequently reaching a wider English audience after the time of concern here (Guy 1988: 414). However, he represents a kind of alternative thinking that is nevertheless relevant for the period.
[455] Montaigne 1967 vol III: 115.
[456] Montaigne 1967 vol III: 110.
[457] Breitenberg 1996: 132.
[458] Breitenberg 1996: 129. Montaigne further acknowledges that men established the social rules for women—and not quite to their benefit. He writes that "[w]omen are not altogeather in the wrong, when they refuse the rules of life prescribed to the World, forasmuch as onely men have established them without their consent," (Montaigne 1967 vol. III: 77).
[459] Montaigne 1967 vol. III: 128.
[460] Swetnam 1615: F3r.

After defloration, only sadness and repentance remained. Swetnam sees men as victims of their own "affections" because they are unable by nature to have fulfilling sex with only one woman after her defloration. In his argumentation, Swetnam sounds as if only defloration could provide men with sexual pleasure. The deed leaves only the feelings of "sorrow and repentance" afterwards, so satisfaction is only attainable for a short time after taking a maidenhead. Male desire poses its own problems apart from women's lust as it itself proves to be unquenchable and unavoidable at the same time.[461]

Male writing like Swetnam's indicates sexual contempt for women but in reality it exposes a male lack: the threat of an unfillable void within the construction of masculine sexuality and desire that tries to comfort itself by establishing women as the threatening Other.[462] Misogyny served as a foil for male inability to define a fulfilling consistent concept of sexual desire and a stable sexual identity in a male-female frame. The need to draw borders and define difference underlies the attempt to fill in the gap in this male dilemma.

2.2.1.4 Procreation, Genealogy, and Legitimation

Early modern English people were obsessed with genealogy, even though other criteria of social merit were already emerging. Still, bloodlines and rank heavily determined a man's social identity, so the genealogically minded individual wanted to continue his bloodline through procreating within marriage.[463] The higher up the social ladder, the more important kinship, lineage, status, and property became. Therefore, a good marriage policy was very important—and ties of kinship influenced marriage decisions as well. As the kin were a community of their own, marriage also meant becoming part of a bigger whole.[464] Women had an important position in genealogies as only they could guarantee legitimacy by marital chastity. Even Elizabeth I continuously had to struggle to be recognised as a legitimate ruler, so it is no wonder that legitimacy often features in the history plays. Phyllis Rackin comments on this recurrent problem:

> The son's name and entitlement and legitimacy all derived from the father, and only the father was included in the historiographic text. But only the mother could guarantee that legitimacy. As bearers of that life that names, titles, and historical records could never fully represent, the women were keepers of the unspoken and unspeakable reality that always threatened to belie the words that pretended to describe it.[465]

Female chastity had become symbolic capital: it was the foundation of the genealogical system and defined the social value of women.[466] The masculine demand of chastity had a ring of preservation of class purity to it as men feared that women could pollute or transcend class barriers via their sexuality.[467] By the loss of their

[461] Breitenberg 1996: 173.
[462] Breitenberg 1996: 174.
[463] Swann 1998: 297, 301.
[464] Stone 1995: 69-70.
[465] Rackin 1990: 191.
[466] It is interesting to note that the term *virtue* shifting from "masculine moral conformity" to the enlarged meaning of female chastity—the female equivalent to male honour—just began to emerge in the 1590s (Emig 2009: 59).
[467] Breitenberg 1996: 70.

maiden names, women were completely "imported" into the husband's family and identified by their husband's name. Their ability to bear children continued the family lines of their husbands; thus, women were the means to perpetuate male identities. The power of the male name cannot be separated from the patriarchal power that infused the relations and the economy between the sexes, but only female chastity could guarantee legitimacy of progeny and thus preserved patriarchal structures like primogeniture, inheritance, and the rights of fathers.[468] Chastity and honour became a fetish in social discourse, especially because it was women who were the only ones who could guarantee the legitimacy of their children and heirs.[469]

Since women were perceived as unstable, insatiable, and lustful, female sexuality created male identity anxiety that was based on legitimate succession and patriarchy; female lascivious tendencies and sexuality had to be controlled by male domination.[470] By following their unbridled desire, women could pollute male lineages, so Peter Stallybrass detected a connection between chastity and women's enclosure within the house.[471] This enclosure was a consequence of the masculinist construction of women's bodies as something private that had to be dominated and regulated; they feared that other men could be tempted to cross these boundaries and thus deprive the husbands of their wife's possession.[472] This control of the female also showed in the confinement of desire to the area of marriage and lawful, institutionalised sex. Desire's power was bridled by the idea that the sexual relationship between the spouses should be founded on true companionship and moralised love,[473] concepts that characterise the Aristotelian idea of friendship.[474]

Renaissance ideas about conception and reproduction illuminate the understanding of the importance and impact that procreation had for people at the time. While medical theory included differing concepts about the formation of semen, one of these supposes the origin of sperm in the male brain. Semen was thought to be the essence of the brain that also formed the soul of the embryo. The sperm was transported via the spinal marrow to the lower parts of the body.[475] The male individual and his offspring were therefore of the same essence and shared the same principle of life.[476] This explanation for the genesis of sperm explains why the act of conception was perceived as a kind of

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[468] Orgel 1996: 36; see Butler 1993: 216.
[469] Breitenberg 1996: 107, 110.
[470] Swann 1998: 297, 301; Breitenberg 1996: 110-111.
[471] Stallybrass 1986: 127.
[472] Breitenberg 1996: 117. Women were transacted like property in this society of "homosocial economy," as Breitenberg calls it. Chastity served as a "badge of honour" for husbands, which is only validated if other men desire to steal and possess it (Breitenberg 1996: 71). Montaigne also saw this problem in his own time. He thought that male anxiety over cuckoldry and the following control over wives may lead to the feared outcome. He wrote: "Let us also take heed, lest this great and violent strictnesse of obligation we enjoine them, produce not two effects contrary to our end: that is to wit, to set an edge upon their suiters stomacks, and make women more easie to yeeld. For, as concerning the first point, enhancing the price of the place, we raise the price and endeare the desire of the conquest," (Montaigne 1967 vol. III: 98).
[473] Belsey 1992: 95.
[474] See chapter 2.2.2.2.
[475] Foucault 1985: 130.
[476] Foucault 1985: 131.

birth of mind, the passing on of an idea. According to this theory, semen originated in the vital powers of the individual and was therefore very powerful. However, when this power was ejected from the male by ejaculation, the loss of semen was seen as a dangerous loss of personal power. Semen, life, and death were further connected by the belief that the brain, then perceived of as a part of the medulla, was the seat of the immortal soul, whereas the spinal marrow was the seat of the mortal soul. As sperm was believed to originate in the brain and to travel through the body via the spinal marrow, male semen was located at the interface of body and soul, death and immortality.[477]

The loss of life's essence through ejaculation was counterbalanced by procreation and the immortality through offspring. The "little death" of orgasm[478] brought forth new life—but at the cost of losing a part of one's own substance.[479] The offspring of a person established a link with immortality; according to this line of thought, reproduction could "alleviate" the death of an individual by securing the survival of the human race at large. Thus, reproduction and progeny transcended one's own life and linked it to eternity that would otherwise be impossible for an individual to obtain.[480] Sexuality therefore links life and death, time, becoming, and immortality.[481]

Another theory stated that semen originated in the blood, the place where one humour could transform itself from one into another.[482] According to Aristotle, semen was a type of distilled blood, the foam that forms while the blood gets heated. As procreation required heat, desire was the humoral "excess" that culminated in the fire of the sexual act.[483] Thus, blood and its "purity" had an extended meaning for procreation. It was a symbol for patrilineal bonds, the essence of being a man. Also, national identity and legitimate status depended on blood and, eventually, on its transmission via sperm.[484] Sperm that conferred lineal descent and social status was derived in its purest and best form from English, aristocratic, and masculine blood. Menstrual blood, on the other hand, was a signifier for women's inability to control their fluids that was expelled from the body because it was literally "superfluous."[485] Even the validation of

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[477] Foucault 1985: 130-133; Breitenberg 1996: 132. For conception as a passing on of a male idea, see Laqueur 1990: 42, 142, 147.

[478] "To die" was a Renaissance slang expression for having an orgasm. Modern French has kept this notion in the expression "la petite mort" (Belsey 1992: 94, 100, Breitenberg 1996: 125).

[479] Shakespeare's procreation sonnets nevertheless urge the addressee to leave a "copy" of himself and to procreate.

[480] Foucault 1985: 133-134.

[481] Foucault 1985: 135.

[482] Breitenberg 1996: 38.

[483] Breitenberg 1996: 49; Laqueur 1990: 44-46; Paster 1993: 81.

[484] Breitenberg 1996: 49-50.

[485] An alternative Renaissance view on menstrual blood can be found in Adelman 1999: 34-35. Melancholics were said to have an inappropriate amount of lust that originated from an excess of blood (connected to the production of black bile in the liver). Due to the bigger amounts of blood, there was a bigger production of sperm. The melancholic therefore had a greater urge to dispel semen—an uncontrollability of his bodily fluids and thus a "female" element. To cure melancholy in men, bloodletting (and therefore discharging the cause of this "femininity") was often used as a remedy. Still, by eliminating the threatening and dangerous feminine from their bodies, men thus *resembled* menstruating women in principle. The restoration of proper masculinity thus involved the destruction of the male principle (see Breitenberg 1996: 51-52).

blood continued the gender dichotomy and does not leave any doubt as to whose blood—and status – was rated more highly.[486]

Legitimacy was important for securing the purity of the male bloodline that defined social status. To ensure it, female sexuality had to be curbed and controlled by enforcing marital chastity. Thus, women were both the guarantors and the passers on of male identity within society. If they failed to keep chaste, the consequences were harsher for women than for the men who had sired the illegitimate offspring—even for lower-class women. Sowernam described the effect of an illegitimate pregnancy on the father and the mother:

> [I]f a man abuse a Maid and get her with child, no matter is made of it but as a trick of youth, but it is made so heinous an offense in the maid that she is disparaged and utterly undone by it. So in all offenses, those which men commit are made light and as nothing, slighted over, but those which women do committ, those are made grievous and shameful.[487]

Legitimacy, gender, sexuality, inheritance, and status were closely linked. Property inheritance was an important feature that affected the landed classes' family structures as well as marriage arrangements. The lower strata of society were less affected as they had little to hand down to their heirs.[488] Calvin commented on the importance of legitimate heirs:

> What else will remain safe in human society if license be given to bring in by stealth the offspring of a stranger? To steal a name which may be given to spurious offspring? And to transfer to them property taken from lawful heirs?[489]

Calvin experienced the legitimate transfer of property from father to son as the hallmark of social order in society. This patriarchal element was an important part of masculine self-definition: if this order was broken or otherwise violated, one's name—and the honour connected to it—was stolen. While women had the important role of safeguarding the legitimacy of this exchange, it was a transfer completely between men.[490] Women were the critical means by which property, lineage, honour, and family names were transmitted from one man to another; if women failed in their duty, the concept of masculinity based on name and honour crumbled. For this reason, female sexuality had a fundamental part in the patriarchal social order.

Male-female contact was highly regulated by moral codes, marriage, and the family; male-male relations in contrast surpassed the private sphere that women were generally confined to as men interacted on many different social planes, such as the family, war, offices, friendships, or sex. The following chapter examines several forms of male-male social contact like father-son relationships, friendship, and male-male sexual contacts to evaluate the different dynamics that structured the interaction between men.

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[486] Breitenberg 1996: 50; Paster 1993: 80-84.
[487] Sowernam 1985: 231-232.
[488] Stone 1995: 23.
[489] Quoted from Thomas 1978: 262.
[490] Breitenberg 1996: 70.

2.2.2 Male-Male Relationships

Where power was concerned, men often interacted with other men in homosocial settings. Between men, contact was rarely as institutionalised as marriage; master-servant relationships and friendships, however, were shaped by underlying codes and myths that comprised different modes of interaction. Patriarchy and hierarchy also influenced how men communicated with each other and shaped male-male relations. The first and founding connection between males can be found in the hierarchical structure of father-son relationships.

2.2.2.1 Father-Son Relationships

Hierarchy structured male-male contacts inside and outside of the family. The household was a means of exacting social and moral control at a time before the emergence of a public police force and had to keep in check the most intractable people in society: young unmarried males.[491] The father filled the elevated position of a *pater familias* and provided order in a role sanctioned by state and church;[492] the family was literally a guarantee for social stability and the basis for taxation.[493] As the head of family, the father had great power, especially in upper class households. He could influence and plan his children's marriages, could provide dowries to his daughters, thereby defining their marriage prospects, and bequeath his estates to his eldest surviving son. All his children were literally at his mercy.[494] He could use and dispose of his estates as he chose and sometimes rewarded or punished the members of his family with estates or their withdrawal. As the influence of kin weakened, children were more and more subordinated to the rule of their father.[495]

The head of the household became the main source for moral inspiration and the religious life of the ones entrusted to his care; he filled the void left by the priests after the Reformation. Family piety shifted from the church to the household, and the patriarch had to look after the religious well-being of his household. The new emphasis on domestic virtues and the home was probably one of the most far-reaching impacts of the Reformation that endowed the *pater familias* with most of the authority formerly held by priests. The Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers strengthened the role of the patriarch as the spiritual and secular head of the family.[496] The rising importance of the household at the expense of old allegiances like kinship and clientage furthered the authority of the head of the household. Weakening power ties to social systems outside of the household strengthened patriarchy. Rather than the actual exertion of physical force, tradition, theology, and political theory legitimised the

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[491] However, in the late sixteenth century, any constable could get access to a house where he suspected a crime like fornication. If he was proved right, he could drag off the parties involved either to jail or to a Justice of the Peace. The offenders usually got whipped as a punishment (Stone 1995: 106).
[492] Stone 1995: 28; 110-111.
[493] Stone 1995: 106.
[494] Stone 1995: 72.
[495] Stone 1995: 112.
[496] Stone 1995: 104. The importance of the family as religious unit was very strong. Most homes had a family bible, and spouses confessed their sins to each other. About a hundred household catechisms were published between 1550 and 1600—to replace church catechisms (Stone 1995: 104, 111).

patriarchy.[497] The Tudor state stressed obedience heavily, and the head of the household was in an analogous position to both the monarch as well as God.[498]

In the sixteenth century, relations between parents and their children were quite remote compared to today's standards. Due to the high mortality rates of infants, many fathers treated them with a similar kind of love and affection that is nowadays shown to pets; young children were also used as an amusement for the grown-ups.[499] The longer a child survived, however, the closer and more affectionate the relationship between parents and child could become.[500] Even if children were wanted and not seen as an annoyance, parents in Tudor England did not find it wise to invest as much emotion and attachment to a creature that had such a low chance of survival. It was a custom at the time to name a child after a child who had recently died—an example of how replaceable children appeared to be.[501] As all members of the family were threatened by an early death, families were much more transient; no one stayed together for long, so emotional attachment was kept to a minimum.[502] It was a custom of the richer families to give their new-born babies away to commercial wet-nurses for a year or longer, even though they were notorious for their laxness in caring for the children.[503] Afterwards, tutors or governesses raised the children, not the parents themselves.[504] The children were left in the care of women up to the age of seven. These women were often caring and loving but they also believed in breaking the will of the child and in using corporeal punishment if the child did not behave according to their educators' standards.[505] Children were thought to lack reason, so they had to be educated like a dog or a horse.[506] Their own will was regarded as "natural pride" that had to be broken to guarantee their submissiveness. As a cruel result, flogging[507] was regarded as the only reliable means to discipline and control children; it became a standard punishment for children in the sixteenth century.[508]

The older a child became, the more interest parents showed in their offspring. Up to the age of seven, boys and girls were dressed in skirts. When a boy turned seven, he was "breeched"—the first time he was clad in doublets and breeches, which marked the beginning of gender distinction. Often, this event in a boy's life also meant that a male,

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[497] Stone 1995: 109.
[498] Stone 1995: 110.
[499] Stone 1995: 114.
[500] Stone 1995: 82-83.
[501] Stone 1995: 57, 66, 407. Mortality rates for infants and children were between thirty and fifty per cent (Stone 1995: 407).
[502] Stone 1995: 66.
[503] Stone 1995: 65, 83, 113.
[504] Stone 1995: 83-84.
[505] Stone 1995: 120-121, 80, 409, 410.
[506] Stone 1995: 126.
[507] Interestingly, modern studies show a different outcome of these childrearing methods. According to them, children "trained" by physical punishment are typically more self-reliant and independent; thus, psychological punishment produces more dependent and obedient children (Brod 1987: 54-55, Filene 1987: 114).
[508] Stone 1995: 116-119, 122. A notable exemption from the rule was Thomas More, who educated his children without the rod, but with love and understanding (Stone 1995: 119-120).

not his mother or any other female, henceforth educated him.[509] The breeching of boys led the way to the world of men and was a formal break with the "gender of childhood" which was mostly controlled by women. Often, this occasion was accompanied by a family celebration.[510] Seven was chosen as it was considered to be the age when a person could be made accountable for his or her sins and could understand right and wrong autonomously.[511] In upper class and middle-class families, many children were fostered out or left their home between seven and thirteen to go to boarding school.[512]

With the rise of Calvinist theology in the 1540s, children's education focussed more and more on keeping them away from sin. For this reason, fathers tried to ensure the submissiveness of their children.[513] Natural order was thought to depend highly on educating children towards discipline; a child's strict obedience would prevent the sins of pride and disobedience.[514] As part of their education, children were reminded of their own mortality in order to prepare the child in the event of an early—and probable—death. However, some more sensitive children were afraid of Hell and damnation; consequently, many children feared, or even loathed, their parents who made them cognisant of their own death.[515] Biblical sources like the book of Sirach also provided strict advice on childrearing.[516] Most parents expressed both love and punishment towards their children physically; there were excesses of cruelty but parents also caressed and tendered their children when they behaved well.[517]

Children were expected to obey their parents absolutely, especially when choosing a potential spouse. Often, the tension between filial obedience to their parents' wishes and the demand to enter a stable and loving relationship put children under pressure; to solve this problem, parents argued that love would develop after marriage, provided that the potential partners did not initially hate each other. This "solution," however, was called into question by the decline of the importance and power of kin and the rising new ideal of intimate married love.[518] The importance of a happy marriage in which marriage was all, and kin mattered less granted children a larger say in the matter. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, prospective spouses were bartered like cattle—after the Reformation, affection played a bigger part and both sons and daughters could veto a partner they did not like. That said, they had to exercise their veto carefully, as they were usually only allowed one.[519]

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[509] Smith 2000: 76; see also Elyot 1962: 18-19; Orgel 1996: 25, FN 24.
[510] Orgel 1996: 15.
[511] Smith 2000: 76.
[512] Stone 1995: 83. In lower-class families, children left the home at about ten to live and work in other—usually richer—households as apprentices, servants, or domestic labourers. There was even a distinct adolescent subculture in London. The adolescents in these working conditions were also exposed to bad treatment, exploitation, or even sexual harassments. The only way out was to sue the torturers (Stone 1995: 84, 120).
[513] Stone 1995: 109, 124.
[514] Stone 1995: 124-125.
[515] Stone 1995: 124, 120.
[516] Stone 1995: 126, 128.
[517] Stone 1995: 120.
[518] Stone 1995: 101-103.
[519] Stone 1995: 134.

The goal of Tudor education was to produce a child who would silently accept his parents' decision regarding his spouse and occupation. These questions had an economic impact on the family, and as children were monetarily dependent on their parents, they had no say on economic matters.[520] The family interest often tore children between the ideals of romantic love and the pragmatics of marriage policy; if the goal of Elizabethan education had been achieved, the potential filial conflict was solved by the fact that children shared their parents' patterns of reasoning.[521] Even when the children had grown up, the deferent attitude towards parents remained; sons had to stand bareheaded in their parents' presence, and adult daughters were supposed to kneel or stand when their mothers were present. To stress social superiority, fathers were commonly called "sir."[522] The stress on hierarchy in a family and the supremacy of the father's will in the lives of his children indicates a certain distance between sons and their fathers. There was a huge potential for deep conflict; educational practices and the looser attachment to children were further causes for emotional coldness. Since children were supposed to obey their parents unconditionally, any disobedience was a minor rebellion against the hierarchy within the family. In the family, dynastic and financial interests could and did trump the wishes of the individual children who had to submit to the bigger whole.

In contrast to family ties, friendships could be chosen. However, this does not mean that they were free of discourse or hierarchies. The following pages will expose how friendships between males were influenced and shaped by discursive means and myths that provided ideals for male friendships.

2.2.2.2 Friendship and Camaraderie

Friendships were a more private and less ritualised affair than marriage. It is therefore more difficult to study their structures in the Renaissance, as they were not institutionalised or otherwise officially normed.[523] In a friendship, men bonded together because of sympathy; unlike marriages, friendships lacked an institutional equivalent and had to be controlled from within to prevent crossing the line to male-male eroticism. In contrast to today, the demarcation lines between friendship and homoeroticism were not as clearly drawn in the sixteenth century; the denotation of the word "friend" used in the singular could mean a close and loved person but could also refer to someone who could be useful and trusted in business. In the latter case, an emotionally close relationship was not necessary. In the plural, however, the term "friends" often referred to advisors, helpers, associates, and backers that were emotionally closer. They could be blood relations like uncles or cousins but also employees of the household, or someone of whom a person could turn to for patronage.[524]

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[520] Stone 1995: 127-128.
[521] Stone 1995: 128-129.
[522] Stone 1995: 122-123, 126.
[523] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 242, 243.
[524] Stone 1995: 79.

The European Renaissance and the classical Greek period were the two historical epochs during which male friendship was most highly valued. The Renaissance esteemed friendship as the highest form of love, and in classical Greece, the most significant bonds were usually between men, not between husband and wife.[525] Aristotle contrasts friendship and romantic or erotic love in his *Nicomachean Ethic*: love is to see something beautiful, and to love it means to want to possess it; friendship, on the other hand, is self-sufficient and an end in itself. Love aims at satisfying a need or lack in the individual; it ends when the need ceases to exist. Friendship, on the other hand, was more enduring. Because of this moral assessment, male-male friendship was privileged above all other bonds.[526]

Renaissance friendship expressed itself verbally by the means of intimate and even sexual attraction, so the demarcation line between friendship and sodomy was a thin one.[527] Friends expressed their love in words and deeds; embraces and vows of affection and loyalty were exchanged between men,[528] so the conventional stereotype of male-male friendships used the image of romantic love. Both were based on the intimate relationship between two people characterised by "undying loyalty, devotion, and intense emotional gratification." This convention was established by the narratives of the twelfth century and has survived to modern days.[529] Homophobia was usually the regulatory factor that drew the ultimate barrier between male-male friendship and love.[530] This kind of rhetoric was also a feature of patronage and result of gratitude that does not necessarily indicate that these relationships involved sexual activity. Rather, it gives testimony of the fact that verbal homoeroticism was deeply ingrained in public discourse. Thus, this kind of language can be employed to prove or disprove homoerotic relationships.[531] Same-sex closeness between men is strikingly expressed in Michel de Montaigne's essay "On Friendship." There, he describes friendship as a soulmateship:

> In the amitie I speak of, they [the friends' minds] entermixe and confound themselves one in the other, with so universall a commixture, that they weare out, and can no more finde the seame that hath conjoined them together.[532]

Elizabethan England celebrated the relationship of friends as soul mates in terms of close intimacy both on stage and in literature, so close same-sex friendships were intertwined with the fabric of everyday Renaissance life. [533]

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[525] Sherrod 1987: 230; Hammond and Jablow 1987: 244-245.
[526] Smith 1992: 137.
[527] Bray 1994: 40-61; Orgel 1996: 36. Bray stresses the connection of sodomy and vice as well as the different quality of intimacy as the separation line between sodomy and friendship between men (Bray 1994: 41, 42-44, 47).
[528] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 248-249.
[529] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 242. The friendships following this myth are highly dramatised, the friends are usually heroes of high birth, young, brave, and beautiful. They share many adventures, dangers, and battles and are loyal to the death ("until death do them part"). During life, they are devoted and generous towards each other. Their friendship stands over all other ties—the fact that Achilles and Patroclus were cousins or Castor and Pollux twins is not important to the story. What counts is their friendship. Besides, relationships with women are overshadowed by the importance and strength of male-male friendship (see Hammond and Jablow 1987: 247, 249).
[530] Connell 1995: 133.
[531] Orgel 1996: 42; Goldberg 1992: 70-86.
[532] Montaigne 1967 vol I: 202; Sherrod 1987: 230.

Hammond and Jablow speak of a cultural stereotype that idealises "men's capacity for loyalty, devotion, and self-sacrifice."[534] From earliest history on, the public sphere was the domain of men, so most friendships also had a political relevance. In Greek city-states, the exclusively male citizens were supposed to work for the public good as warriors and politicians.[535] Warfare, the separation from the bonds of the family, and adversary surroundings therefore set the background for "true" male friendships in classical Greek narratives. Friendship became idealised, war glorified, and warriors portrayed as ideal men, a blueprint for later stories. This image excluded both the domestic sphere and women, so men's potential to commit to larger causes and their readiness to fight for them was further stressed. Originally designed for aristocrats, the upper-class tradition was eventually lost and the myth was varied.[536]

The epics of the Greeks and the Romans transferred this male ideal of friendship to generations to come. The epic male hero was a fighter and leader who had to be outstanding in battle, strong, courageous, and loyal—first of all to his leader and king, then second to his comrades, and then to his family or clan. A variation of the theme is the band of fearless men who follow a great hero.[537] The emotionally charged relationship between these men usually exceeds mere camaraderie but is rather an intensified form of loyalty between the group and the leader.[538] The extent of devotion between the two male friends in an adverse environment is usually dramatised but can be traced from the earliest epic poem known, the Gilgamesh story, through biblical narratives like David and Jonathan to the friendship of Achilles and Patroclus as told in the *Iliad*.[539] The moment of deepest devotion is usually when one friend laments the other friend's death like in Achilles' grief for Patroclus.[540] As a consequence, Western culture has traditionally defined male friendship in terms of comradeship and brotherhood – the kind of friend one would sacrifice one's life for.[541]

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[533] Sherrod 1987: 230-231; Shepherd claims that male bonding in Shakespeare was as sexual as marriage. He exemplifies his statement by an excerpt from *Coriolanus*, where Aufidius tells Coriolanus that he was as moved to see Coriolanus as when he had his wedding night with his wife (Shepherd 1988: 101; *Coriolanus*, 4.5.114-117). There are even more examples for male-male bonding that have a homoerotic ring to it (for example the "love death" scene of Suffolk and York in *Henry V*, 4.6.11-32). In the account of York's and Suffolk's death both are not only joined in their loyalty to their king and liege, but also in their death when their expressed affection for each other is at its peak. Friends being united in death is a pattern that harks back to medieval narratives of male-male friendship like the one of Amis and Amile (Hammond and Jablow 1987: 251).

[534] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 241.

[535] A private person who did not involve himself into public matters was an ιδιωτης, an idiot.

[536] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 241, 246, 252.

[537] Doyle 1983: 25. Examples are Jason and the Argonauts, or the friendship between Nissus and Euryalus that is replaced by their relationship with the other members of the Aenaedae. King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table as well as Robin Hood and his Merry Men are later variations of this myth (Hammond and Jablow 1987: 252).

[538] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 252. Henry V evokes this myth before the battle of Agincourt to motivate the outnumbered English against the French.

[539] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 245.

[540] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 248.

[541] Sherrod 1987: 214-215. Smith makes especially clear how thin the line between comradeship and homoeroticism was (Smith 1991: 31-77).

While friendship enjoyed the status of a bond above all other human ties, it conflicted with the newer Protestant concept of a cooperative marriage between man and woman who should form a "communion." These two important relationships vied for supremacy. The conflict between the loyalties of marriage and male-male friendship is often characterised as a passage from youth to manhood in the literature of the time.[542] Lacey Baldwin Smith states that the idea of friendship both "fascinated and repelled Tudor society."[543] Friendships therefore needed to be defined by articulate rules and boundaries to distinguish them from sexual relationships between men.[544] However, the guidelines for friendship between men were not readily defined in the Renaissance but followed rather contradictory ideals: on the one hand, a man should be stoically self-sufficient, on the other hand Christian values like mutuality and community should also be part of a friendship.[545] The balance of proximity and distance led to contradictions in close male relationships that both aimed at domination of the self as well as the desire for a perfect, non-emotional bond that connects men like one blood.[546] The narratives about male friendships not only defined the expectations of and attitudes between the friends but also their status and codes of behaviour.[547] The myth mingled the desire to free oneself from the obligations imposed by lineage and kinship, the longing for glory and fame, and the desire for emotional warmth that was not to be found in "official" male-male bonds, at least not in theatre and literature. These tales usually exaggerate male aggressiveness and highly value combat and often feature heroes who die young.[548]

While friendship was a highly esteemed good in the Renaissance, bonds between men who became too close were dangerous as soon as they became erotic. Sexual acts between males were a capital offense in Tudor England, so it was important to make the boundaries between friendship and a sexual union between two men clear. Structurally, the power system created tension by the moral elevation of male-male friendship and the legal prohibition of sodomy; even though the lines of separation appear to be shady, Cady argues that there is a clear distinction between "masculine love" and friendship in the Renaissance.[549] He claims that the term "masculine love" designated a distinct sexual orientation based on the exclusive attraction to other men that went beyond the terminology of the ambivalent sodomitical discourse.[550] The following chapter will elaborate on the discourse surrounding male-male love and its connection to both the theatre and social deviance.

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[542] Smith 2000: 88. A blurred distinction line and rivalry of loyalties is a faultline that has to watch out for in the later analysis. This might be a field for renegotiating male relationships with both men and women.
[543] Smith 1986: 45.
[544] Brod 1987: 5.
[545] Strier 1995: 34-35.
[546] Sherrod 1987: 214.
[547] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 254.
[548] Hammond and Jablow 1987: 257.
[549] Smith 1992: 137, Cady 1992: 20.
[550] Cady 1992: 12.

2.2.2.3 Male "Homosexuality"

In a society that criminalised homosexual contacts between men, the secluded area of private lust and masculine love had political force – and possibly even juridical consequences.[551] Even though Elizabethans were aware that some people preferred their own sex, "homosexual" *behaviour* did not necessarily lead to a self-identification with a "homosexual" *identity*.[552] The idea that the preference for one's own sex was a constituent of a distinct identity did not yet exist in the late 1500s.[553] Sexuality took "one of two forms of what was in effect a kind of bisexuality," as Cady argues.[554] The fluidity of desire is based on the Galenic body; and as the humoral body entailed the possibility for all forms of lust, the humoral spectrum also comprised same-sex desire. Authors like Bray and Weeks call this an "undivided sexuality" or a "flux of sexualities";[555] Randolph Trumbach thinks that the attraction of men towards men was rather "a more regularised and differentiated bisexuality, whose homosexual component was always age-asymmetrical."[556] Both views regard sexuality as a behavioural act that

[551]Sodomy was a canonical offence since 1290 (sodomites were supposed to be buried alive), but probably the sentence was never executed (Franceschina 1997: 19-20). In 1533 hanging was decreed as the punishment for sodomy (Kay 1998: 123). Its codification made it necessary to define the issue more closely. By the mid-seventeenth century sodomy legally required penetration and/or ejaculation if it were to be considered prosecutable. As the law considered women unable to penetrate others erotically, sodomy became a crime between men (Traub 2000: 433-434). For more on the legislation on sodomy in 1533, see Mager 1994: 142-143.

[552] Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1987: 87.

[553] Smith 1991: 10-12. For a thorough account of sodomy's influence on Renaissance literature, see Bredbeck 1991.

[554] Cady 1992: 10.

[555] Cady 1992: 10.

[556] Cady 1992: 10. This is a view that aligns itself with the Ganymede myth as a specific Renaissance image for male-male love (Smith 1991: 191-193, 195-197). The Ganymede myth is embedded in the Greek pederast concept of *erastes* and *eromenos*, a relationship between an elder and wiser man (εραστες) functioning as a kind of tutor and taking pleasure in a male youth (ερομενος). In ancient Greece, male homosexuality was institutionalised in a religious and educational context (Franceschina 1997: 1-3). "The Art of Ganymede" was a common slang term for homosexual love and was used as a circumlocution for *eromenos* (Cady 1992: 30), minion, and male-male couplings (Smith 1992: 141). Alluding to the Ganymede figure, certain codes for homosexuality developed like the cup (Ganymede became the cupbearer of the Gods), the word "catamite" (which derives from the Latin form of Ganymede, "Catamitus"), and the Age of Aquarius, which stands for social and sexual freedom; mythologically, Ganymede became Aquarius in the zodiac (Franceschina 1997: 1-3). Ganymede became the paradigm for different notions: a model for gender ambiguity, androgyny, and effeminacy; a symbol for master-servant and teacher-student relationships; a paradigm of homoplatonism as well as a symbol for misogyny. Spiritual same-sex love was usually positively associated with fidelity, honour, truth, and lifetime commitment (Franceschina 1997: 3; Smith 1991: 189-223). The open presentation of the love scene between Jupiter and Ganymede in the prologue of Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* is a striking example how the Ganymede myth was used in Tudor drama (see the discussion and implications of this scene in MacDonald 1999: 97-113). MacDonald explains the background of the myth as a depiction of "a specific and socially functional homoeroticism" that would introduce boys to a homosocial society that did not always separate the sexual and the social. A valuable golden cup was a common present by the *erastes* to the *eromenos*—thus merging the symbols of the myth and the historic (MacDonald 1999: 100). Marlowe's Ganymede is "both sexual subject and sexual object, pretty boy and sexual manipulator, penetrated and at least potentially penetrator"—a fact that disrupts the social order on the highest levels of divinity. Ganymede is both powerful and helpless—and thus transcends the usual "rules" for the asymmetrical relations between man and boy. Additionally, the fear of chaos and dissolving gender distinctions that are so often vented by anti-theatrical criticism, becomes a form here (MacDonald 1999: 103, 104, 106).

is not an expression of a fixed sexual orientation determining identity.[557] That the Renaissance used a different terminology for male-male sexual attraction does not mean that exclusive "homosexuality" did not yet exist; famous examples like Bacon prove this point.[558] Orgel's claim that sexual attraction between men seemed less threatening than lust for women is not quite true, however; male-male love was not only problematic and created deep anxiety, it was also illegal.[559]

Tudor England had a clear linguistic concept of exclusive sexual attraction between men, and the elaboration of homosexual symbols and the complexity of its connotations prove that male-male love was already perceived as something distinct.[560] Mere homoeroticism inspired by male friendship and the Platonic concept of androgyny was widespread in the Renaissance but was not classified as "masculine love." Rather, the discourse of sodomy comprised male-male sexual relationships in a concept that was a threat to the order and society. Since the sterile sexual coupling did not produce any progeny, it could not have a place within the order of being; since non-procreative sex between men and women had the same social effect as buggery between men, it was likewise frowned upon.[561] In practice, however, the general attitude was more than lenient towards "sodomists."[562] During Elizabeth's reign, only six sodomy trials were put in front of a court—and five of them resulted in acquittals. All of these cases treated the rapes of minors.[563]

Despite the clear distinction on the surface, it is difficult to define the grey area between homoeroticism and homosexuality. As the Tudor definition of sodomy comprised many socially deviant practices, it does not do as a distinctive feature. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick defined homosexuality as "those parts of the homosocial spectrum that seem most marked by genital sexuality," and thus draws the line at genital contact in contrast to mere homosocial contact found in all-male settings.[564] However, erotic feelings towards other men could blur the boundaries between homosexuality and homosociality; if feelings and erotic fantasies entered the picture, homosociality turned into homoeroticism. The OED defines "homoerotic" as "[p]ertaining to or characterised

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[557] Cady 1992: 10.

[558] Cady 1992: 14. John Aubrey identified Francis Bacon clearly as a boy lover: "He was a παιδεραστης. His Ganimeds and Favourites tooke Bribes; but his Lordship always gave Judgement *secundum aequum et bonum* [according to what was just and good]." The last reassurance that this sin did not hinder Bacon's ability of judgement is revealing and especially interesting in the light of the fact that Bacon was charged with bribery and corruption (Aubrey 1957: 11). Esler calls Bacon a "Tamburlaine of the mind"—maybe one reason why he got away with his sexual preferences (Esler 1966: 181).

[559] Orgel 1996: 49. Due to the potential social and legal threat male-male sexual activity entailed for a man, Orgel goes a bit far in calling male-male love "safer" than love for women. What *is* right, however, is that women and boys had a similar social status that was inferior to that of an adult man. As they both were socially subordinated to men, they were available for sexual intercourse. Beautiful boys were praised that they looked like women (see Sonnet 20 by Shakespeare, for instance), so boy actors cross-dressing as women further underline this hierarchical equation of women and boys (Orgel 1996: 51).

[560] Homosexuality has always existed in all cultures and all times (Treadwell 1987: 267) and is therefore a variant—not a deviance—of human sexual life.

[561] See Elizabethan world image in Suerbaum 2003: 475-498, 504-509 and also chapter 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 and subchapters as well as 2.4.

[562] Breitenberg 1996: fn. 3, 219.

[563] Smith 1991: 49; Orgel 1996: 58-59.

[564] Sedgwick 1985: 1-5; Brod 1987: 8.

by a tendency for erotic emotions to be centred on a person of the same sex" (A). If homoerotic attraction leads to any sexual actions between men, Sedgwick's definition of homosexuality takes over. Thus, the triad of homosociality, homoeroticism, and homosexuality forms a cascading set of different intensities of male-male sexual interaction.

The Renaissance mind did not yet think according to the binary lines of "heterosexuality" and "homosexuality"; unmarried bachelors with a taste for younger boys were an oddity but not given a label or category.[565] Some writers like Foucault and Weeks[566] think that the modern homosexual was an "invention" of the mid-nineteenth century, others like Sedgwick and McIntosh date it back to the beginning of the eighteenth century.[567] The writer Károly Mária Kertbeny first coined the distinction between "homosexual" and "heterosexual" in a letter in 1868;[568] the German psychiatrist Westphal first pathologised homosexuality in 1870[569] in a paper on a female patient.[570] Before that time, same-sex attraction was called "inversion." The theories on homosexuality developed subsequently by Havelock Ellis, Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Cesare Lombroso, Albert Moll, Sigmund Freud, and others brought homosexuality into the medical and psychological discourses related with sex. What was formerly "a detestable and abominable sin, amongst Christians not to be named"[571] became a psychological and medical condition in the nineteenth century.[572] Michel Foucault puts it pointedly:

> The nineteenth-century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology.[573]

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, medical, psychological, and legal discourses informed the perception of the "homosexual" as a specific individual type. Homosexual men saw themselves as distinct from heterosexuals and frequently thought they possessed "a woman's soul in a man's body."[574] Before these discursive changes took hold, same-sex attraction was merely a potential for men's lust – or a potential threat to the social order or even the cosmos.[575] However, men who loved men were not thought to have a different psychological and corporeal makeup than men who desired

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[565] Orgel 1996: 59.
[566] Carrigan, Connell, and Lee argue that Weeks did consider homosexuality to be socially organised and conceptualised in its modern meaning not until the late nineteenth century. So, the homosexual or invert is a product of nineteenth century discourse (Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1987: 87.
[567] Cady 1992: 10-11.
[568] Cady 1992: 33.
[569] Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1987: 87.
[570] Crowley 1987: 301.
[571] Traub 2000: 433.
[572] Crowley 1987: 301-302. The common cultural assumptions in the West go back to this inverted image of the homosexual. As opposites are believed to attract, men who desire men must consequently lack masculinity; hence the effeminised prejudices about homosexuals since the disease mongering of homosexuality in the nineteenth century (Connell 1995: 143).
[573] Foucault 1978: 43.
[574] Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1987: 87-88.
[575] Carrigan, Connell, Lee 1987: 87-88.

women.[576] Alan Bray explains that male-male sex was rather a "disorder in sexual relationships that, in principle at least, could break out anywhere," and Goldberg sees sodomy as a "temptation anyone might succumb to, rather than the marker of identity."[577]

Despite the essential sameness in desire, "homosexual" acts were more aggressively condemned than other illicit forms of sexual activity as they were furthest removed from the norm of marital procreative sex.[578] As passion and desire were caused by the undirected and ever changing bodily humours, sodomy as a legal charge had to be linked to other normative transgressions to make it punishable.[579] In this vein, Burton constructs "homosexuality" in terms of the Other and explicitly links sodomy to Catholicism: English "wenchers, gelded youths, debauchees, catamites, boy-things, pederasts, Sodomites (as it saith in Bale), Ganymedes, &c." are to be found in the company of priests.[580] Inordinate lust and passion threatened the well-balanced and rational state of normative masculinity as they were caused by excess of the bodily humours. The worst "sins" were therefore the ones furthest away from moderation, reason, and self-possession as well as the sexual practices that were contrary to procreation within marriage. So, the radical for the Renaissance distinction of a natural and unnatural passion is not the object of desire but rather the degree of the "tyranny" of love that has to be contained within the bounds of reason and self-control.[581] As all men were subject to the humoral system that comprised all possible lusts, "homosexual" acts between men were, so to speak, a consequence of a specific excess of humours that could happen to anyone who could not contain his rational control of his body.[582] But while male-female lust led at least potentially to procreation, male-male intercourse was by definition sterile. This sterility, as well as a man's weakened vital force through ejaculation, cut the sodomite off from posterity and his society and could only lead to death. By transgressing the boundaries of "proper" lust and sexual acts, the sodomite did not sin in essence but in degree.

To understand the social implications and the threat sex between men posed, the Renaissance discourse of sodomy has to be dissected; it accumulated the ideas of male-male sex and contextualised them into a bigger picture that was contrary to established social norms. As sodomy became prosecutable under civil law in 1533, the prohibitions thought and named male-male anal intercourse in detail so that the offence could be persecuted.[583] By the mid-seventeenth century sodomy required (forcible) penetration

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[576] Scholarship has produced brilliant works on this topic. See for example Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England*, and Goldberg, *Sodometries*.
[577] Goldberg 1992: 10; Bray 1982: 25.
[578] Breitenberg 1996: 59.
[579] Breitenberg 1996: 59. Remember the imbalances and excesses in humoral pathology—a distorted body balance could result in excessive and "forbidden" desire and vice versa. This could happen to anyone as the fluidity of porous bodies did not allow fixed identities (see chapter 2.1.3 and its subchapters).
[580] Quoted from Breitenberg 1996: 61-62.
[581] Breitenberg 1996: 62, 58.
[582] Breitenberg 1996: 58.
[583] Franceschina 1997: 19-20, Kay 1998: 123.

and/or ejaculation if it were to be considered prosecutable. Consequently, sodomy became a crime only between men. Female-female penetration or ejaculation was *not* thinkable, so lesbianism as a sexual deviance was virtually erased from discourse.[584] Often, sodomitical contacts happened in a relation of an older man with an underage boy. Feelings were not relevant for the offense—what counted was forcible penetration between two men.[585]

Besides, the bible explicitly prohibited male-male anal intercourse: "The má also that lieth with the male, as one lieth with a woman, they haue bothe committed abominacion: they shal dye the death, their blood shal be vpon them" (Leviticus 20:13).[586] Additionally, sterile homosexuality was a violation of God's commandment to increase and multiply in Genesis 8:15-17 and thus a further offense against the God-given order.[587] "Sodomy"[588] originally had multiple meanings, mostly anything not socially tolerable in Protestant England such as Catholicism,[589] bestiality,[590] sorcery,[591] or

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[584] Traub 2000: 433-434; Smith 2000: 125; Smith 1991: 41-53. Traub contests this statement efficiently in the introductory chapter of her book *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England*. Under the title "Practicing Impossibilities," she challenges the much-stressed claim that lesbianism did not have a discourse and a voice of its own in early modern England. She writes against the conception that lesbianism was silent, invisible, and unthinkable in the Renaissance—contrary to male-male sexuality (Traub 2002: 3). She concedes, however, that phallocentrism occludes lesbianism and thus renders it rather invisible (Traub 2002: 34). So she puts the "clitoral body" and the "chaste friend" in to the centre of her approach as points of access to the discursive field of lesbianism in early modern England (Traub 2002: 34). In the following chapters, she thoroughly provides evidence for representations of female-female love in Renaissance England. However, male-male sexual contacts were legally forbidden and were forming a more established and "visible" discourse due to the re-emergence of antique Greek and Roman concepts of *philia* and idealised vision of friendship between men. As lesbianism is not the issue of this work, further research in this respect is deeply encouraged.

[585] Smith 2000: 125; Smith 1991: 46-53. An issue might also be the forcible penetration of another—if male-male sex happened on a mutual agreement between two adults, it is hard to imagine any one of the two would try to sue the other legally. However, if the liaison threatened order in any way, others might have an interest to bring the case to court. The legal definition of sodomy was very narrow. Forcible penetration was effectually rape, and if the case should be persecuted, there had to be evidence of both anal penetration as well as an ejaculation. The courts required a witness to give testimony, and there were strict rules about who could serve as a witness. Consensual male-male sex and male-male sex that did not include penetration were not legally prosecutable as sodomy, but still had to be subsumed under the term as a metaphysical sin. In some cases, even consensual male-male sex had legal consequences, as the Castlehaven case in the 1630s shows (Orgel 1996: 58-59).

[586] Havrelock explains this law as wanting to prevent the mixture of different body fluids, the same principle applying to menstruating women in Judaism. Semen, a fluid containing life, should not be mixed with faeces, which represents decay and death. However, she also points to the inhibition to blur gender categories—a male body should not be treated as a female one; a male penetrating another male therefore clearly transgresses a border (Havrelock 2008: 692).

[587] Doyle 1983: 240.

[588] Sodomy was a canonical offence since 1290 (sodomites were supposed to be buried alive), but the sentence was likely never executed (Franceschina 1997: 19-20). In 1533 hanging was decreed as the punishment for sodomy (Kay 1998: 123). Its codification made it necessary to define the issue more closely. By the mid-seventeenth century sodomy required (forcible) penetration and/or ejaculation if it were to be considered prosecutable. As the law considered women unable to penetrate others erotically, sodomy became a crime between men (Traub 2000: 433-434; Smith 2000: 125; Smith 1991: 41-53).

[589] Sodomy was often associated with Catholicism, Islam, foreigners, and barbarianism (Orgel 1996: 39; Bray 1982: 20, 75).

[590] The German term "Sodomie" means "bestiality" in English and should not be confused with "sodomy."

[591] Thompson and Whelehan 2001: 127-128.

treason.[592] The different meanings of the term sodomy show that it comprised anything disturbing the God-given social order: sorcery as well as popery were acts against the true Protestant faith while bestiality, buggery, and any form of non-procreative sex undermined the procreative element to preserve the chain of being.[593] Thus, sodomy not only comprised male-male sexual contacts in general, but any "unnatural" desires like masturbation, adultery, and pederasty; consequently, sodomitical discourse encompassed sexual deviations and forms of social subversion.[594] Power issues also played a part: dynasties and aristocratic male lineages depended on legitimate progeny as much as the hierarchical and patriarchal order depended on the subordination of the female.[595] If sexual relations followed hierarchical patterns like master-servant power relations in a wider sense, they usually did not arouse much suspicion unless they involved illegitimate children or social scandals. Only when sodomy—meaning male-male sex—disrupted the way in which society was organised, it was sued legally.[596]

Connell sees anal penetration as "a key symbol of Western male homosexuality," a signifier of anti-hegemonic masculinity.[597] As the ultimate denominator of hierarchy within heteronormative discourse, male-male penetration subverted and perverted the power structure; ejaculation then made sodomitical activity—and thus the disturbance of hierarchical order—quantifiable and visible, nameable, and condemnable.[598] Foucault exposes the paradox in Coke's statement that buggery is "a detestable and abominable sin, amongst Christians not to be named"; in this case, male-male sex is named *not to be named*. By forbidding and excluding it from society, it could form a counter-discourse on its own from where it could exert its subversive power. Marlowe's famous quip that "all they that love not tobacco and boys [are] fools" is embedded in this very discourse of anti-social behaviour like sedition, demonism, and atheism.[599] Labels like "sodomite" and "atheist" were applied to any person outside the norm of socially and sexually accepted behaviour. Any practices other than "proper" marital sex, vaginal penetration, and procreation were therefore considered sodomitical.[600]

Male-male relationships and desire followed a different discursive construction than male-female sexuality, even though it was similar to the "heterosexual" model in regard

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[592] Breitenberg 1996: 59; Bray 1982: 19-24; Goldberg 1992: 18-20; Orgel 1996: 40. For a connection between the theatre and sodomy, see Goldberg 1992: 105-175.
[593] See Elizabethan world image in Suerbaum 2003: 475-498, 504-509.
[594] Franceschina 1997: 19-20; Breitenberg 1996: 59; Bray 1982: 19-24.
[595] De Grazia 2000: 102.
[596] Franceschina 1997: 20-21; MacDonald 1999: 100. MacDonald interprets Jupiter's transformation into an eagle as the symbol for royal might and power as a means to keep up his dignity as king of the gods which he otherwise would have lost by passionately surrendering to the charms of a beautiful boy. Thus, the two soar up to the heights of Olympus—possibly a hint to sexual passion. She also draws the connection between the words "rape" and the Latin "raptus" for "abduction" (MacDonald 1999: 101, 102). MacDonald further states that Renaissance literature saw grammatical irregularities as a manifestation of sodomy (MacDonald 1999: 102).
[597] Connell 1995: 62.
[598] Traub 2002: 15. She states that sexuality within a patriarchal system "assumes the phallus to be the primary signifier of sexuality, and penetration the only form of eroticism that counts" (Traub 2002: 15). The ban on all non-procreative sexual practices in early modern England underlines this statement.
[599] Traub 2000: 433; Baines 2003: xxxv; Goldberg 1999: 55.
[600] Kay 1998: 120; Traub 2000: 432.

to asymmetries of power. In male-female relationships, the man was the author of love as male desire was paired with power and agency. Sodomitical relationships subverted this arrangement because a man did not only desire but was desired himself and thus became a love object. This disrupted the belief that men represented a *quality* whereas women could be reduced to their *physicality*.[601] Thus, male-male sexual relationships made the leading male-female, rational-physical duality obsolete. The Greek concept of male-male love—rediscovered by humanism—explains some of the delicate differences that distinguished male-male love from male-female sex; they are most explicitly expressed in Phaedrus‘s speech in Plato‘s *Symposion*.[602] This dialogue assumes that love as a bond between individuals is mainly love between men.[603] The most celebrated kind of this love was the bond between Achilles and Patroclus;[604] early civilisation deemed this male-male love as a value within a warrior society that could instil military morale to the men and inspire noble self-sacrifice for the other.

The highly stylised love between older lover (*erástes*) and younger beloved (*erómenos*) was primarily a form of male bonding that was a socially institutionalised initiation into the male world of valour, power, and privilege.[605] The Greek concept of *pederasteia* was not as unproblematic in ancient Greece as it might seem at first glance. As two men—or rather an older man and an adolescent—were involved, the polarity and hierarchy of the act of penetration characterised by activity and passivity, of acting and letting it happen, governor and governed, the victor and the defeated, became a problem because of the status between the two males. The male ideal was to be active, dominant, superior, and penetrating – the equivalent to the free man as a political construct.[606] If a man voluntarily subjected himself to passive penetration, he discarded his superior social role. The Greeks found this detestable, so they erected delicate norms around the relationship between *erástes* and *erómenos*.[607] The *erómenos*, the passive boy or adolescent, was not expected to feel any pleasure or lust and was not allowed to feel affection or other positive sentiments for his lover during intercourse. Rather, he was expected to “attend“ the satisfaction of his lover’s desire like a spectator so that he

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[601] Shepherd 1999: 77.

[602] Even though Plato interpreted the *Iliad* as a reflection of the homoeroticism of his own time, he thought of ideal friendship as a spiritual connection between men (Hammond and Jablow 1987: 249).

[603] Crompton1987: 326. The myth of male heroism and camaraderie also resonates here. In Greek thinking, *eros* came from the loving partner whereas the loved one could not be an active subject in the relationship. His or her involvement in the relation was called *anteros*, loving again—but this was not the exact equivalent of *eros*. Especially the boy should only answer to his older lover‘s example, benevolence, care, and his benefactions. If the love wore out or if time cooled down the relationship, both of the males could meet again as equal partners in the concept of *phília*, friendship (Foucault 1985: 239-240). However, men and women could also be joined in *eros* and *anteros*. Marriage is no contradiction to *eros*, but other powers are working here. That is why the relationship between a boy and a man has to be reflected differently—an “erotics” has to be created to order and channel the powers at work here (Foucault 1985: 201-203).

[604] Crompton 1987: 326.

[605] Crompton 1987: 327, 328.

[606] Foucault 1985: 215. This problem shows that the wish for or the enjoyment of sexual passivity is incompatible with hegemonic masculinity (see also Connell 1995: 132).

[607] The deterrent example of Timarchos, who surrendered voluntarily and because of lust to the role of the penetrated and thus subjected one illustrates this issue clearly (Foucault 1985: 215-219).

would not give in to lustful submission and thus a socially inferior role.[608] This should turn the young man into a "master of lust"; as he was supposed to have power over himself and others later in his life, becoming an object of lust for another male was problematic.[609] If he did not feel arousal or any lust during intercourse, the young man learned to bridle his passions and mastered himself; thus, his status as a free man could not be questioned even though he submitted to another man's desire. Some Greeks condemned sex between men to be against nature (*para phýsin*) because they felt that the penetrated partner was necessarily emasculated.[610] To overcome this problem, they demanded that love should be steered away from the body towards the soul, which was considered the pure form of love.[611] This spiritual but asexual same-sex love was positively associated with fidelity, honour, truth, and lifetime commitment,[612] so the problem of domination and subjection during male-male intercourse was solved by philosophising away sexual desire.

Social contacts of males with both men and women were never completely free of social conventions like hierarchy and social status. Discourse and thus social power as in the form of patriarchy was a double-edged sword for men, as they enabled and constricted men at the same time. In sexual relationships with women, misogyny and the vilification of desire for women inhibited men from fully enjoying sex with women, creating a void longing for completeness and lasting satisfaction. Furthermore, society expected male-female sex to be confined to legal wedlock. Friendships with men were also guided by underlying myths and narratives, but could provide the friends with deep and fulfilling relationships. However, friendship had to steer clear of homoeroticism and sex between men; forbidden by law, male-male sex was dangerous and socially shunned as part of sodomitical discourse that comprised every activity and belief that was detrimental to social orthodoxy. However, Renaissance culture features many homoerotic undertones that are hard to deny—and even harder to interpret. To understand how male gender and power were intertwined in the bigger social structures of the state and institutions like the theatre, the following chapters will analyse the power and ideology that had such a firm grip on the society men moved in.

2.3 Gender and Power in the Renaissance

Power and authority penetrated all of the relations between people within society.[613] The next few chapters focus on how power, and especially male power, exerted its influence on late Tudor society, which was ruled by a female monarch. Now, the focus will shift from an interpersonal to a suprapersonal perspective of the different channels that influenced the public discourse of power, which was structured by male authority and religious ideology.

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[608] Foucault 1985: 223-225.
[609] Foucault 1985: 225.
[610] Foucault 1985: 222.
[611] Foucault 1985: 230-234.
[612] Franceschina 1997: 3.
[613] On the causes of the aspiration to power at court see Esler 1966: 146-164.

2.3.1 Tudor Ideology

The emerging modern nation state[614] had to struggle to implement its power; while the old feudal structures were already declining, the rebellion of the northern Earls of 1569 showed that the feudal lords still posed a threat to the central power of the monarch.[615] After the rebellion was suppressed, the influence of the old aristocratic houses was curtailed and the national militia was reorganised under centralised Deputy Lieutenants in the shires. Thus, the monopoly on weapons and men shifted from the aristocracy to the national state.[616] While the aristocracy's political influence was still present, its military power had inevitably gravitated towards the crown and the gentry.[617] Through its subservience, the old aristocracy became more pliant to the law.[618] Elizabeth did not wish to completely abolish aristocratic power and influence but wanted to counterbalance it with her authority.[619] The state authority centralised justice, the military, welfare for the poor,[620] punishments, and property regulation more and more during the sixteenth century. To implement these innovations, the state used massive propaganda to promote and ensure loyalty to the centralised power of the monarch as a

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[614] "Nationhood" shaped itself due to Henry VIII's break with the Catholic Church and the following anti-papist propaganda as well as due to the war with Spain. National identity then was based on English culture and law (Guy 1988: 454). For more on the war with Spain, see Cruickshank 1966: 251-279; MacCaffrey 1992.

[615] The rising earls argued that they rebelled because they feared to be "trodden vnder foot by new upstarts," (McCoy 1989: 35).

[616] The new militia was an expensive enterprise for the shires that had to pay for the mustermasters, the arms, repairs of fortifications, and getting the mustered and equipped men to the ports of embarkation. The county of Kent alone paid over 10,000 pounds for its militia between 1585 and 1603. Some money could be covered by the exchequer, but the counties had to pay about 75 per cent of the costs. Due to the Armada scare, the coastal counties had to provide the navy with merchant ships, so the economy suffered due to these measures as well (Guy 1988: 385; Cruickshank 1966: 17-40, 91-142; Williams 1984: 129-136; Williams 1979: 55-80; Clark 1977: 221-226; Smith 1979: 93-110; MacCaffrey 1992).

[617] The nobility, however, did very probably not reduce its private armories. That state officials enforced statutes that called for the public supply of arms and horses, is not debated (Cahill 2008: 14).

[618] Loades 1999: 235, 249-252. Aristocratic violence mainly changed its appearance. Lords did not keep their own bands of armed men to scare their opponents any more, but the introduction of the lethal rapier and the codes of the duel in the 1570s "privatised" conflicts and led to a fight between two men. A surprise attack with armed men gave way to a "civilised" and "gentlemanly" challenge to a duel that only put the two combatants at risk. Thus, upper class violence was bridled and the monopoly of power shifted towards the central government. Quarrels between aristocrats or between the aristocracy and the crown were now mainly an affair of the courts and Star Chamber (Loades 1999: 252-253). The "law of nature," as Essex called the rules of aristocratic honour, had a basis in continental law—but English common law did not recognise it (Guy 1988: 443-444). Essex even went so far as to directly challenge his duty of obedience towards his monarch by stating: "What, cannot princes err? Cannot subjects receive wrong? Is an earthly power infinite?" (Guy 1988: 446). That Essex's belief in the "natural" role of the aristocracy as political leaders was a motivation for his rebellion is doubtful, however (Guy 1988: 449). It seems plausible that he initiated action against the queen as he was financially desolate and frustrated. On violence, riots and class in the 1590s, see also Guy 1988: 404-407.

[619] Loades 1999: 252.

[620] The effect of Elizabethan poor laws were thwarted by the serious economic problems England faced during the 1590s. The government, however, issued orders for official grain searches and forced sales of surplus grain to the needy in 1594 and 1595. Also, measures for the people affected by plague were implemented by the crown in 1587, 1592 and 1593 (Guy 1988: 403).

subject's highest duty, which was worth even more than life itself and overrode all other fealties.[621]

Ideology was a means to establish these innovations socially by providing a code system as a base for society; it was the underlying principle that showed in cultural codes, norms, and guiding ideas.[622] These basic ideas provided the direction for action, formed normative rules, and established the ruling discourse within society. Influencing behaviour and thinking patterns, ideology occluded unwanted features in society, therefore Frederic Jameson deducts that there must be an existence of a "political unconscious," a suppressed conscience, the "other side" of established social and political order.[623] This deviance is an integral part of the ruling system; as the hegemonic culture was defined by the "not-deviant," it was dependent on the subversive elements it excluded because it had to define itself against these "other" forces.

In early modern England, the ideological elite of society controlled and monopolised the thoughts and the interpretation of the world, thus establishing hegemonic discourse. This hegemonic discourse is what Althusser and Jameson defined as "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence"—ideology as an imaginary force materialised into real-life relations that also reified into the shaping and construction of subjects.[624] The OED's more open definition of ideology as "[a] systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics or society, or to the conduct of a class or group, and regarded as justifying actions, especially one that is held implicitly or adopted as a whole and maintained regardless of the course of events" (*OED*, 4.), points out different parts of ideology. Ideology structures behaviour as well as political and social ideas that relate to a group or class of people; as an underlying assumption of values, ideology justifies actions. Society (or the ruling classes who can influence ideological discourse) maintains this set of beliefs on how to evaluate reality. Thus, ideology has the potential to occlude or explain away unwished for or deviant occurrences. Ideology, in Judith Butler's words, is "a linking together of political signifiers such that their unity effects the appearance of necessity"—a means that constantly has to be stabilised by reiterations as it is inherently instable.[625] Ideology thus manifests itself as material practice in everyday life and spreads through institutions like the educational system, family, law, religion, journalism, and culture.

The Elizabethans enforced their unifying state ideology by the means of espionage and censorship;[626] the theatre as cultural institution held a very ambiguous position

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[621] Stone 1995: 99-100, 424. Old religious loyalties that had been centred on the community, parish or confraternity, were now directed towards the nation state (Stone 1995: 104).
[622] See Zimmerman 1992: 3.
[623] Zimmerman 1992: 3.
[624] Quoted from Zimmerman 1992: 4.
[625] Butler 1993: 192.
[626] For more on literacy, learning, censorship, and the printing policy under Elizabeth, see Guy 1988: 415-423. Janet Clare, however, claims that censorship set a special set of rules that were rarely overstepped (Clare 2001: 21). During the 1590s, however, the rules regarding political parallels tightened—Clare explicitly names *Richard II*, *2 Henry VI*, and *Henry V* (Clare 2001: 22-25; see also Hadfield 2001 for a further and more complex treatment of the issue). She claims that Marlowe's *Edward II* did not suffer such an attention from the censor was due to the fact that the brutality of the play is contained in legal

within the ideological frame and was closely observed. While the theatre had to please "official" taste and performed at court, it also had to take market forces and preferences of its public audience into account. As a result, the theatre not only transmitted hegemonic discourse but also constructed ideology in a very complex manner; writers exposed the inherent instability of public discourse by using topics that were sensitive in regard to state ideology even though they seemed to contain all subversion.[627] The power exerted through official certain channels depended on its acceptance, so ideology had to secure its legitimacy.[628] The ruling classes that could profit from ideological discourse and power upheld the ideological concept; by trying to maintain social barriers, they separated themselves from the rest of English society. To keep their say in hegemonic discourse, it was in their interest to control class boundaries and implement measures to protect their social standing that separated them from the lower or economically aspiring classes.

As ideology was an expression of the dominant and hegemonic culture, it became a part of the cultural memory of England at the time by being communicated again and again. Documents, holidays, and other cultural means like tournaments at court materialised ideology by staging the ideals of chivalry and martial, aristocratic masculinity. This is how the Tudor myth became a part of the national "knowledge."[629] Richard Moryson advised Henry VIII on the impact of visual spectacles on the commoners that "[i]nto the common people things sooner enter by the eyes, than by the ears; remembering more better that they see than that they hear."[630] So, pageants and ceremonial pomp had their place in the relations between court and the public.[631] Propaganda represented reality and events according to the ruling state ideology and thus became nearly undistinguishable from actuality. Further, language as the main transmitter of propaganda became a representation of royal authority.[632]

Ideology engaged with conflict and contradiction within society in order to stamp them out; however, this very engagement resulted in ideology incorporating some of the ideas it wished to suppress—to silence dissidence, it had to be named first to be rebutted. This paradox is also evident in literature and the theatre; ideological writing was inconsistent and undetermined because divergences that challenged the order had to

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succession. However, her claim that the sodomitic element of the play—especially Edward's murder—lets the audience "recoil[...] from the sight in disgust" is problematic (Clare 2001: 26). The quarto editions of *Edward II* do not give any stage directions of how the red-hot spit is used in the murder scene, so many newer editions simply fill in the gap with a sodomitical, anal rape. Clare's claim is therefore not grounded in the text of the play itself but influenced by modern readings.

[627] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 113-114.

[628] Force and torture, however, were also means employed to enforce this social acceptance.

[629] On tournaments, court and public entertainments, see Guy 1988: 423-432; on chivalry as a form of and cause for aspiration for honour, see Esler 1966: 105-112, 112-124.

[630] Quoted from Guy 1988: 425.

[631] Schruff 1999: 249.

[632] Sinfield explains that by the employment of royal language, poets created a circle of power coming from and returning to the monarch. The poets used power against power by engaging the most radical potential in language, its own multivalent, self-contradictory nature. This does not turn the king's poets into subversives or revolutionaries; on the contrary, they were all royalists and followed the monarch's prescriptions, pursuing his sustaining contradictions (Sinfield 1992: 81).

be included but at the same time this inclusion of conflict questioned the unity of ideology.[633] This mechanism exposes the construction of ideology: it seems to create unity and coherence but has to occlude the problems and try to incorporate the dissident voices at the same time. That is clearly not possible without some tension and inconsistencies.

The *episteme* of the late sixteenth century was later conceptualised as "Elizabethan world picture"; it was a means of propaganda that should not be overestimated. While it structured the frame of thinking, it constituted no absolutely restrictive order even though some underlying principles could become law.[634] It was no prescription by the state but a conglomerate of ideas, beliefs, and social norms. The most basic principle was the concept of order and hierarchy; from the most insignificant mineral to the mightiest archangel, the elementary as well as the cosmic world were hierarchically structured. Because everything and everyone had their own place within a big God-given plan, the individual could not change or leave his place; he could only improve it by fulfilling his duty to the best of his abilities. Since the Fall of Man he had been able to distort the divine spark in his soul by doing evil or willingly leaving his place in the order. A decline in moral standards was considered a sign of decay that finally led to doom and the end of the world.[635] Higden describes at the beginning of the second book of his *Polychromicon* how degree affects the order of things:

> In the universal order of things the top of an inferior class touches the bottom of a superior: as for instance oysters, which, occupying as it were the lowest position in the class of animals, scarcely rise above the life of plants, because they cling to the earth without motion and possess the sense of touch alone. The upper surface of the earth is in contact with the lower surface of water; the highest part of the waters touches the lowest part of the air, and so by a ladder of ascent to the outermost sphere of the universe. So also the noblest entity in the category of bodies, the human body, when its humours are evenly balanced, touches the fringe of the next class above it, namely the human soul, which occupies the lowest rank in the spiritual order. For this reason the human soul is called the horizon or meeting-ground of corporeal and incorporeal; for in it begins the ascent from the lowest to the highest spiritual power. At times even, when it has been cleansed of earthly passions, it attains to the state of incorporeal beings.[636]

Correspondences and analogies ordered Elizabethan thinking and had a very concrete impact on the organisation of knowledge.[637] Comparisons ordered European thinking up to the end of the sixteenth century and helped interpret texts, organised the meaning of symbols, and made the understanding of things palpable. All things were mirrored in each other: earth reflected heaven, and on earth this order continued itself in the different degrees of hierarchy.[638] The different planes of creation corresponded with each other, descending from "God and the angels, the macrocosm or physical universe,

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[633] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 116-117.
[634] Greenblatt's claim that the orthodox power structure of Elizabethan England contained eventually all subversion shall be challenged here. Orders form a certain structure of compulsion, but the human mind cannot be absolutely contained within it. It is framed and shaped by it, but the mind is eventually free and able to even transcend the borders of unthinkability.
[635] For a detailed description of the Elizabethan world picture see Suerbaum 2003: 475-498, 504-509.
[636] Quoted from Tillyard 1944: 12-13.
[637] See also chapter 2.4.
[638] See Foucault 1970: 17-30.

the body politic or state, and the microcosm or man."[639] The order on earth mirrored the order in heaven, each location having equivalents in another sphere or "kingdom." For example, the king in his state on earth was analogous to the highest king of kings in heaven; their equivalents were the sun[640] among the planets, fire among the elements, the eagle among the birds, the lion in the animal kingdom, the dolphin among the fish,[641] oak in the kingdom of plants, gold in the mineral kingdom and so on.[642] As everything was an image of the highest heavenly order, disorder in heaven caused chaos on all levels of the earth and vice versa.[643]

Man was himself a part of creation but at the same time a microcosm that contained the whole world outside within himself. The human body consisted of the four elements and had a rational, vegetative and sensitive soul. Thus he incorporated all the qualities of plants and animals but surpassed them by his additional rationality.[644] The human constitution—humoral pathology—corresponded to the constitution of the earth: vital heat was likened to "subterranean fire,"; veins were rivers, breath the wind, and passions storms or earthquakes.[645] Just like man mirrored the world around him, the Elizabethan state was believed to be an image of "divine" order. The mystification of the status quo was a means to stabilise the monarchy and the state as it legitimised state politics,[646] and Protestantism as an "activist religion" supported centralised power in England.[647] The result was a neo-medieval secular mythology with archaisms, rituals, and symbols that aimed to suggest inner stability and order within a rapidly changing world.[648] The Gloriana cult around the queen was a somewhat mystic measure to promote Elizabeth's popularity that furthered her identification with the nation and even evoked a popular veneration that was similar to Saint Mary's in Catholic times.[649]

The courtly conventions centred on the monarch could barely hide the never-ending struggles between the monarch and the nobility. Ideology does not *show* the prevalent

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[639] Tillyard 1944: 14. It is impossible to try and trace the sources for this doctrine of order. The book of Genesis is one as well as Plato's works (Tillyard 1944: 18). Summarising contemporary texts give an outline of the doctrine, however, but single sources are hard to find.

[640] One of the most recurrent emblems that represents kingship recurrently in Renaissance texts is the sun. It is the most important of the planets, and therefore an analogy to the most important person within a state—the king (see for example Tillyard 1944: 234).

[641] That the dolphin is a mammal was not relevant for the analogy.

[642] Tillyard 1944: 15.

[643] See also Leisi 1997: 27. Storms and heavenly disorders like meteors or other irregularities were connected to disorder within the state (Tillyard 1944: 16) – so disorder was likened to heavenly excess, passions on a higher level.

[644] Thus, Hamlet's claim that man is "the paragon of animals" (*Hamlet*, 2.2.297) can be contextualised in a cosmological sense.

[645] Tillyard 1944: 16.

[646] Sinfield and Dollimore see ideology as a legitimisation of "inequality and exploitation by representing the social order that perpetuates these things as immutable and unalterable—as decreed by God or simply natural. Since the Elizabethan period, the ideological appeal to God has tended to give way to the equally powerful appeal to the natural. But in the earlier period, both were crucial: the laws of degree and order inferred from nature were further construed as having been put there by God," (Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 114).

[647] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 114.

[648] Schruff 1999: 13.

[649] Loades 1999: 244; Guy 1988: 433; Yates 1975: 29-87, 112-120; Strong 1977: 146-151 on the Gloriana cult, and *passim*. On criticism against the cult surrounding the queen's person, see Strong 1977: 125-126.

power structures but *conceals* them; consequently, the crown had to be sensitive to public feeling to prevent revolt and social upheaval.[650] The system of patronage helped contain opposition to the monarch at court, as it kept the courtiers busy in a competition for their share of authority wrung from the monarch. However, the crown depended more and more on the goodwill of its servants and on their acceptance of royal policy, because their allegiance could never be taken for granted—and a monarch without courtiers is a static representative of ideological (in-)significance.[651] The dependency of the crown on the courtiers and subjects notwithstanding, England could never attempt to build up an absolutist monarchy because of the social and financial situation it experienced during the Renaissance. The transition from a feudal to a capitalist state could not provide a basis for the emergence of a fully absolutist state. Before absolutism could really establish itself in England, it was cut off by a bourgeois revolution.[652] England never was an absolutist state; although the kingdom became more and more centralised, the monarch lacked an absolutist position. In the late Middle Ages, however, England was the most unified monarchy in Europe; one single urban centre with the means for relatively speedy communication and feudal structures without seigniorial jurisdiction added to the centralisation of power around the king (or queen) in London. At that time, the system of royal patronage developed. The king was dependent on the trust he could put in his subjects, so that trust in turn was rewarded. Henry VII expressed this system of mutual loyalty: "Study to serve me, and I will study to enrich you."[653] Thus, the limitation of the monarch's power by the noblemen was the price he had to pay for their support.[654]

The change of the feudal system made nobility and gentry redefine their status by their standing in public service, their importance for society. Classes, roles, and interests overlapped and even clashed as the Elizabethan state apparatus recruited gifted lower-class men as bureaucrats whose status exceeded the aristocracy's. The Elizabethan courtier Sir Philip Sidney perceived this as unsatisfactory; having risen above their class of origin, bureaucrats found themselves at odds with the aristocrats, a fact that made them very sensitive to political vibrations and developments.[655] As these new developments enabled social mobility, a static concept like the Elizabethan world view does not do justice to the new power dynamics. Rather, the Elizabethan state ideology tried to smooth over anxieties caused by a world in transition and provided an illusion of stability.[656] The often-stated social coherence is likewise a deception; Greenblatt

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[650] A literary example of courtly critique on kingly power is Sir Philip Sidney's book *Arcadia.* It was open defiance and requested royal power to be limited. In his work, kings are deposed for tyrannical behaviour, and constitutional restraints are enforced. Sidney seems to represent the nobility's claim to their share of the rule and the uselessness of absolutist tendencies. Social harmony is repudiated, only the shepherds are able to solve social conflict. Sidney even dared to warn the queen that her planned marriage with Alençon could split the body politic of the realm (Sidney 2009: 277-281; Sinfield 1992: 85-87).
[651] Sinfield 1992: 83-84, 91.
[652] Sinfield 1992: 82.
[653] Quoted from Loades 1997: 4.
[654] Loades 1997: 1-4.
[655] Sinfield 1992: 89-90.
[656] The Elizabethan world picture is contested in the academia (see the discussion of the problem in Schruff 1999: 76-77).

rightly stated that "[a] consensus held together by threats of torture and the stake is no consensus at all."[657]

The Reformation had reshaped the fundamental relationship of man and transcendence; this sea change in religious practice and belief not only challenged social coherence but was a break between the Middle Ages and early modernity. However, more and more scholars have shown that both Protestant and Catholic Reformations owe much to what preceded them. The Reformation was strongly shaped by late medieval theology and social outlook; nevertheless, the Reformation provided an immensely important new influence on Tudor England that also changed the position of the monarch in society.[658] The Reformation led to an unprecedented close cooperation of state and church, who exacted social disciple by forcing people to publicly identify with a particular religious belief. Both church and state implemented strict supervision and ready punishments to oblige people to conform to a new religious identity. These institutions aimed to create a truly godly society in which their subjects lived a moral, self-restrained life, so state and church had to overcome their different interests in order to work together.[659] When extraordinary events like comets, wars, diseases, and abnormal births took place, people believed they originated in God's anger. To protect their flock, authority wanted to detect and punish sin to assuage divine wrath; this kind of reasoning was to be found in both Catholic and Protestant populations in the sixteenth century.[660]

In England, church and state had cooperated closely since the Act of Uniformity. The monarch occupied the role of Head of Church and thus had an ideological monopoly with a double power base. Church and state could join forces to promote propaganda and implement material practices like the disciplining of their subjects' bodies.[661] Authorities became ever more involved in domestic disputes, as they saw the peaceful Christian household as the building block for the construction of an orderly society. The age-old informally permitted practice of married people living apart because they were not compatible was ended, and marriage courts were newly founded to deal with cases regarding faith and morals.[662] Due to the church's and state's growing anxiety regarding disorder and due to their new found ability to act in concert to establish a God-fearing Christian society, misogynist attitudes were revived and distributed via the pulpit and the judge's bench. Bolstered by divine will, they were articulated as universal norms and became an ideology of their own accord.[663] This

[657] Greenblatt 2005: 79. Clark contends this statement; he claims that the period was indeed characterised by growing political stability (Clark 1977: 111-148). However, he also recognises that the 1590s was a time of crisis (Clark 1977: 221-268). See also Williams 1979: 351-405.
[658] Karent-Nunn 1998: 176.
[659] Karent-Nunn 1998: 176-177.
[660] Karent-Nunn 1998: 187.
[661] There is no clear explanation as to why sixteenth-century men in positions of authority were more ready to discipline than those before them. Some historians argue that this was due to spreading capitalism in which narrow regulation helped to build economic consolidation and efficiency, but others disagree on this reason (Karent-Nunn 1998: 176).
[662] Karent-Nunn 1998: 184-185.
[663] Karent-Nunn 1998: 197.

shows how the church and state implemented ideology to achieve social cohesion that was the backdrop for the emergence of a nation or a people that formed itself on the basis of a shared myth, shared values, and a shared political, cultural and historical heritage.

The Reformation had strengthened the monarch's position as centre of state and Head of Church; thus, the ruler had become the centre of ideological orthodoxy. He (or she) literally embodied the realm, a concept that found its expression in the theory of the two bodies of the king.[664] Many discursive fields relating to the masculine power principle surrounded the monarch as the embodiment of all God-given authority on earth; that a female sovereign ruled complicated matters, of course.

Elizabeth's reign posed a theoretical problem to good and godly rule and challenged her legitimacy as a ruler because she was female; nevertheless, she developed her own set of paradigms on which she successfully based her rule. Her reign exposed the frictions of gender constructions and authority of her time as she had to overcome the notion that women and rule did not go together. As governing was no women's matter, she sometimes called herself "king" while using the advantages of being a woman if it suited her cause. As God's representative on earth had to be by definition male, Elizabeth was seen by some as a monster or even a deformity, even though there were many powerful women ruling in Europe at the time. In addition to Mary Tudor and Elizabeth herself, Mary Stuart, Mary of Guise, and Catherine de Medici were all active leaders in the political arena.[665] That said, Elizabeth was the most successful female ruler of them all.[666] However, Elizabeth had to struggle to cement the legitimacy of her reign; in 1536, the Act of Succession declared Elizabeth and her sister Mary illegitimate. In 1543, the sisters were restored into the line of succession but the question of their legitimacy was not settled.[667] When Elizabeth ascended the throne, she was officially still illegitimate, but Parliament was quick to declare her "to bee, both by the Divine and Civill Law, and the Statutes of this Realme, […] the lawfull, undoubted, and direct Queene of *England*, rightly and lawfully descending from the Royall Blood, according to the order of succession."[668]

Completely aware of the theatricality of kingship and her royal person, Elizabeth used all the means of ideology and self-fashioning available to her to construct herself as a successful, shrewd monarch. She surrounded her political actions with symbolism and language that supported her political role.[669] In her speech at Tilbury in 1588, she constructed herself as a political hermaphrodite as well as the daughter of her father, a connection she drew frequently. As Elizabeth could not claim the authority of a father,

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[664] See Kantorowicz 1957 *passim* and chapter 2.3.2 with its subchapters.
[665] Levin 1994: 1-2. John Knox for example talked of the "monstrous regiment of women"; see Knox 2009 and Levin 1994: 2. Also hermaphrodites and cross-dresses were often called "monstrous," see Stubbes 1585: [sig.F6v] and Breitenberg 1996: 153, 160.
[666] Levin 1994: 8-9. See also the "Golden Speech" at the end of Elizabeth's reign, Elizabeth I 2009: 503-507.
[667] Levin 1994: 7-8.
[668] Quoted from Campbell 1947: 137.
[669] Suerbaum 2003: 53.

she stressed that she was a worthy descendant of *her* father.[670] She declared, "I may have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king."[671] Elizabeth referred to herself as "prince" recurrently, thus furthering her hermaphrodite image.[672] Thus, Elizabeth divided herself into the two distinct bodies of a ruler: while her natural body was that of a "feeble woman," she located her body politic in the decidedly male tradition of her father, Henry VIII. Instead of the *pater patriae*, Elizabeth presented herself as a loving mother to her people who chose virginity in order to be married to her people.[673] Her construction as Virgin Queen and mother of her people, however, was undercut by rumours about her sexuality and possible sexual relations with courtiers such as Robert Dudley or Christopher Hatton.[674]

To be able to rule independently, Elizabeth rejected her "womanly" duties as a married wife. She chose to stay unmarried so that no man had any claims over her. Probably due to the death of her mother, Elizabeth learned early that the sexuality and reputation of a woman were easily endangered and that a damaged reputation could mean actual or political death. Apparently, Elizabeth had decided at the age of eight that she would never marry.[675] However, her "virginal" reign was a dynastic anomaly that caused immense social and political anxiety in the last years of her rule.[676] However, Elizabeth's deliberate self-construction as the Virgin Queen also served as a metaphor for the impenetrability of England.[677] The purity and virtue connected with virginity further heightened the honour of England and the queen herself by preserving her body from polluting foreign influences.[678] However, the impenetrability of both the queen and the state produced only a temporary stability. Her people always craved for a marriage and a male heir that would secure the Tudor rule without the instability a female ruler implied.[679]

2.3.2 The Heart and Stomach of a King—The Monarch

As head of state and government, the monarch embodied ideological order and the epitome of virtues. Monarchy not only safeguarded stately order but represented the image of power and of justice in the person of God's anointed on earth. This image that emerged in the Middle Ages gained momentum under Henry VIII.[680] Robert Filmer's book *Patriarcha: or the Natural Power of Kings* saw the origin of legitimate power in adamitic discourse according to which a monarch's power descended from Adam, who received it directly from God. Thus, monarchy and patriarchy were God-given and the

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[670] Levin 1994: 142-143; Suerbaum 2003: 126.
[671] Levin 1994: 1.
[672] See Neale 1953a: 126-127, 146, 150, 173-176, 365-366; Neale 1953b: 99-100, 119, 321, 389; Strier 1995: 136.
[673] Levin 1994: 41.
[674] Levin 1994: 3.
[675] Somerset 2003: 120, Levin 1994: 6-7.
[676] Schruff 1999: 177, fn. 175.
[677] Breitenberg 1996: 119.
[678] Montrose 1986: 315-316.
[679] Levin 1994: 4.
[680] See *Richard II*, 3. 2.54-57, Levin 1994: 12 and Kantorowicz 1957: 24-41, 347-358.

monarch was, by definition, male.[681] Political terms like "Head of State," "constitution" and others are the result of an age-long tradition to perceive the state as an organic body.[682] As the head cannot survive on its own, all the other limbs and organs have to work together to fulfil their duty. In a state, this meant that a good king had to choose apt councillors to reign well, a commonplace in Elizabethan orthodoxy. The king ruled as a head amidst his councillors, governing the limbs of the political commonwealth organically; if that worked the kingdom would fare well. The newly crowned and reformed Hal expresses this intention to rule well when he declares:

> Now call we our high court of Parliament,
> And let us choose such limbs of noble counsel,
> That the great body of our state may go
> In equal rank with the best-governed nation.
>
> (*2HIV*, 5.2.133-136)

It is important to note that the hierarchically structured but independent units are inseparable; a body cannot live without its head and vice versa. This political partnership rendered absolutism impossible; it could only emerge after the organic state models had broken up.[683] However, as the monarch was expected to lead the commonwealth, the councillors as the limbs of the body had to submit to the superior reason of its head.[684] The image of the king as the head connected to the body of the realm is often used in stately contexts; physical metaphors like health, illness, and provision also belong into this category.[685] Often, the understanding of the state as an organic body uses the body of the king as a symbol for the condition of the state itself;[686] the king and the country are so intricately connected that the constitution of the king mirrors the shape of the state—consequently, an ill or corrupted king may indicate "something rotten" in the kingdom.

As the state of the monarch corresponded to the state of the realm, it was extremely important to have a virtuous ruler who would guarantee the well-being of his kingdom by his own comportment. In metaphors for good rule, the care and responsibility for the good of the kingdom is often the *tertium comparationis*; the king is often depicted as the pilot of the state ship, the father of the country, life-giving sun, a fountain for his people, a shepherd of his flock or a gardener of his realm.[687] Burton stresses the dangerous consequences of a bad ruler who could influence the realm with his personality:

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[681] Schruff 1999: 149, fn. 49; Levin 1994: 12; Howard 1988b: 262-263.
[682] This tradition goes back to Plato, who described the commonwealth as a body (Schruff 1999: 64; Peil 1983: 302-488).
[683] Schruff 1999: 65.
[684] Breitenberg 1996: 94.
[685] Schruff 1999: 64-65.
[686] Schruff 1999: 66-67.
[687] Schruff 1999: 123, 125; Peil 1983: 700-870, especially 780-782. The image of the king as gardener who weeds out unwanted plants in his kingdom and thus curbs rebellion and disorder is a metaphor often used. The microcosm of the garden parallels the macrocosm of the realm. One of the most emblematic scenes concerning the gardener metaphor is the garden scene in *Richard II*. Trimming and dressing are necessary in a garden as well as in a commonwealth (see *RII*, 3.4; Peil 1983: passim; Schruff 1999: 123-124).

> Whereas the princes and potentates are immoderate in lust, hypocrites, epicures, of no religion, but in show: Quid hypocrisy fragilius? what so brittle and unsure? what sooner subverts their estates than wandering and raging lusts, on their subjects' wives, daughters? to say no worse.[688]

The body of the state showed the same symptoms as the body of the monarch; it was therefore essential that a monarch be able to use reason in order to rule and constrain both the body politic and the body private.[689] Burton explains this when he says that "[a]s it is in a man's body, if either head, heart, stomach, liver, spleen, or any one part be misaffected, all the rest suffer with it: so is it with this economical body."[690]

As the king as head of state was responsible for the well-being of the body politic and his body private, he was expected to reign with a superior mental capacity that had to be obeyed—nevertheless, the king's leadership was also a service for all.[691] Breton sums up the characteristics of a worthy king:

> A worthy king is a figure of God, in the nature of government. He is the chief of men and the Church's champion, Nature's honour and earth's majesty: is the director of law and the strength of the same, the sword of justice and the sceptre of mercy, the glass of grace and the eye of honour, the terror of treason and the life of loyalty. […] He is the Lord's anointed, and therefore must not be touched, and the head of a public body, and therefore must be preserved. […] In sum, he is more than a man, though not a god, and next under God to be honoured above man.[692]

The capacity to control one's body rationally was seen as a male feature that not only derived from humoral pathology but was a means to legitimise the rule over others; thus, a monarch was expected to exercise explicitly male qualities in the Renaissance. As the head of the state, the king also had to be virile and potent.[693] This idea correlated with the image that the king had to till the land and make it fertile; likewise, the king's personal fertility did not only secure the dynasty but was also thought to keep the country fertile and fresh.[694] That the sovereign was often called a *parens patriae*, a father of the nation, indicates the organic and natural connection of the monarch to his state.[695] Any kind of royal sterility—be it through childlessness, homosexuality, or self-construction as Virgin Queen—was thought to weaken the country; a monarch was expected to procreate to strengthen the country.[696]

The weaker a monarch, the weaker the country. Howard comments that the weaker a crowned king is, the more impostors and upstarts threaten him and his people, and his weakness satirises and parodies the sanctity of kingship.[697] The charge of being a bad king or a tyrant meant that a person was not fit to be a king, and according to a king's

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[688] Burton 1850: 53.
[689] Breitenberg 1996: 64.
[690] Burton 1850: 69.
[691] Peil 1983: 482, 386; 302-488.
[692] Bretton 1891: 255.
[693] Schruff 1999: 141. This idea can be found in the bible, where King David is provided with a young, beautiful woman to keep up his potency (Kings 1:2-4). It is interesting that the virgin should induce *heat* in the old king—to invigorate his humoral masculinity. However, the liaison was not consummated and the plot did not work out.
[694] Schruff 1999: 165-166, 169.
[695] Stone 1995: 110.
[696] Schruff 1999: 173-174.
[697] Howard 1994: 132.

intrinsic connection with the country, it also meant that the body of the commonwealth did not function properly.[698] The less a king was able to play his role, the more he became vulnerable to enemies possessing histrionic skills. Thus, performing a king's role well is a form of power. The second tetralogy emphasises theatricality as an integral part of kingship, not as an element alien to it.[699] Displaying legitimacy, however, is problematic. A monarch had to have a stable basis to reign from that was accepted by his subjects; from the Middle Ages onwards, this stable basis was divine right based on divine legitimation and patrilineal succession. Jean Howard thinks that the impression of legitimacy is both dependent on the monarch's production of gender differences and the powerful subordination of the feminine to masculine authority as the history plays are always concerned with the legitimacy of the monarch.[700] The performative element of gender on an all-male stage under a female monarch already delineates social tensions that were negotiated in the theatre.

2.3.2.1 Divine Right

The king enjoyed status as God's anointed, a chosen one who held the fate of a whole kingdom in his hands. The divine right of kings connected the king to a metaphysical power and surrounded both his body private and the body politic with holiness. From the Middle Ages onwards, the ritualistic unction of the king during the coronation ceremony legitimated and founded kingship; like a priest, the king was instituted as God's anointed and steward on earth and was elevated over the ordinary people and invested with a charge that could not be delegated.[701] The change in a king's outer appearance after coronation through his investments with regalia and his anointment as king sparked off a change in his substance—the quality of being changed for the person invested by a ritual.[702] The king not only had a special relation to transcendence, but also a special responsibility towards God. In one of the most striking quotations touching kingship, Shakespeare sums up the metaphysics of kingship:

> Not all the water in the rough rude sea
> Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;
> The breath of worldly men cannot depose
> The deputy elected by the Lord.
> (*RII*, 3.2.50-53.)

All authority came from God, and the king was God's representative on earth.[703] The monarch was therefore responsible to God alone. Patrilineal succession could pass on the title, and hereditary rights were regarded as infeasible and in theory not subject to positive law.[704] Divine right of kings also implied that the charge could not be transferred to someone else; the only one who has power over the king is God himself,

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[698] Tillyard 1944: 88. See also Bretton 1891: 256 on the characteristics of an unworthy king.
[699] Howard 1994: 139-140.
[700] Howard 1988b: 261-262; 274-275; Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 132, 322.
[701] Schruff 1999: 69, 266-267; Kern 1954: 46-120; Kantorowicz 1957: 42-86; Schramm 1970: 115-116; Kern 1954: 1-13. For the background and development of the coronation as investment with power and sacrament, see Schramm 1970: 1-111.
[702] Kern 1954: 46-120; Schramm 1970: 115-139.
[703] Loades 1997: 10.
[704] Loades 1997: 14.

therefore a king could not designate another person to be more powerful than himself. James I formulated his understanding of divine right very poignantly in a speech before Parliament in 1610:

> God has power to create, or destroy, make, or unmake at his pleasure, to give life, or send death, to judge all, and to be judged nor accountable to none; […] And the like power have kings: they make and unmake their subjects; they have power of raising and casting down, of life and death; judges over all their subjects, and in all cases, and yet accountable to none but God only.[705]

These far-reaching powers had to be mediated by and exacted with responsibility; a good king would use this discretion wisely with virtue, wisdom, and mercy. It was Bacon who formulated the responsibility of kings to both God and their people:

> Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times; and which have much veneration, but no rest. All precepts concerning kings are in effect comprehended in those two remembrances; *memento quod es homo*; and *memento quod es Deus*, or *vice Dei*; the one bridleth their power, and the other their will.[706]

This quotation shows the intermediate position that the king held between God and man. As the king is accountable to no one except God who invested the monarch with power, his subjects are never in a position to judge their monarch. The people had no recourse to resistance. The medieval idea of divine right of kings was still valid in the Renaissance. Secular rulers began to claim that their authority derived from divine right after their opponents, the medieval papacy, had started to do so. The kings claimed that their temporal power was derived directly from God and not from the church, but no one went so far to claim their direct power for the throne. The claim of divine right had two functions: first to restrict ecclesiastical power, and second to fend off the political claims of feudal magnates. Thus, the monarch's authority positioned him above the feudal lords and subjected them to his jurisdiction. However, the absolute implementation of divine right into actual politics was not very successful in England. Richard II, who made an attempt to theorise divine right into his reign, faced a feudal rebellion, and consequently, the political implications of the coronation oath were eventually limited. The main political theorist of the fifteenth century, Sir John Fortescue, cemented his belief in limited monarchy into political thinking, which still had an impact on Tudor rule.[707] In Tudor England, divine right comprised many aspects of varying degrees of validity. An important feature was legitimism, the belief in hereditary succession. Royal supremacy was another feature, which was mostly handled as "a sacred trust;" but as English kings and queens had to share their rule with Parliament, divine right never had an absolute impact on constitutional theory. Royal prerogative had always been bound by common law, and any attempts to fix issues of principle and legal doctrine in England—as James I later attempted—were doomed to fail.[708]

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[705] James VI and I 2003: 107.
[706] Bacon 1999: 46.
[707] Loades 1999: 277-278; Schramm 1970: 204-213.
[708] Loades 1999: 278-280.

The metaphysics of English kingship is best expressed by the theory of the monarch having two bodies[709]—one was the physical, biological body the monarch had in common with all his subjects, and the other was a metaphysical, royal body, the "body politic" that was considered to be immortal and infallible. This body politic was the epitome of virtue as it "is not subject to Passions as the other is, nor to Death, for as to this Body the King never dies." Kingship and the person of the king thus became transcendent in the merger of the physical body royal with the metaphysical abstract of the realm.[710] The body politic came to life when the constituents of English politics—the interdependent unities of the realm—assembled in Parliament. King, Lords, and Commons formed the organic, interdependent body politic that became tangible in this assembly. This political organism had to be kept in a healthy balance—just like the physical body that had to keep a balance of its bodily humours.[711] The Tudor monarchs were aware of this fact, and Holinshed cites a quotation of Henry VIII that touches this subject:

> And further we be informed by our iudges, that we at no time stand so highlie in our estate roiall, as in the time of parlement, wherein we as head, and you as members, are conioined and knit togither into one bodie politike, so as whatsoeuer offense or iniurie (during that time) is offered to the meanest member of the house, is to be iudged as doone against our person, and the whole of parlement.[712]

This quotation stresses the organic link between the king as head of state with his "limbs," i.e. the other political functions of the state, which are embodied by Parliament. This reasoning made it possible for King Charles' I body private to be sentenced to death in the name of the King's body politic. This act eventually separated the two royal bodies on the scaffold for all to see.[713]

A certain "charisma" surrounded kingship, an innate majesty that found expression in the divine right of kings.[714] Besides the embodiment of special virtues, his majesty is shown through ceremony, dress, comportment, and verbal identification. Elyot tried to make clear how kingship shows in the body and person of a king:

> [Majesty] is the whole proportion and figure of noble estate, and is properly a beauty or comeliness in his countenance, language and gesture apt to his dignity, and accommodate to time, place, and company; which, like as the sun doth his beams, so doth it cast on the beholders and hearers a pleasant and terrible reverence.[715]

Harking back to religious charismatic ideals, the power of the royal gaze is often a marker of majesty while the royal blood is the medium that carries royal charisma.[716] The unpolluted transmission of royal charisma and legitimacy through patrilineal

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[709] The concept of the two bodies of the monarch comes from Ernst Kantorowicz's book *The King's Two Bodies*; see also Schruff 1999: 71.
[710] Kantorowicz 1957: 13; Greenblatt 2005: 166-167. For a good and thorough summary of the importance of the king's two bodies in English Renaissance drama see Schruff 1999: 63-122, 210-224.
[711] Breitenberg 1996: 64, Schruff 1999: 73.
[712] Holinshed 1808 vol. III: 826.
[713] Schruff 1999: 74. Stone calls the execution of Charles I a "national patricide" (Stone 1995: 110).
[714] Schruff 1999: 181-183.
[715] Elyot 1962: 99.
[716] Schruff 1999: 184, 190.

descent and "pure" bloodlines therefore plays an important role in the discussion of kingship. While blood ties created responsibilities for members of the same family, royal blood had an additional value that conveyed power as well as duties towards a whole kingdom.[717] The office of kingship was an institution that in theory could not die. The cry "The king is dead—long live the king!" is part of the conception that the institution lives on despite the actual ruler's death. While the body private could die, the body politic immediately merged with the new monarch's body private—*dignitas non moritur*.[718] The image of the phoenix who lives, grows old, dies and is reborn again expresses this immortality of kingship.[719] An early modern political English thinker, Edward Coke, explained the connection of the two bodies of the king as follows:

> It is true that the King hath two capacities in him: one natural body, being descended of the blood royal of the realm; and this body is of the creation of Almighty God, and is subject to death, infirmity, and such like; the other is a politic body or capacity, so called, because it is framed by the policy of man (and […] is called a mysticall body;) and in this capacity the King is esteemed to be immortal, invisible, not subject to death, infirmity, infancy, nonage, &c.[720]

However, practically speaking, this concept was not absolutely clear even to early modern theorists. Francis Bacon commented on the potential confusion that the theory of the bodies of the king could cause politically and ideologically:

> [F]or some said that allegeance hath respect to the Law, some to the Crowne, some to the Kingdome, some to the body politique of the King, so there is confusion of tongues amongst them, as it commonly cometh to passe in opinions, that have their foundations in subtilty, and imagination of mans wit, and not in the ground of nature.[721]

Bacon thought of the two bodies of the king as inseparable but distinct. The thought of the king having two separated but connected bodies paved the way for the development of an abstract state that is not linked directly to the monarchs or politicians who actually govern it.[722]

2.3.2.2 Order, Hierarchies, and Obedience

The hierarchy established by monarchy was thought to be analogous to the order within the cosmos. In the same way that one God reigned in one cosmos with one sun and one moon, one king reigned over a kingdom; this reasoning permeated all areas of life. Consequently, even small animals were thought to have a king.[723] According to the same logic, subjects could only be loyal to one ruler; the structure of the universe thus

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[717] Schruff 1999: 191, 193. Spilled royal blood could make its bearer a martyr or saint. Edward II was accused of a condemnable life, but once he was killed, he became a martyr to whose grave many pilgrims came (Schruff 1999: 193).
[718] Kantorowicz 1957: 383-450.
[719] Kantorowicz 1957: 385-395. For Elizabeth's connection with the phoenix motif, see Somerset 2003: 450; 460; 422-489.
[720] Coke 1826: 17.
[721] Bacon 1641: 16.
[722] Bacon 1641: 37-43; Schruff 1999: 64, 68.
[723] Schruff 1999: 77. Canterbury's "bee speech" in *HV* (1.2.187-204) elaborates on this theme. See also Peil 1983: 166-301.

also established clear ties of loyalty.[724] John Donne—like many others—thought that monarchy was a God-given, masculine form of government:

> All forms of Government have one and the same *Soul*, that is, *Soveraignty*; That resides somewhere in every form; and this Soveraignty is in them all, from one and the same *Root*, from the *Lord of Lords*, from *God* himself, for *all Power is of God*: But yet this form of a *Monarchy*, of a *Kingdome*, is a more lively, and a more *masculine Organe*, and Instrument of this Soul of Soveraigntie, then the other forms are: Wee are sure *Women* have Soules as well as *Men*, but yet it is not so expressed, *that God breathed a Soule into Woman*, as hee did into Man; All formes of Governement have this Soule, but yet God infuseth it more manifestly, and more effectually, in that forme, in a *Kingdome*[.][725]

Monarchy is therefore divine and leads to the idea of the divine right of kings, firmly establishing the king at the top of the earthly hierarchy. James I always strongly emphasised this elevated position; in a speech from 1610, he even concluded that kings are God-like creatures "[f]or kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon God's throne, but even by God himself they are called gods."[726]

James equals kings to divine beings—even gods; a thought with far-ranging consequences. What seems very far-fetched entails the idea that the divinely installed hierarchy of monarchy calls for absolute obedience; so disobedience against one's sovereign was also disobedience against God, his order, and the teleology of the world. Chaos and degeneration would necessarily ensue by the rejection of God's plan for the world. However, James' strong emphasis on obedience might indicate that these ideological structures were already transitioning and breaking up.[727]

Chaos and decline were dreaded by all. Calvin makes clear in his *Institutiones* that the functioning of moral law is necessary within the metaphysical frame; if law and order are not kept up by force, tumult and confusion ensue—the contrary to the religiously postulated order.

> This constrained and forced righteousness is necessary for the public community of men, for whose tranquillity the Lord herein provided when he took care that everything be not tumultuously confounded. This would happen if everything were permitted to all men.[728]

Hierarchies thus ensure order; and as every social degree has different rights and duties, social inequality is part of Calvin's world picture. As English society became increasingly mobile, frictions and tensions strained the notion that English society was made up of distinct "sorts" or "degrees" of people. William Harrison classified them in 1577 as follows: gentlemen who do not have to work for a living, burgesses or citizens who live in towns and cities, yeomen farmers, and artificers or labourers.[729] By theory, everyone knew their respective places and there were no overlaps; practically, however, Shakespeare as a burgess had access to the coat of arms of a gentleman because of his father's office. Additionally, monetary success enabled upward social mobility as

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[724] Schruff 1999: 77.
[725] Donne 1959: 240-241.
[726] James VI and I 2003: 107.
[727] Schruff 1999: 77. For a discussion of order in a changing society, see Wrightson 1982: 149-182 and 222-228.
[728] Quoted from Altman 1978: fn 11, 254.
[729] Harrison 1968: 94; Smith 2000: 119.

well.[730] David Harris Sacks argues that despite the self-perception of the English aristocracy, they formed a "*class* whose membership depended upon social determinants of honor and wealth, and not a *caste* established exclusively by blood." However, female chastity was necessary in order to guarantee these "social determinants" and thus became a site for male gender anxieties. That the social demarcation lines needed protection reveals that English society had indeed become at least somewhat permeable and not static.[731] Nevertheless, hegemonic ideology insisted on the God-given order as a social requirement, an attempt to occlude social change and to maintain the remnants of the old, more static order. Social mobility confused established systems of hierarchy and thus also obedience.

The heavy stress on obedience in the last third of the sixteenth century exposes the perceived need to secure the old established order. One of the main Tudor documents on obedience was the *Homily against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion*, published in 1558, the year of Elizabeth's accession to the throne.[732] Around 1570, obedience was a major issue as not only the rebellion but also Elizabeth's excommunication by the papal bull *Regnans in excelsis* had called the queen's authority into question as it released all Catholic English subjects from their fealty to their queen. The homily had to be read in all English churches and was probably known to every English person at the time.[733] The *Homily against Disobedience* summed up the power relations between ruler and subject. The monarch is God's anointed on earth and only responsible towards God; if a subject rebels against his monarch, he inevitably also rebels against God, a sin that entails divine revenge; and subjects have to endure whatever ruler they are granted with, so if a people have a bad king, they have to endure his reign as a punishment from God. While rebellion is a divine chastisement of the ruler, the insurgents are nevertheless guilty against the monarch and God himself.[734] The only reason for resistance against one's superiors are orders to act against God's will; oppression and tyranny, however, have to be suffered patiently.[735]

Questions regarding allegiance arose if there were quarrels about legitimacy; which ruler should be obeyed—the actual ruler holding power or a ruler based on legitimate succession? Another problem was if the ruler openly acted against God's laws—whom should a subject obey, the ruler or God? And if a subject might resist the monarch with a cause, should it be active or rather passive? And even more fundamentally: could a king be deposed? If yes, would his subjects be consequently released from their oaths of fealty to him?[736] The Tudors held the opinion that the actual possessor of the crown should be obeyed, and that subjects were under no circumstances allowed to judge their monarch or rebel against him or her. The Tudors *had* to take that stance; due to religious decisions like Henry VIII's or because of their questionable legitimacy like Elizabeth's,

[730] Smith 2000: 119.
[731] Sacks 1988: 476-477; Breitenberg 1996: 73.
[732] See Kinney 2011: 58-60.
[733] Campbell 1947: 143, 156, 216.
[734] Campbell 1947: 156, 214-215.
[735] Tillyard 1944: 66.
[736] Campbell 1947: 156.

Tudor monarchs had to keep their unsettled flock in line.[737] So, Tudor authority tried to enforce hierarchical structures and insisted on obedience—a clear sign that the structure of society was becoming less stable. The church helped cement the orthodoxy on power:

> Almighty God hath created and appointed all things in heaven, earth and waters in most excellent and perfect order. In heaven he hath appointed distinct orders and states of archangels and angels. In the earth he has assigned kings, princes, with other governors under them, all in good and necessary order.[738]

The church also publicised the monarch's insistence on obedience; the theological justification for the submission to state authority was Paul's letter to the Romans:[739]

> Let euery soule be subiect vnto the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: & the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoeuer therefore resisteth ye power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shal receiue to them selues a iudgement. For princes are not to be feared for good workes, but for euil. Wilt ye then be without feare of the power? do wel: so shalt thou haue praise of the same. For he is the minister of God for thy wealth: but if thou do euil, feare: for he beareth not the sworde for noght: for he is the minister of God to take vengeáce on him that doeth euil. Wherefore ye must be subiect, not because of wrath onely, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause ye paye also tribute: for they are Gods ministers, applying them selues for the same thing. Giue to all men therefore their duetie: tribute, to whome ye owe tribute: custome, to whome custome; feare, to whome feare: honour, to whome ye owe honour.[740]

All power comes from God; and just like in the relation between the *pater familias* and his children, the king as the father of the people demands obedience. Erasmus supported this analogy when he asked: "[f]or what else is a kingdom but a large family, and what is a king but the father of very many people?"[741] This power relation is of course directed one-way and singular; Bacon followed this stance and constructed authority as concentrated in one person, referring back to the original Father who legitimates all forms of patriarchal power.[742] The household with the father as *pater familias* became the symbol for the whole social system in which order, deference, and obedience were stressed by both state and church propaganda as God-given principles. Stone identifies the split from the Catholic Church as responsible for this development; when the old medieval world crumbled, the ensuing struggle between the old and the new was perceived as very unstable and frightening, which justified the need for such strong claims of stability and order. The emergence of social and geographical mobility forced people to orient themselves anew, which often produced additional anxiety and insecurity. Paired with the new attitudes of the Reformation where people stood "naked" before their Maker, only equipped with the scripture and their conscience, these developments added up to a widespread feeling of insecurity.[743]

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[737] Campbell 1947: 156-157.
[738] Cranmer 1997: 10.
[739] Schruff 1999: 105.
[740] Epistle to the Romans, 13:1-7.
[741] Schruff 1999: 112, 126; Erasmus 1997: 33-34.
[742] Breitenberg 1996: 81.
[743] Stone 1995: 409-410.

Obedience to established authority was a religious duty and a basic precept of medieval jurisprudence; positive law had to be consistent with—and subordinate to—the law of God and Nature.[744] Even though disobedience towards a worldly authority meant a direct offence against God, medieval jurists developed the theory that "vox populi vox dei"—the voice of the people is the voice of God.[745] Thus, rebellion could also be God's warning to a regent that he was not acting according to divine will. This created a tension between the monarch as God's representative on earth and the people who were supposed to voice God's will; this ambiguity challenged the absolute claim of the divine right of kings and could be interpreted as a theoretical legitimation for both rebellion and autocracy.

Due to the political sequence of reformatory, counter-reformatory, and again reformatory Tudor monarchs, the right of political resistance on religious grounds was an acutely discussed issue in early modern England. When Pope Pius VI excommunicated Elizabeth in the bull *Regnans in excelsis*, he disengaged Elizabeth's Catholic subjects from their duty to obey her and laid the foundations for active political resistance against her rule.[746] The radical Protestant side also theorised resistance. Calvin referred to the book of Daniel to explain that disobedience was not an offence if obeying people led to disobeying God. It would be better for private people to suffer the worldly punishment than to become guilty against God.[747] Furthermore, state officials were duty-bound to resist when necessary as they should protect the people and the commonwealth with their office. If they tolerated misdeeds of their worldly lord, they betrayed their office.[748] Calvin's prerequisite for the obedience is the conduct of the prince: if he acts according to God-given guidelines and takes the responsibility for the stability of his commonwealth seriously, he has to be obeyed; if he crosses these boundaries, he loses the right to his subjects' obedience.[749] Consequently, Calvin demands that the king legitimate himself doubly through his right to the throne as well as through his conduct.[750]

However, Protestant thought was ideologically split on the issue of wicked rulers; people were divided regarding if God-given power or personal conscience was the ultimate authority on personal action. At the beginning of the Reformation, theorists distinguished sharply between active resistance and disobedience. Open resistance was thought to lead to sinful rebellion, whereas passive disobedience was deemed to be more Christian since violence should not be used against rulers or any other superiors. In the 1570s, just after the uprising of the Northern earls, official discourse began to deny personal conscience as the ultimate reason for political action. If any subject could

[744] Loades 1997: 10-11.
[745] Loades 1997: 11.
[746] Schruff 1999: 107.
[747] Schruff 1999: 108-109.
[748] Schruff 1999: 109.
[749] Schruff 1999: 121.
[750] Sidney followed this line of thought when he warned the queen that her subjects' obedience was conditional: "If, then, the affectionate have their affections weakened and the discontented have a gap to utter their discontention, I think it will seem an evil evil preparative for the patient (I mean your estate) to a greater sickness," (Sidney 2009: 279).

judge their superiors on moral and conscientious grounds, perpetual unrest would be the natural consequence; therefore, subjects should patiently suffer under any kind of ruler.[751] The more extreme Marian exiles, in contrast, had stressed a "doctrine of conscience," based on the belief that despotic rulers were rebels against God himself, so active resistance against them on the grounds of personal conscience was legitimate. In their eyes, passive acquiescence was effectively collaboration with the wicked, so resistance became a collective responsibility.[752] These approaches show that resistance was indeed a part of Renaissance political discourse; Tillyard's claim that "orthodox doctrines […] were shared by every section of the community" is therefore problematic.[753] The question arises regarding the origins of subversion and resistance if orthodoxy was indeed shared by all segments of society; the stress on obedience and one's proper place within the chain of being would have been a social tautology if orthodoxy had been shared by everyone. Tillyard's attempt to explain his point are unconvincing if one considers the evidence of Renaissance texts and their discussion of discursive issues.[754]

The relationship of courtiers to their monarch was tainted with the scramble for power, scarce attention, and the self-fashioning of aristocrats who wanted posts and positions. The question of power often intersected with personal goals, so the court was a setting where these needs and tensions had to be balanced. The following chapter analyses how these power dynamics were regulated.

2.3.3 Role Play at Court

Court life was deeply theatrical, as everyone had to play a certain role and manipulate his or her appearance.[755] The atmosphere of the court in the 1590s was politically dense and charged with tensions as urgent political questions like the final settlement of succession for the aging and childless queen were unresolved, the dynamics of the faction around the Earl of Essex was gaining momentum, and the threat of a Spanish invasion was not yet banned. With a queen who was known for her fits and tantrums as head of this court, courtiers could not openly speak their minds if they wanted to keep the favour of their monarch.[756] As a survival tactics, the courtiers developed a certain type of theatricalised role-play. Humanists often lamented the discrepancy between tongue and heart during the sixteenth century.[757] While the perfect

[751] Strier 1995: 170-172. For more on the discussion of obedience and the right to resistance, see Kern 1954: 138-247, especially 175-212.
[752] Strier 1995: 172-173.
[753] Tillyard 1944: 64.
[754] Tillyard 1944: 66-67.
[755] Conduct books, especially aimed at courtiers, were galore in the Renaissance, many coming from Italy. The most important was Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (translated in 1588 by Hoby as *The Book of the Courtier*) and Thomas Elyot's *The Book Named the Governor*, which treated the education of princes and gentlemen (see Smith 2000: 39-40 and Schruff 1999, *passim*). These educational and self-help books for the right behaviour and knowledge needed by the mostly male courtiers at court and in social settings show that male identity was already perceived as a performance and social construction long before the advent of post-structuralism (Smith 2000: 40).
[756] Somerset 2003: 134-135, 234-238, 646, 651-655; 389-399, 530-532.
[757] Greenblatt 2005: 129.

courtier should ideally express his inward virtue with his outward behaviour, the pressure at court often forced him to veil his frustration and hostility in worship and subjection; criticism was transformed into a theatrical attitude.[758] Their main job of offering advice and planning actual politics, was thus turned into show, façade, and in the worst case into intrigue.[759] Therefore, speech at court was often perceived as perverted, a consequence of the close link between language and power; Machiavellian practices like flattery, self-censorship, mystification, and inversion had entered communication. Greenblatt claims that this ongoing game of dissembling and feigning as a technique of self-fashioning was a Machiavellian survival tactic.[760] Satirists often used the queen and some "ideal" courtiers as material for the abuse of "systematically distorted communication" as Habermas called it.[761]

Greenblatt reasons that the heightened theatricality at Renaissance courts was a consequence of the courtiers' situation; having not yet found a new role for themselves, they anxiously gravitated around the monarch as the centre of power, constantly struggling for scarce attention and recognition. They tried to achieve this by a heavy—Greenblatt calls it "fetishistic"—emphasis on manner.[762] However, Castiglione's ideal of a courtier was forged as a synthesis of the *miles christianus* and the ideal of a humanistically educated prince into a concept that was to be the foundation for the *gentleman*.[763] Sir Philip Sidney was the incorporation of this ideal at the Elizabethan court in the 1580s.[764] However, not only did the nobles and courtiers play their parts in court dynamics—the queen did as well. While the ceremony and pomp of kingship has always had a histrionic quality to it, theatricality was deeply integrated into proceedings at the Elizabethan court; court life and the staging of kingship became increasingly theatrical during Elizabeth's reign. Elizabeth veiled her royal control with a romantic atmosphere and by stylising herself as Gloriana and Astraea. She perceived of herself as a person with an at least partly fictional identity and her court as a theatre; by literally staging her appearances in public, Elizabeth added importance to her representation of

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[758] Altman 1978: 183; Greenblatt 2005: 164-165. See also Esler 1966: 226-227.
[759] Altman 1978: 221.
[760] Greenblatt 2005: 14, passim.
[761] Habermas 1970: 205-218. The Earl of Essex, for example, was widely regarded to be an ideal knight, the highest (but already old-fashioned) masculine ideal that was still valid in Elizabethan society (Smith 2000: 48). An image published by T. Cockson in the 1590s and reprinted in Smith 2000 lauds him as "Virtue's honour, Wisdom's valour, Grace's servant, Mercy's love, God's elected, Truth's beloved, Heaven's affected," (Smith 2000: 46). However, this ideal knight, who should be bound by obedience to his queen, finally defected and opposed the queen and her orders by returning from Ireland against her will in 1599. He then rebelled against Elizabeth and was executed in 1601 (Smith 2000: 46-47; Cheyney 1948: 455-548; see also Falls 1955 on the situation in Ireland *passim* and on the Essex rebellion 149-154). His person and his fate also show the histrionic tensions between the male courtiers under a female monarch, culminating in the final question of obedience and rebellion (on the tensions at court, see Greenblatt 1988: 64-65).
[762] Greenblatt 2005: 161-162.
[763] Paul comments on the virtues a Christian man should have in Ephesians 6: 13-17: "For this cause take vnto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to resist in the euil daye, & hauing finished all things, stand fast. Stand therefore, and your loines girde about with veritie, & hauing on the brest plate of righteousnes, And your fete shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Aboue all, take the shield of faith, wherewith ye may quench all the fyrie dartes of the wicked, And take the helmet of saluation, and the sworde of ye Spirit: which is the worde of God."
[764] Schruff 1999: 18-19.

the body politic of England.[765] The queen herself used language as an act, and political actions became surrounded by a symbolism that was part of the role of the monarch.[766] Elizabeth commented on the theatricality of kingship in 1586 that "princes are set on stages in the sight of and view of all the world."[767]

This exposition "to all the world" implies both the exemplary role princes have for their people as well as the illustration of social hierarchy through ceremonial representations.[768] No one had the motivation to demystify this construct or the queen's embodiment of power. In her accession speech, Elizabeth stated that "I am but one body naturally considered, though by [God's] permission a body politic to govern."[769] The body politic made her a "fiction of permanence" as Greenblatt calls it, a representation of immutability.[770] While the discourse of power helped establish the ideological fiction of stability, Elizabeth apparently *believed* in the histrionic decorum of royal authority she effectively performed; this, however, did not inhibit her to from using ceremony for her own ends.[771] She never let anything happen accidentally; John Hayward commented on Elizabeth's deliberate use of show and representation that the queen "knew right well that in pompous ceremonies a secret of government doth much consist, for that the people are naturally both taken and held with exteriour shewes."[772] Thus not only the courtiers but also the queen herself actively took part in the role-play at court that was dedicated to impersonating and humanising ideology and power. The fiction of the Virgin Queen was framed by the themes of mutual love and self-sacrifice; the cult around Elizabeth channelled national and religious sentiments into a worship of the monarch that could divert from actual problems and social divisions that late Tudor England suffered from. This veneration made it possible for Elizabeth to turn her political disadvantage of being a woman into a virtue and thus a new resource of power and legitimation. However, her declarations of love for her people did not prevent her from employing force and violence against those same people.[773] Power was a coin that possessed both faces of love and violence and could easily flip from one to the other; Machiavelli had stated that a prince had to know how to use both the beast and the man within.[774]

One of the main changes from medieval to Renaissance court life was the notion of the courtier as an actor who is always under surveillance on stage; another change was the fact that honours were no longer obtained by the sword but by the grace of the

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[765] Greenblatt 2005: 166-167.
[766] Suerbaum 2003: 53.
[767] Neale 1953b: 119; Greenblatt 2005: 167; Goldberg 1999: 59.
[768] Schruff 1999: 250-251.
[769] Elizabeth I 2009: 76.
[770] Greenblatt 2005: 167. Strier criticises Greenblatt's approach to see literature as an expression of the social and its norms. He does not agree that literary work is simply "absorbed into an ideological superstructure," (Strier 1995: 69-70.)
[771] Greenblatt 2005: 167.
[772] Quoted from Pye 1990: 63; Schruff 1999: 249.
[773] Greenblatt 2005: 168-169. Examples of her declaration of love for her people are Elizabeth's speech to her troops at Tilbury and the so-called *Golden Speech* (Elizabeth I 2009: 392, 503-507).
[774] Machiavelli 1997: 65; Greenblatt 2005: 224.

monarch.[775] The old regionally confined "lineage society" was becoming a more open "civil society" with more universal modes of thought and values; this development was due to the Reformation, which established a new concept of morals and a new way of connection between the believer and God. In the wake of humanism, literacy and schooling became more widespread and established a more centralised allegiance to the monarch; a developing new economic system professionalised the relations between people; bureaucracy and centralised organisation increased universal loyalty to the sovereign. The initial desire of the nation state to install security, law, and order eventually developed a dynamic of itself.[776]

Many facets of Tudor court role-play found their way into the dramas of the time. Language was the most important means of acting and self-representation on stage and at court. Additionally, the different male ideals to which courtiers and the high nobility aspired revealed a lot about the *status quo* at court as well as the needs and wishes of late Tudor society. These features made up a close-mesh net of courtly role-play, deceit, favours, and ideals. Rhetoric, an integral part of aristocratic education, became a new tool used to advance a nobleman's position at court. It could be used as mediator between present and past as well as imagination and politics. Literature, therefore, turned into a playground of possibilities and role models vying to be discussed and evaluated. This view of literature was facilitated by the fashionability of men's lives according to will, just as literary material could be fashioned in regard to the desired effect on the audience. Rhetoric thus theatricalised culture – or rather became the instrument of a culture that was already deeply theatrical.[777]

Language in early modern England was both "the instrument of society," as Ben Jonson called it, and a model for society.[778] The developing idea that language was a signifying medium with no direct representation of the world occupied writers and dramatists alike during the second half of the sixteenth century. Despite this shift of linguistic perception, language was still thought of as a social and political issue; the interrelation between words and the world were a litmus test of how social order

[775] Greenblatt 2005: 162-163. Smith comments on the anachronism of chivalric imagery and tournaments at Elizabeth's court and the tensions between the old concept of the sword aristocracy and the new type of courtier (Smith 2000: 44-48). McCoy argues that this antiquated cult of chivalry helped to bridge the gap between obedience and personal honour; through the spectacle of "feudal loyalty and romantic devotion," courtiers expressed their submission under Elizabeth's sovereignty while chivalry also exalted militarism and personal honour (McCoy 1989: 2-3). In the decade after Elizabeth's death, the ideals of chivalry "lived on in a melancholy and nostalgic afterglow" in literature. These writers put their hopes on the Prince of Wales for chivalry to survive, as he combined the ideals of Protestant zeal and militarism in his person to demonstrate autonomy and magnificence (McCoy 1989: 157-158). Finally, the concept of chivalry died with Prince Henry in 1612 (see McCoy 1989: 3-4; Smith 2000: 45, 48). But in the seventeenth century, some single aristocrats like Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel used chivalry as an outward pose to underline their aristocratic privileges and rights—but he just adorned himself with this knightly image out of vanity. His person could not fill the chivalric ideal. However, the belief in aristocratic autonomy and authority even fuelled the will of some aristocrats to break away from the crown during the Civil War and instilled Milton with his belief in "the rights and liberties of ‚every free and gentle spirit,'" (McCoy 1989: 158-161).
[776] Stone 1995: 100.
[777] Greenblatt 2005: 162. See also Elyot 1962: 28-51 and Tuve 1947: 180-191.
[778] Quoted from Breitenberg 1996: 91.

worked.[779] In early modern thought, a text did not signify the world but resembled it.[780] Language acquired a material quality through this resemblance; by exemplifying, enacting, and repeating its referents, public discourse likewise materialised again and again. Tudor power structure and the quality of politics thus materialised through the means of language.[781] However, language was deeply ambiguous; rhetoric was often perceived of as loquacious, ambiguous, deceptive, and lacking control, which rendered the use of language and rhetoric feminine.[782] The gendered faultline in Renaissance discourse shows here as well: while language was considered a worthless women's weapon, it was in reality a means of masculine self-assertion and rational assertion of will.

Consciously constructed speech was often likened to clothes; rhetorical language could mislead and misrepresent just like "gaudy apparel." Thus, fashionably and well-clad courtiers who talked eloquently used two different but similar means of deception.[783] Just like clothing, language is a signifier for something beyond itself and not the "thing itself." Language, just like clothing and the theatre was thought to deceive and to create illusions.[784] If language could not be taken at face value at court and was not "true," it was a sign for the Elizabethans that the social order was likewise not "true" anymore. Bacon anticipated Saussure's denial of a "natural" relation between the signifier and the signified; for him, the use of language leads to deceit, misrepresentations and therefore to social decomposition.[785] He argues that "words are the tokens current and accepted for conceits, as moneys are for values, and that it is fit men be not ignorant that moneys may be of another kind than gold and silver[.]"[786] Bacon's reference to money alluded to the devaluation of English coins that began under Henry VIII, when money lost its nominal value. Language worked like devalued coins as words no longer corresponded to their original meaning (or value) and thus represented an arbitrary meaning that was democratically circulated among the "vulgar."[787] Bacon advocated proper language—"the chaste and perfect style"—that should disseminate power, knowledge, and authority between men; figurative and more elaborate speech was often deemed feminine in the Renaissance.[788] Bacon's linguistic ideal was a pure, masculine, and aristocratic perception of language that should oppose

[779] Breitenberg 1996: 91.
[780] Breitenberg 1996: 43.
[781] Breitenberg 1996: 44.
[782] Breitenberg 1996: 136, 182.
[783] Smith exemplifies the notoriously elegant and fashionable courtiers with the help of Robert Greene's satirical pamphlet *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier* (1592) in which the characters *Velvet Britches* and *Cloth Britches* quibble about their respective claims to be in England (Smith 2000: 29-30). Breitenberg 1996: 152.
[784] Breitenberg 1996: 182.
[785] Breitenberg 1996: 83-84.
[786] Bacon 1974: 132.
[787] Breitenberg 1996: 84. Judith Butler additionally asks whether language refers to materiality or if language rather is a precondition for the emergence of materiality (Butler 1993: 31).
[788] Breitenberg 1996: 76-78.

vulgar, female passivity. A pure and simple style of writing should keep up the intellectual authority of those who sought to divulge knowledge "properly."[789]

The English Renaissance displayed an increasing uneasiness towards metaphorical language. Initially metaphors were considered necessary and helpful for understanding the world, a view that would soon change. In 1550, Richard Sherry stated that metaphors "sheweth the thynge before oure eyes more evidently," following the old idea that iconic language were "pictures of ideas" that bore an intrinsic connection to words.[790] Relationships between words existed because of pre-existent relations in the world, just as tropes and metaphors expressed their intrinsic correspondence to the matter at hand.[791] Henry Peacham explains this in *The Garden of Eloquence*:

> Necessity was cause that Tropes were fyrst inuented, for whé there wáted words to expresse nature of diuerse thinges, wise men remembering that many thinges were very like one to an other, thought it good, to borrow the name of one thing, to expresse another[.][792]

Towards the end of the century, Bacon's and Shakespeare's writings indicate a shift in this perception; the inherent connection between words and meaning had become either a nostalgic ideal or a cause for anxiety. Bacon and Shakespeare had different approaches to the problem, however: whereas Shakespeare often explored the pitfalls of a "fallen" or perverted language, Bacon advocated the need to master the connection between words and meaning artificially and deliberately by the means of clarity.[793] Puttenham pointed out the discrepancy between words and referents in his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589) and doubted the existence of "natural" resemblances in the world. By defining metaphors as "an inversion of sence by transport," he anticipated Bacon's later critique mentioned above.[794] As the connection between signifier and signified had become distorted, language could no longer be trusted; the old relationship of similarity and consecutive closeness had been disturbed. This disturbance opened up a field of creative use of language but also could also end up in conceit and thus created an area of tension.

Apart from language, the ideal of chivalry provided men with an ideal sign system for the high nobility at court; even though it had become antiquated, it was still used as a reference for self-representation and self-fashioning. The chivalric courtier serving the queen as the inaccessible lady was an important role in the self-representative play at the royal court. Courtiers like Robert Dudley, Sir Philip Sidney, the Earl of Essex, and Edmund Spenser cultivated this *topos*, each of them with different success.[795] McCoy,

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[789] Breitenberg 1996: 95.
[790] Breitenberg 1996: 85.
[791] Breitenberg 1996: 91, 43-44.
[792] Peacham 1577: B1v.
[793] Breitenberg 1996: 85.
[794] Breitenberg 1996: 44.
[795] This even went so far that Sir Philip Sidney assumed a "melancholy part" that was part of his chivalric persona. He cultivated it in his writings like *Old Arcadia* and used it as criticism of the current situation (McCoy 1989: 67-69). Indeed, the figure of the hermit experienced in warfare who counsels others on the rules of knighthood is a recurrent figure in chivalric literature since Ramon Lull's *Book of the Ordre of Chyvalry* (McCoy 1989: 145). Just as Sidney's *Old Arcadia* are "the scriptures of the perfect knight of Protestant chivalry," so Spenser's *Faerie Queene* endorsed the "Protestant crusading zeal and aggressive

who analysed the role of chivalry at the Elizabethan court, describes this role-play as a means of negotiating the tensions between a strong female monarch and aspiring male nobles who were powerful but nevertheless subjects. This conflict broke out openly when the Earl of Essex rebelled against the queen but was "muted and unresolved" for most of Elizabeth's reign.[796] The core of this conflict lay in the tension between honour and obedience, between old feudal rights of knighthood and the obedience to "right royal majesty" with its newly acquired, more centralised way of power exertion. The courtiers were supposed to express their loyalty and devotion to the queen in a feudal fashion; at the same time, chivalry encouraged them to pursue aristocratic militarism and revere old values like personal autonomy and honour.[797] Chivalry asserted the freedom of privileged subjects—the nobility—to adhere to the feudal principles of freedom and the right to dissent, paired with the legitimation to fight for these rights.[798] Religious zeal and chivalric honour often combined in an "opposition to tyranny." McCoy therefore argues that chivalry was "in consort with other radical movements" an ideological challenge to the status quo.[799]

Personal pride and experience in warfare remained important for the nobility, and war was an opportunity to win personal fame and glory on the field. The monarchy still depended on the aristocracy to raise troops, and many nobles saw their true vocation in battle.[800] The contradictory calls for both aristocratic aggression and obedience to the monarch had to be canalised via a code of behaviour that domesticated the independence and autonomy of the nobility to royal authority—a difficult endeavour.[801] Consequently, the court nobility was split between recklessly active and arrogant soldiers and a more scholarly faction.[802] The more pliable and adaptable courtiers generally outperformed their military counterparts at court since the *militia* had problems adapting to their new role. Military men were too proud to "creep and crouch," which was often interpreted as arrogance.[803] They themselves interpreted this arrogance as "magnanimity," or greatness of soul. At the time, it was still an essential part of nobility and meant "a certaine excellencie of courage, which aiming at at honour, directeth all his doings therevnto, and specially vnto vertue."[804]

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foreign policy of the Elizabethan *militia*," as McCoy states. In Spenser's work, the chivalric compromise works out best because he keeps a greater distance between the court and his writing. He uses allegories and elegies to veil the relations to court rather than showing them openly. Therefore, Spenser's *Faerie Queene* can be called the "period's fullest realization of the militant, chivalric ideal of *discordia concors*" (Yates 1975: 88-111; McCoy 1989: 127-129 and *passim*). Esler thinks that chivalry is to blame for the unrealistic expectations of the younger courtiers at Elizabeth's court that inevitably had to lead to frustration (Esler 1966: 223-227).

[796] McCoy 1989: 1-2, 9.

[797] Personal honour was both linked to prowess in war as well as lineage (McCoy 1989: 132).

[798] McCoy 1989: 7.

[799] McCoy 1989: 7-8. However, chivalry was a threat to the new *political* status quo under the Tudors—it was rather "deliberately archaic" itself and not open to innovation (McCoy 1989: 18).

[800] McCoy 1989: 9.

[801] McCoy 1989: 2-3; 13-14.

[802] McCoy 1989: 10.

[803] McCoy 1989: 12.

[804] Quoted from McCoy 1989: 12.

The history plays as well as other forms of literature attempted to resolve the question of how to end the conflict between the monarch and the courtiers. McCoy sees the reasons for the Wars of the Roses in this very tension.[805] In real life, Elizabeth tried to channel the more aggressive aristocratic energies in tilts and tournaments at her accession day festivities, where the courtiers invented a role for themselves in a spectacle for their queen.[806] These and other rituals were deliberately used to mediate tensions between the aristocracy's and the queen's interests: aggression could be displayed ritually without actual combat in honour of the queen as the monarch.[807] By these means, the aristocracy felt that their ancient rights were acknowledged while Elizabeth received the due "ceremonial devotion" of her noble subjects.[808] However, the revival of feudal aristocratic rituals was an anachronistic and escapist fantasy of the upper classes who exerted themselves in quixotic and delusive mock tournaments.[809] However, the original concept of chivalry was just as belligerent as the Renaissance perception of honour that was propped up by the revival of medieval chivalric rituals.[810]

2.3.4 Virtues, War, and Male Aggression

War was the classic outlet for aristocratic chivalry, which was based on military virtues like courage and honour.[811] A man and especially a monarch was expected to follow a certain set of rules and behavioural codes to enforce his masculinity and moral legitimacy. In Latin, the ideas of man and virtue are linguistically intertwined—man (*vir*) is a constituent of virtue (*virtus*); thus, a man can be interpreted as the embodiment of virtue. This connection was accepted and commented on in the English Renaissance, firmly joining masculinity and the close adherence to ethical norms and ideals.[812] Breitenberg argues that honour was a constitutive foundation of masculine identity as a

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[805] McCoy 1989: 2.

[806] An example is Sidney's *The Four Foster Children of Desire*, portrayed in detail with other such incidents in McCoy 1989: passim. See also Strong 1977: 129-162 for a detailed account of Elizabeth's Accession Day tilts on November 17 and the chivalric roles of her courtiers. From 1588 onwards, the tilts were continued on November 19 to commemorate the English victory over the Armada; interestingly, this day is also St. Elizabeth's day (Strong 1977: 146; Yates 1975: 88-111).

[807] McCoy 1989: 4. In the later rule of Elizabeth, the tournaments should keep their participants free of harm and humiliation. It was still a strenuous affair like a sporting event that could release aggressive energies, but finally the heralds stopped to take the scores and claimed that everybody did well (McCoy 1989: 23-24).

[808] McCoy 1989: 14-15.

[809] McCoy 1989: 15-16. McCoy argues that Elizabethan chivalry had indeed a political meaning, but in effect it did not result in any viable successes. Sir Philip Sidney died in the Netherlands, when he indulged in his chivalric ambitions—and the Earl of Essex overshot the mark in his attempt to make the queen pliable to his wishes. His bravado expeditions did not result in any political changes, but were rather used by him to help further his image as an ideal knight. McCoy gives an example in Essex' solitary challenge of the Spanish in front of the gates of the city of Lisbon—a bravado action, but of no political impact, which nevertheless won him popular glory (McCoy 1989: 80). Strong also calls him the "inheritor of the Leicester-Sidney connection" (Strong 1977: 140).

[810] McCoy 1989: 18.

[811] McCoy 1989: 12. For the roots of the aspiration to honour, see Esler 1966: 112-124. On the virtues for a ruler, see Elyot 1962: 159-241, especially 159-164 on justice and 164-167 on reason.

[812] Smith 2000: 42.

social basis of being, a definite attribute of being a male.[813] He defines honour in the broad sense of anything synonymous to reputation, fame, credit, and public opinion. Even though the term "honour" was applicable to both men and women, it narrowed down to chastity and virginity for women, while it encompassed a broader range of meaning including status, privilege and nobility for men.[814] Interestingly, the more terms such as chastity and honour were used, the more they exposed that the status delineations of the nobility were threatened by other castes like Puritans, professionals, or commercial classes. Chastity and honour played a more important role in the upper classes where older foundations of status were declining due to greater social mobility. Marriages and chastity became a symbol for class purity and a demarcation line against social miscegenation.[815]

The landed classes had a high regard for "good lordship," the mutual exchange of support, patronage, and hospitality on the basis of loyalty, respect, advice, and deference. Emanating from the head of the house, good lordship embraced the whole household, the kin, tenants on the estate, servants, and the client gentry that formed a special social unit via "affinity." The system of good lordship entailed a special set of values based on loyalty that even superseded obedience to the law, the monarch, and the Ten Commandments.[816] Apart from the more collective values of lineage and lordship, honour was the most personal parameter of the male self in a patriarchal society. It derived from the medieval codex of chivalry but its impact lasted well into the eighteenth century, when "men of honour" would still challenge each other to a duel. Honour consisted of public recognition of a gentleman's individual worth based on his status and lineage by his peers. As a result, he deserved respect; however to maintain his honour, a gentleman had to prove his military valour in battle, and had to prop up his good faith by his lineage of origin and his connections through marriage.[817] Falstaff parodies the exalted valuation of honour in his own inimitable way in *1 Henry IV*. For him, death in battle is no option:

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[813] Cahill adds that the "earlier modes of subjectivity having to do with aristocratic codes of honor were being re-constituted through the modern practices of quantification and abstraction," (Cahill 2008: 19).

[814] Breitenberg 1996: 97-98. An identity based on honour means that identity is ascribed to a person by others. One therefore has to publish one's private deeds and characteristics; the private has to become public—and so a paradox develops: one *is* one's reputation, but it has to be applied by *others*. Thus, other people transfer identity on an individual, so it does not come from within as an essence. Masculine identity and thus honour derives from female chastity, so it is also dependent on something external and individually uncontrollable. This paradox becomes a frequent cause for masculine anxiety. While honour is crucial to both genders, women are responsible for men's honour—and not vice versa. Thus, chastity becomes a form of female power in a patriarchically installed system of female powerlessness. If honour is a basis for male identity, it has to be published, celebrated, and acknowledged by other men. And if male honour is also dependent on female chastity, the sexual comportment of wives also has to be published and circulated. Paradoxically, chastity becomes a public affair and has to be confirmed by others; however, it is also claimed to be an intrinsic value (see Breitenberg 1996: 98, 189, 100, 104).

[815] Breitenberg 1996: 104, 108.

[816] Stone 1995: 73. At a time where the nation state had to implement its position and had to penetrate the country with its laws, these connections of allegiance to special houses was potentially dangerous to the monarch. Especially in the north of England these old ties of lineage and lordship were still strong in the sixteenth century. People were still loyal to the Nevilles, the Percys, the Cliffords, or the Dacres. However, the rebellion of the northern earls proved this system to be in transition already, due to the new ideal of the nation state that concentrated obedience and loyalty on the monarch (see Stone 1995: 74).

[817] Stone 1995: 73-74.

> ‘Tis not due yet. I would be loath to pay him [death] before his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me? Well, ‘tis no matter; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on? How then? Can honour set-to a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? No. What is honour? A word. What is in that word ‘honour’? What is that ‘honour’? Air. A trim reckoning. Who hath it? He that died o’Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. ‘Tis insensible then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I’ll none of it. Honour is a mere scrutcheon. And so ends my catechism. (*1HIV*, 5.1.127-139)

During the English Renaissance, the meaning of the term “honour” changed; the term increasingly signified a socially acknowledged testimony of virtue by other good men, a confirmation of a previously obtained good name or virtue. The Calvinist movement had a different approach; it interpreted honour as a matter between God and individuals that went beyond mere words and human vanity, stressing the intrinsic value of honour as a fairly private affair.[818] Robert Ashley as a representative of the “old” perception of honour defined it as “a certaine testimonie of vertue shining of yt self, geven of some man by the judgement of good men[.]“[819] While Ashley still depended on other people’s judgement to confer honour on a person, Calvin thought of honour more as an inward value that entirely relied on an integer relationship between a human being and God:

> [Man] cannot claim for himself ever so little beyond what is rightfully his without losing himself in vain confidence and without usurping God’s honour, and thus becoming guilty of monstrous sacrilege.[820]

There was not only a shift from the public to the private perception of honour; further, the aristocratic understanding of honour as personal property had to be defended against the emerging world of commerce. In the England of the 1590s, two parallel economic systems competed for social hegemony: the old feudal system based on land and inheritance was challenged by the new capitalist system based on wealth.[821] Apparently, the old hierarchy dominated by the landed classes felt threatened by the new, aspiring merchant classes. The old aristocratic ideals still prevailed, however; the ideal virtuous man in early modern England was characterised by nobility, honesty, gentleness, honour, and virtue, all referring to social and ethical dimensions within the old hierarchy. “Nobility” was the social rank a person held, while “gentleness” was expected by a man who did not have to work for a living, and “honour” implied a person of high rank. Therefore, any account of early modern masculinity has to consider the social rank of the character in question.[822]

Kings were expected to exert the royal virtue of *iustitia*, justice.[823] Thomas Elyot explained that “justice is so necessary and expedient for the governor of a public weal that without it none other virtue may be commendable, nor wit or any manner of

[818] Breitenberg 1996: 102.
[819] Quoted from Council 1973: 15.
[820] Quoted from Council 1973: 26.
[821] Smith 2000: 43-44.
[822] Smith 2000: 42-43.
[823] Schruff 1999: 23-24.

doctrine profitable."[824] Instituted by God, the king is the main judge in his realm, the main reason why a king was not supposed to leave his throne or abdicate. He had to fulfil his duty that God gave him—everything else was deemed unnatural.[825] However, justice should not be exerted coolly but always with mercy, the divine attribute connected to justice. Justice could not be demanded or claimed but should be exerted without reserve and was irreversible.[826] If mercy was used well, the justice of a king exerted even more power by legitimising him morally. A prince could acquire further moral honour by keeping away from the vices of the plebs and monitoring the moral standards of his subjects. Any prince who had not yet reached this stage of moral integrity was not supposed to rule; he had not yet reached his moral maturity until he could control his own whims.[827] Renaissance historiography regarded Richard II and Edward II as examples of this moral failure, as both did not follow good advice but surrounded themselves with bad councillors. Both kings died horribly, wrecked by their own misrule.[828] To prevent this, a king was duty bound to surround himself with good counsellors who would keep him from erring; a king who surrounded himself with good and responsible councillors demonstrated his awareness of the fact that he was fallible.[829] Bad counsel or fawning, flattering courtiers were a bad omen for the kingdom.[830] Writing for the potential councillors, Castiglione advised his courtier readers to keep their conscience as their most important arbiter. If a conflict should arise, the courtier should follow his conscience and, if need be, should leave his master or resist him.[831]

To achieve the insight and wisdom necessary for good rule or good counselling, men had to cultivate their masculine rationality. While men were still expected to be active, controlling, and successful, there was a new stress on their rational and intellectual abilities.[832] The king as head of state was expected to exhibit this trait in abundance and be able to control himself rationally; should he succumb to his desires, he would lose rational control over himself and over the realm and thus his political authority.[833] The king as the head *had* to be rational and self-controlled as this was his inherent role within the body politic. The intellectual stress on rationality also made Renaissance men detect their other, dark, and brooding sides. They explored the secrets of their personalities that sometimes led to inner anguish and conflict.[834] Shakespeare's

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[824] Elyot 1962: 159.
[825] Breitenberg 1996: 165.
[826] Schruff 1999: 49.
[827] Tillyard 1944: 33.
[828] Tillyard 1944: 33.
[829] Schruff 1999: 89. The question of counsel was often discussed in terms of ideas deriving from antiquity that centre around the two poles of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. The main works from antiquity in question were Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics* and *Ethics* as well as Cicero's *De officiis* (Guy 1988: 410-413). The plays about Henry VI's rule are also telling examples of how the tension between the *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* were negotiated on stage.
[830] Schruff 1999: 86-87.
[831] Schruff 1999: 112.
[832] For problems with church authorities in that matter, see Doyle 1983: 29.
[833] Breitenberg 1996: 63, 65.
[834] Doyle 1983: 29.

tragedies, Greenblatt's findings on Renaissance self-fashioning, as well as Burton's book on melancholy give testimony of this.

The chivalric aristocrat was the main male ideal for the upper social strata and thus found his way into the history plays; his main goal was to achieve and maintain honour on the battlefield. Often, the decisive moments of the history plays centre on battle, and the kings have to prove their mettle in armed conflict. Therefore, war was a big influence on a society involved on many fronts and the arena where the nobility had to prove themselves. But war was not unproblematic; the political and religious conflicts of the sixteenth century had raised fundamental questions regarding war: was a Christian state permitted to instigate war? Could it fight against another Christian state? Could war be led for religious causes? How was a soldier's personal responsibility during battle to be evaluated? Citing biblical sources where Moses was ordered by God to fight and Christ's statement that what is Caesar's had to be given to Caesar, theorists concluded that Christians were allowed to wage wars but the cause of the war necessarily had to be just to justify the damage caused.[835] To be allowed and acceptable, war had to fulfil certain conditions: it had to have a just cause, could be led for religion's sake, was permitted in order to help out allied countries, and could be led against a state that "despoils the citizens of another state."[836] Personal revenge was not a legitimate cause for war, and armed combat was only a last resort if the conflict could not be solved otherwise. Additionally, the ruler could act as God's instrument for enacting divine justice, so war could also be interpreted as a chastisement for evildoers.[837] Stephen Gosson sums up these principles in his *Trumpet of Warre* in 1598:

> As warre must haue a iust title to make it lawfull, so it must also be undertaken by lawfull authoritie, that is, the authoritie of the Prince […]. The reason of it is this, that as in a common weale it is requisite there should be an authoritie, to punish offences, and to keepe the same in order: so in the wide worlde, that all kingdomes and commonweales might be preserued, it is requisit there shuld be a power & authority to punish iniuries, this power resting in no Prince in the worlde as superiour to al other Princes, war steps in in the place of iust vindicatiue iudgement, God hath left no other meanes unto Princes to flie unto.[838]

The history plays often displayed armed conflicts, especially against the French. Thus, they helped to build a collective English national memory by distinguishing between "us" and "them," drawing a line of distinctive national characteristics that were shared by the English collective. Thus, ideology unified historical developments into a past that presented the late Tudor state as a necessary result of historic consequence—the Tudor myth. Cahill adds that the militarisation and reordering of Elizabethan society were further influences that helped shape the feeling of nationhood.[839] Thus, both the

[835] Campbell 1947: 264-265.
[836] Campbell 1947: 265.
[837] Campbell 1947: 265-266.
[838] Gosson 1598: [sig.B8r].
[839] The "trained bands" were a new phenomenon that appeared in 1573. This domestic army was regulated and overseen by lord deputies (Cahill 2008: 14-15).

new knowledge about the world as well as the trauma produced by violence is brought to the stage.[840]

Men were expected to assert their masculinity constantly, so city governors encouraged young men in urban settings throughout Europe to channel their masculine energy in military ways; they should prop up their work ethic with marching and drill, and bond loyally with their respective neighbourhoods and guilds.[841] Young noblemen, in contrast, were initiated into manhood by Renaissance society initially through hunting and later through marriage.[842] The history plays, however, use battle, not hunting, as a litmus test for the masculinity of young princes. Common soldiers—even the ones who fought with Henry V at Agincourt—had a difficult stance in Elizabethan England. Barnabe Googe sums up their problems in his preface to Captain Barnabe Riche's work *Allarme to England* from 1578:

> But our countrey hath always had that faute (and I am afrayde will never be without it) of much unnaturall and unthankfull to such as with their great hazard, paynes and charges have fought to attayne to the knowledge of armes, by which shee is chiefly maintained, succoured and defended. To bring one example among thousands. What a number was there of noble Gentlemen, and worthy souldiours, that in the dayes of that victorious prince King Henry the fifth (after the honourable behaving of themselves, as well at *Agincourt*, as other places, to the discomfiture and utter overthrowe of the whole Chivalry of Fraunce) returning to their countrey, were pitifully constrained (and which was indeed most miserable) in their olde and honourable age for very want and necessitie to begge, whyle a great number of unworthy wretched that lyved at home, enjoyed all kindes of felicities. That noble Gentleman Syr William Drurie a Paragon of armes at this day, was wont (I remember) to say, that the souldiers of England had always one of these three endes to looke for: To be slayne, To begge, or To be hanged.[843]

The soldiers returning from war were often disoriented and had problems reintegrating into a civil society that frequently treated them with disrespect.[844] Gaveston's handling of the soldiers seeking employment is a good literary example for this. The men drafted for military service were usually without means; in theory, all able-bodied men between sixteen and sixty could be conscripted but in actual fact, mainly masterless and poor men were pressed into service. A report of the Privy Council in 1598 shows that vagrants or men from jails were recruited. They were mostly destitute, beggarly men that were not really considered fit for service. Some did not even have shoes.[845] Eventually, "fitness" for service became normative through selection, so the male body became legible. This modern notion correlates with the rise

[840] Cahill 2008: 40-41. Cahill makes clear that she does not equate early modern trauma with modern and post-modern shell shock or post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) but that militarism in Tudor England produced its own forms of trauma in the soldiers (Cahill 2008: 137-139, 179 and *passim*). Guns, for example, were the loudest noise that an early modern person was able to hear. The effect of a cannon shot in the theatre should therefore not be underestimated (Cahill 2008: 183).
[841] Rowland 2005: 23.
[842] Kamm 2009: 75.
[843] Quoted from Campbell 1947: 245.
[844] Cahill 2008: 19, 172-173.
[845] Cahill 2008: 14; Falls 1955: 52. MacCaffrey 1992: 47.

of the influence of quantifying and calculating within Western Culture.[846] A quotation shows how the selection process worked:

> He that wyll goe about to muster men, must be verye carefull that by the continuaunce, by the eyes, by the sure compacting and and joining of the lymmes, he chose them which may be able to perfourme the parte and dutie of souldiours. For not only in men, but also in horses and in dogges, the chiefest power is by many tokens […].
>
> Let the young man therefore that shalbe a souldiour, not looke drowsily, let hym be straighte necked, broade brested, let his shoulders be well fleshe, let him have stro[n]g fingers, longe armes, a gaunte belly, slender legges, the calfe and feete not too full of fleshe, but knitte faste with harde and stronge synowes. Fynding these tokens in a souldiour, you neade not greatly complayne for want of tall stature. For more requisite it is that souldiours be stronge and valiant, then huge and great.[847]

The ideal features of a soldier's body were clearly defined. Here, the ideal is still constituted among the lines of "ability" and "sufficiency" versus inability and insufficiency. Later on, these dualities would move towards the social dichotomy of the normative and the deviant.[848]

Ideally, of course, soldiers should obey their superiors and serve their monarchs unconditionally, but due to the harsh realities that English soldiers faced, literature condensed their grievances into the deviant figure of the malcontent.[849] He is unwilling to adapt to his social class and angry at being unable to find his place in the social setting; his actions are often motivated by a feeling of disappointed merit. The malcontent is not inherently wicked or bad but turned evil by his sense of deprivation. As a consequence, he is a troublemaker and a disturber of the order because he is not part of it.[850] He is dangerous as he has a lot to gain and nothing to lose—his motivation is directed against the system that has denied him his due. He is a potential traitor and often threatens revenge; he is spiteful and angry at the world that denied him his gratification.[851] In contrast to the conventional figure of the Machiavel, the malcontent is an outspoken character. Richard III is a Machiavel; even though he describes the subtle secrecy of his proceedings in various soliloquies and monologues, he keeps his schemes from the public.[852] The Machiavel, however, exists in two different versions. The first "Machiavel" is an infamous manipulator who tries to gain power and influence in the state merely to quench his thirst for power. He is highly intelligent, a schemer, who works only for his own personal satisfaction.[853] The second "Machiavel" is closer to

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[846] Cahill 2008: 76-77, 78. She also refers to Canguilhem 1978.
[847] Quoted from Cahill 2008: 77.
[848] Cahill 2008: 78-79.
[849] On malcontents and their melancholy, see Esler 1966: 202-243, Babb 1959: 3, and Whitman 1973: *passim*. Melancholy was further associated with genius and believed to be "imported" from Italy until it became an epidemic in England from the 1580s onwards (Babb 1959: 3).
[850] Keller 1993: 5-6.
[851] Keller 1993: 6, 8.
[852] Keller 1993: 8. Richard Gloucester gives away his Machiavel strategy when he claims: "Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile, / And cry 'Content!' to that which grieves my heart, / And wet my cheeks with artificial tears, / And frame my face to all occasions," (*3HIV*, 3.2.182-185).
[853] Keller 1993: 6. Ribner states that the stage character of Machiavel was rather derived from "the Senecan villain-hero and the morality play Vice than from anything in Machiavelli's writings." The Machiavel has a history of his own, specifically in England (Ribner 1965: 18).

Machiavelli's prince than the stage character that owes a lot to the medieval Vice figure; as he acts to "acquire and maintain" his power, he only uses violence or strong means for the benefit of the commonwealth, never for his own. Evil for its own sake or for personal gratification is off limits to this kind of Machiavel, who strives for his personal security as well as the peace of his realm.[854] The malcontent can borrow from either Machiavellian character. Princes often represent the second type of Machiavel, whereas villains and schemers are rather modelled after the first type, the stage Machiavels. Motivated by "bitterness, envy, and desperation," the malcontent struggles for freedom of action but is stuck between the desire to control his fortune with self-discipline and his own *virtú*.[855]

One of the best examples of a malcontent prince using his *virtú* successfully is Henry Bolingbroke in *Richard II*.[856] This type is frustrated because he was deprived of a position he once held, usually the crown or another favourable position. He strives to consolidate the dominant power and is therefore not interested in disorder as such. He is often displaced by an upstart and therefore wants to reinstate the old order and attempts to do so by reverting to political cunning and intrigue. This figure questions and negotiates the Elizabethan system of patronage as well as the political struggle of the Earl of Essex in the 1590s.[857] The malcontent soldier as a type was inspired by other political and social problems of Elizabethan rule. He wanted his merits to be valued but was often deprived of the most basic necessities: food, housing, clothes, and money. His actions on stage are often ambiguous—he would support the ruling order if his needs were fulfilled. But as he was not granted his wishes for respect and remuneration, he often strove for a "forcible transformation of power within the system."[858] Aristocratic soldiers combine the problems and privileges of a prince and a common soldier. An aristocratic soldier is not only responsible for his army but may also be motivated to secure a position at court for his pains; thus, he both furthers the position of his sovereign and pursues a good reward for himself.[859] The malcontent characters of drama impersonate this ideological struggle. More often than not, a malcontent is eager to change something in the *status quo* and becomes a restless and subversive element in the plays.[860] If his actions cannot be absorbed into the existing order, he has to be destroyed to keep out the forces of subversion.[861]

2.4 Renaissance Organisation of Thought

The Enlightenment decisively changed how information was organised; the Renaissance regarded the accumulation of facts and history a favoured area of

[854] Keller 1993: 6-7, 1.
[855] Keller 1993: 7, 9.
[856] Keller 1993: 69.
[857] Keller 1993: 13-14.
[858] Keller 1993: 14.
[859] Keller 1993: 82.
[860] Keller 1993: 163.
[861] Keller 1993: 163.

knowledge.[862] Michel Foucault made palpable how people in the Renaissance understood their world. For them, "nature, in itself, is an unbroken tissue of words and signs, of accounts and characters, of discourse and forms."[863] Everything existed in a web of connections; reflection, analogies, and the idea of intrinsic interconnection between objects constituted a fundamentally different way of perceiving the world. Altman's study on how Renaissance drama mirrors the early modern frame of mind stresses this interrelation of things. Tudor plays were staged questions that fictionalised educational and humanist thinking patterns; humanist education in rhetoric and logic enabled the student not only to argue for or against an issue but also to investigate the nature of a debated question. This training began as early as grammar school and shows in writers' intensive use of rhetorical figures, debates in drama, shifts in points of view, and a concern for the matter of rhetoric itself.[864]

Humanist education strove to produce heterodoxical thinking, as students were often encouraged to argue *in utramque partem*—on both sides of a question. Consequently, the students had a nuanced view of debates of the time, and Renaissance training of thought resulted in ambivalence and equally weighed points of view in a text.[865] The dramas written by playwrights trained in this school of thought express this tendency towards heterodoxy as they often juxtaposed different subjects and views without resolving the tension between them. Reality was more complex than theories for these thinkers; plays became staged questions that centred on proofs and counterproofs to work out possible solutions to a problem at hand. Stage characters presented different points of view and developed strategies to evaluate and possibly solve the issue while entertaining the audience. This form of drama was called "explorative comedies."[866]

Tragedies could also be "explorative" in so far as they juxtaposed different movements towards the tragic end. These tragedies commented events, argued, and described them but while they share the same concern about rhetoric and critical analysis, they are not as positive about the efficiency of these measures as the comedies. The tragedies are trapped in a world where will, not reason, dominates, and where man is entangled in his fate due to tragic flaws that lead to his inevitable fall. Whereas the struggle of the "tragic plight" of the protagonist is surveyed through the lens of Renaissance scholarship, the audience is not rewarded with an idea about how to

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[862] Tillyard 1944: 54-55. For more information on Renaissance thinking and the use of imagery, see Tuve 1947.
[863] Foucault 1970: 39-40.
[864] Altman 1978: 1-3.
[865] Altman 1978: 3. Altman continues: "Still more problematic, when a writer trained in sophistic rhetoric has assimilated the various elements of composition taught in the discipline—speeches of praise and blame, arguments in defense of a proposition, *sententiae* confirming an argument, mimeses of persons in highly emotional states—and has learned to seek out and enjoy these passages in the literature he reads, what will be the nature of the aesthetic experience he provides in the play he composes *of* them? A rhetorical element designed to arouse passion may be placed beside one designed to investigate truth, which will perhaps be juxtaposed to another commanding assent. How will these parts relate to one another, and how will their collocation affect the auditor's response?" (Altman 1978: 4).
[866] Altman 1978: 229.

resolve the conflict. What the audience may be granted, however, is an insight into the motivations of the hero who is driven by internal and external forces into his doom.[867]

The juxtaposition of different voices and issues that may even contradict each other more often than not puzzles the modern mind, which feels the need for a stringent plot with a clear-cut result. The Renaissance mind meandered through issues, arguing for this and that point with equal fervour and presenting complications without necessarily resolving them. What seems to be a lack in consistency and uniformity is just a different reasoning than post-modern thinking habits.[868] Elizabethan drama aimed to present different but useful ideas about life and human behaviour, even if they endorsed contradicting theses. Tudor dramatists were aware of the fact that there are different levels of response to a story, so including different approaches and theses was justified for them. Humanist thinking had taught Elizabethan audiences to acknowledge the validity of different approaches; emotional and moral responses could lead to contradictory truths that were both valid in their own right.[869] By juxtaposing different points of view, metaphors, and arguments, the audience was forced to think the matter through for themselves. Instead of understanding everything at once, Erasmus identifies advantages in the use of cryptic allegories and their effect on an audience:

> Allegory not infrequently results in enigma. Nor will that be unfortunate, if you are speaking to the learned, or if you are writing […]. For things should not be so written that everyone perceives everything, but rather so that they are compelled to investigate certain things, and learn.[870]

Examples given to prove an argument did not need to be analogous but should share a "larger conceptual identity" with their point of reference.[871] Thus, analogies, images, and parallelisms had a heavy weight in argumentation. Rosemund Tuve discusses how Elizabethan imagery was logically employed: "the majority of images using trope would be covered formally by the definition: two things seen to be in parallel predicaments or 'places'."[872] Thus, the relation between referent and dramatic or linguistic signs was rather symbolic.

Many Elizabethan dramas did not only fulfil a didactic mission; by staging questions, the plays widened the moral scope as they delved into the "intellectual and

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[867] Altman 1978: 230.
[868] Masten 1997: 11.
[869] Altman 1978: 260.
[870] Quoted from Altman 1978: 206**.** Altman explains that allegories were perceived of as "extended metaphors." Metaphors were not only linguistically decorative but were thought to exercise the wit. John Hoskins explains why: "A METAPHOR, or TRANSLATION*,* is the friendly and neighborly borrowing of one word to express a thing with more light and better note [...]. The rule of a metaphor is that it be not too bold nor too far-fetched. And though all metaphors go beyond the signification of things, yet are they requisite to match the compassing sweetness of men's minds, that are not content to fix themselves upon one thing but they must wander into the confines; like the eye, that cannot choose but view the whole knot when it beholds but one flower in a garden of purpose [...]. Besides, a metaphor is pleasant because it enricheth our knowledge with two things at once, with the truth and similitude [...]," (Hoskins 1935: 8). Interesting here is that the *tertium comparationis* is termed a "similitude," whereas the referent is the "truth." The separation of truth and referent is not yet exacted: nature and things are truth. This is important to understand the materiality of Elizabethan thinking.
[871] Altman 1978: 204.
[872] Tuve 1947: 286.

emotional exploration" of a question at hand, examining it from many points of view to seek out its internal truth. By putting the quest for the inner truth of an issue on stage, the contemplative and intellectual endeavour of the playwright was enacted as well.[873] The questions on stage could be fictionalised in two ways: first by imitation—a realistic portrayal on stage that is informed by the question at hand or troubled by it—or second by enriching the question's significance. Thus, the metaphorical implications widen the view to a bigger range of experience in the drama.[874] Imitation was an established means of Tudor education. While writers like Coignet considered it to be lying, counterfeiting, and deceit, humanists like Ascham praised imitation's ability to teach; imitation was a means of relating more closely to nature as the blueprint of art.[875]

Early modern thinkers conceptualised nature and language as female and therefore needing to be mastered and "discovered." By the coercion of the scientist, nature would be forced to reveal the secrets and truths God hid within her.[876] Like women, nature had to be bridled and pressed to give away her secrets to become controllable.[877] Bacon thought that the world could be understood by the human mind in its pristine state, if all the layers of false appearance and contamination that overshadowed creation since the Fall were pulled away.[878] In *The Advancement of Learning*, he wrote: "God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass, capable of the image of the universal world, and joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light."[879] Bacon sees the masculine subject as permanently striving for knowledge. For him, all satisfaction deriving from knowledge is tainted by the fact that it derives from "promiscuous" nature. The supreme knowledge—that of God—can never be reached by man.[880] So, a man can only *strive* for knowledge, never reaching the pure, complete and absolute truth of things. So desire, the not having, is the motor of all knowledge, not having achieved a certain goal. However, the economy of desiring mastery over nature is embedded in the bigger discourse of perception that the male mind has to build knowledge and power on the mastery of the female nature. So even within the discourse of thinking, any female agency had to be subjugated to masculinity.[881]

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[873] Altman 1978: 6.
[874] Altman 1978: 196.
[875] Campbell 1947: 93; Ascham 2011: 606-608.
[876] Breitenberg 1996: 81. The cultural link between the female and nature is ancient. Some etymologies derive "matter" from "mater" (mother) or "matrix" (womb). Matter, therefore, is the originating, the reproductive principle. What matters, is matter, it has the power of creation and possibility, and is also the principle of cultural intelligibility. Materiality, then, is the effect of power while working formatively and constitutingly (see Butler 1993: 31-34). So, women reproduce matter, but men give it its form or spirit (see Butler 1993: 31; Laqueur 1990: 28). The connection of the female with matter and nature deprived her also of a metaphysical connection that was granted to men because of their rationality (see Butler 1993: 38).
[877] Nature and primal being were perceived as being female, whereas the male was associated with culture and artificially constructed or formed being – a primary non-existence that is a further reason for the male anxiety to slip back to the female if male characteristics are not sufficiently asserted or even lived (Kay 1998: 121).
[878] Breitenberg 1996: 82.
[879] Bacon 1974: 7.
[880] Breitenberg 1996: 90.
[881] Breitenberg 1996: 91.

The intellectual refinement of the 1590s was a result of the developments in the previous decade; humanist education and its intellectual formation exposed their public impact by having drama revolve around political issues. Altman identifies a few "standard courtly themes," as he terms them: "the nature of sovereignty; the place of love in the life of a public person; the relationship between courtier and monarch; the character of woman; the rival claims of love and friendship, of passion and chastity."[882] The history plays deal with most of these questions in a highly politicised setting. And while a decisive solution to a problem could not always be found, it was worth striving for.

The intellectual training at school was meant to produce men of firm moral conviction who would be able to lead public and responsible lives. It was considered important that they be able to transport their views and persuade others to adopt their cause. For this reason, not only the art of rhetoric but also Christian ethics and values were part of the curricula.[883] Erasmus of Rotterdam writes about the choice and use of school material that should catch a pupil's attention in his "sketch of the curriculum of St. Paul's":

> [C]are must be taken to propound themes not only worthy the subject but suitable, as being within the range of the boy's interest. For in this way he may acquire not only training in style, but also a certain store of facts and ideas for future use. For example, such a subject as the following would prove attractive: "The rash self-confidence of Marcellus imperilled the fortunes of Rome; they were retrieved by the caution of Fabius." Here we see the underlying sentiment, that reckless counsels hasten toward disaster. Here is another: "Which of the two shows less wisdom, Crates who cast his gold into the sea, or Midas who cherished it as his supreme good?" […] Mythology and fable will also serve your purpose.[884]

The citation shows that Tudor schooling aimed to teach pupils how to find the governing principles that informed actions of the past for themselves. By exploring the two-sidedness of the issues at hand, the deeper levels of these questions should expose the underlying patterns of human life through text production. The universality of examples—the link between the universal and the specific—and different points of view were the foci of this pedagogy. The students were encouraged to imagine themselves in life situations different from their own, and to explore matters with different eyes. Thus, subjective limitations were overcome to enable a perspective of humanity in general.[885]

Tudor education stressed the virtues of self-reliance, the ability to analyse underlying motivations for action, and the ability to communicate personal aims and convictions; a strong moral basis within oneself should provide the strength. Cicero calls for stoic constancy in his book *De officiis*, demanding the right measure or decorum in dealing with duties. His work was a standard text for grammar school students in the sixteenth century; by acting according to balance and rationality, Cicero taught that an individual could form himself without getting trapped in the pitfalls of

[882] Altman 1978: 283, fn 45; 197.
[883] Altman 1978: 43.
[884] Woodward 1904: 169-170.
[885] Altman 1978: 44-45, 53.

personal pride.[886] Besides, keeping calm in the face of another person's anger provided autonomy and is thus a mode of social power.[887]

Understanding the lines of thought and the mode of reasoning that guided the Renaissance mind opens up a field of understanding useful for evaluating puzzling juxtapositions in the plays. Not only do the history plays deal with power and politics; they often situate the ruler in a problematic setting that he has to evaluate, thereby illuminating his character and success as a ruler. In addition to the personal level, the plays deal with history, a field of knowledge that gained importance as humanism became increasingly influential. The following chapter examines the strategies and the importance that history and history writing had for Tudor England and how the history plays were located within the discourse of historiography.

2.5 Tudor Historiography

Humanism and the Reformation had already established the importance of history as a useful field of knowledge; humanism encouraged the search both for one's own self and a national identity through history as the knowledge of one's origins was the basis for individual identity. History was considered one of the best teachers of how fickle fortune could be.[888] The Reformation used history to justify the positions it was moving to with historical facts.[889] History chronicling became ever more important under the Tudors, and the history plays were deeply influenced by this development of historiography. The chronicles not only provided the material for the history plays but also played an active role in the nation building process setting in under the Tudors; they were an important tool for the Elizabethan understanding of history that went beyond mere comprehension of the past. Francis Bacon explicitly lists history in his classification of learning according

> [t]o the three partes of Mans vnderstanding, which is the seate of Learning: HISTORY to his MEMORY, POESIE to his IMAGINATION, and PHILOSOPHIE to his REASON:[890]

History was considered to be a good and desirable area for learning since it was a vast field of accumulated facts. Thus, it could instruct and inform a person's memory, and humanist learning encouraged the accumulation of facts which could then be used for the compilation of knowledge and for the moral function of historical examples.[891] Historical writing was thought to enable young men to tap the experience of old age and the accumulated wisdom of former times.[892] Thus, young men should follow the good examples of former heroes whose noble acts were preserved and immortalised in historical writing.[893] To enter the chronicles and be immortalised for one's deeds to posterity was regarded as a motivating factor for men in pursuing glory and perform

[886] Emig 2009: 52.
[887] Strier 1995: 104.
[888] Campbell 1947: 19-21. For more on Tudor historiography and its development, see Rackin 1990: 5-12.
[889] Campbell 1947: 33.
[890] Bacon 1605: Bb3r.
[891] Tillyard 1944: 54-55.
[892] See also chapter .2.4 on Renaissance thought.
[893] Tillyard 1944: 56.

great acts.[894] Historiography, therefore, always had a purpose beyond the mere memorisation of dates and warriors—one of its main functions was to be a "political mirror"[895] History was thought to present examples and consequences of personal actions and decisions to rulers, magistrates, and the interested individual alike to teach them morals, provide good examples, and justify political decisions. History's examples should educate its readers. However, this view of history was not universal. Sir Philip Sidney argued in *A Defence of Poetry* that only poets could convey their message with a striking example—not the dull historian. For him, the reason for writing, reading, and watching fiction was the illustration of heroic masculinity.[896]

The idea that history served a moral end was already commonplace in the 1590s.[897] Renaissance historiography culminates in Raleigh's *History of the World* from 1614. In his preface, he summed up all the ruling humanist and reformatory theories on history including the notion that history repeats itself and follows a pattern. If one learned history's lesson, one could provide for the future as it became eventually calculable.[898] Campbell stresses that this work is a "culmination of a tradition" and has to be read and understood in the "light of what had gone before."[899] Raleigh followed Augustine's understanding of history as an ever-repeating pattern. Raleigh interpreted the cycles of revenge and reward in English history before the Tudors as follows in the preface of his *History of the World*:

> And that it may no lesse appeare by euident proofe, than by asseueration, That ill doing hath alwaies beene attended with ill successe; I will here, by way of preface, runne ouer some examples, which the worke ensuing hath not reached. […] This cruelty the secret and vnsearchable iudgement of GOD reuenged, on the Grand-child of *Edward* the Third: and so it fell out, euen to the last of that Line, that in the second or third descent they were all buried vnder the ruines of those buildings, of which the Mortar had beene tempered with innocent bloud. For *Richard* the second, […] was in the Prime of his youth deposed; and murdered by his by his Cosen-germane and vassall, *Henry of Lancaster*; afterwards *Henry* the fourth. […] This King, whose Title was weake, and his obtaining the Crowne traitorous: […] he saw (if Soules immortall see and discerne any thinges after the bodies death) his Grand-childe *Henrie* the sixt, and his Sonne the Prince, suddenly, and without mercy, murdered; the posseßion of the Crowne (for which he had caused so much blood to bee powred out) transferred from his race; and by the Issues of his Enemies worne and enioyed. […] This cruell King [Richard III], *Henry* the seauenth cut off; and was therein (no doubt) the immediate instrument of GODS iustice.[900]

In his work, English history follows the same circular pattern as the Tudor myth: the sin of a king will eventually be revenged on his grandson. The murder of Edward II lead to the disasters of the Wars of the Roses; after this, Edward III killed his uncle, the Duke of Kent—a deed that fell on his grandson Richard II, who was to be deposed and killed for his misrule; Henry IV's usurpation of the English throne condemned the reign

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[894] Tillyard 1944: 56.
[895] Campbell 1947: 15. See also 107-108.
[896] Smith 2000: 135-136; Sidney 2002: 82-84, 89-94, 103, 111.
[897] Campbell 1947: 49.
[898] Tillyard 1944: 55.
[899] Campbell 1947: 79-80.
[900] Raleigh 1614: A3r-B1r. Tillyard comments that Raleigh's work shows perfectly how history evolves from metaphysics and cannot be separated from theology (Tillyard 1944: 9).

of his grandson Henry VI; Henry VII, eventually, had the lords Stanley and Warwick executed, so his grandson Edward VI was punished with an early death.[901]

Historiography was regarded as an applied science; whoever understood the machinations of history could use it for his ends or derive personal edification from moral examples when faced with difficulties. Ribner sees the moral and didactic purpose of history as its main end; Renaissance scholars engaged with history to "moralis[e] on cause and effect."[902] The use of the past helped evaluate political actions as well as the virtues and failings of contemporary statesmen. Additionally, history documented political theory and thus provided a qualitative means for assessing current political affairs.[903] Apart from the moral, ethical, and political lessons, the didactic use of history provided exercise of style for students, celebrated the past and present glories of a national state, and helped to further the emergence of a unified nation state.[904] Besides, the study of past political disasters could provide strength and help for individuals to bear present political disorder and upheavals with stoical fortitude that was grounded in humanism.[905] Other historiographers wanted to discover how political leaders could achieve their ends in a space freed of Providence. It should be "a field for the play of the heroic energy of the autonomous politic will, seeking to dominate events by its command of the political arts."[906] Machiavelli's work is an example of this new tradition of using and interpreting history.

The older Christian streak of historiography stressed different merits; from this perspective, history explained how God's justice and wisdom provided a rational plan in human events.[907] This approach was universal, providential, apocalyptic, and periodised; it usually began with the creation of Adam and encompassed the history of the world.[908] Thus, history provided an intelligible and rational pattern that reflected God's justice evolving in human affairs.[909] The belief in God's interference in human action had an impact on real life; the medieval concepts of "cleansing oaths" and judgements of God were used to determine guilt or innocence; it was thought that God had the most interest in revenging injustice, so the outcome was interpreted as a divine verdict. Respectable people, nobility, merchants, and even the pope could rid themselves of allegations by swearing an oath, which could "cleanse" them. Persons of rank could also use self-execration – if they had said or vowed untruth, then God could revenge their misdeeds. Because collecting evidence was difficult at the time, the belief in the intervention of divine justice constituted a major part of the legal system and was not considered separate from the secular world. Even though judgements of God were

[901] Tillyard 1944: 61-62.
[902] Reese 1961: 65-66, Ribner 1965: 16, 12.
[903] All Ribner 1965: 19, 24. These points derive from classical and humanist thinking about history.
[904] Ribner 1965: 12-13.
[905] All Ribner 1965: 24. These points derive from classical and humanist thinking about history.
[906] Guy 1988: 415.
[907] Ribner 1965: 24.
[908] Ribner 1965: 19.
[909] Ribner 1965: 20.

forbidden from the twelfth century onwards, they were used nevertheless and cleansing oaths were still allowed.[910]

2.5.1 The Historical Sources

Appointed by Henry VII, Polidore Vergil was the first humanist writer to compile an English history. Even though his work was not available to the general public in England, he provided his successors with abundant material. He was also the first historiographer who began to narrate history instead of merely putting events in an annalistic form. By relating cause and effect, interpreting the events, and generalising their significance, he formed a unified narrative that was exemplary to his successive historiographers.[911] Vergil's writing was unique in that he consciously competed with classical historians and related historical events very critically.[912] He thought that history developed evolutionarily and drew a parallel between the maturity and decay of states and the life of man. England, according to Vergil, was already old when she was renewed and invigorated by the Norman Conquest.[913] Vergil detected repetitive historical patterns in the period between the reigns of Richard II and Henry VII and used this stretch of time as an example of how divine vengeance of a royal crime unfolded within time and plagued later generations until the enthronisation of the Tudors ended these strives.[914] This evaluation was probably based on Augustine's claim in his work *City of God* that history was a manifestation of God's judgements; God "can never be believed to have left the kingdoms of men, their dominations and servitudes, outside of the laws of His providence."[915] He goes on further to define his argument:

> These things being so, we do not attribute the power of giving kingdoms and empires to any save to the true God, who gives happiness in the kingdom of heaven to the pious alone, but gives kingly power on earth both to the pious and the impious, as it may please Him, whose good pleasure is always just. For though we have said something about the principles which guide His administration, in so far as it has seemed good to Him to explain it, nevertheless it is too much for us, and far surpasses our strength, to discuss the hidden things of men's hearts, and by clear examination to determine the merits of various kingdoms. […] Manifestly these things are ruled and governed by the one God according as He pleases; and if His motives are hid, are they therefore unjust?[916]
>
> Thus also the duration of wars are determined by Him as He may see meet, according to His righteous will, and pleasure, and mercy, to afflict or to console the human race, so that they are sometimes of longer, sometimes of shorter duration. […] Let them, therefore, who have read history recollect what long-continued wars, having various issues and entailing woful [sic] slaughter, were waged by the ancient Romans, in accordance with the general truth that the earth, like the tempestuous deep, is subject to agitations from tempests – tempests of such evils, in various degrees – and let them sometimes confess what they do

[910] Seibt 1987: 408.
[911] Campbell 1947: 59-60.
[912] Tillyard 1944: 32.
[913] Note that martial prowess and brutality can invigorate and renew a country according to this doctrine. This idea is recurrent in Renaissance literature.
[914] Tillyard 1944: 36-37.
[915] Augustine (1993): Book 5, chapter xi, 158.
[916] Augustine (1993): Book 5, chapter xxi, 174-175.

> not like to own, and not, by madly speaking against God, destroy themselves and deceive the ignorant.[917]

History simply *had* to evolve the way it did as it was God's plan; everything had a meaning, even though people might not be able to see it immediately.

Sir Thomas More's *The History of Richard the Third* stands out for its deeply theatrical portrayal of Richard III. Shakespeare's play borrowed many details such as the king gnawing his lip from More. The portrait of this king as the arch-villain derives from More as well—a construct no one has been able to alter yet. Following the style of Thucydides, More made his characters speak.[918] Even though he kept close to the historical events, More exposed a sense for the dramatic in his writing; thus, he followed Froissart even though a direct link between the two writers cannot be established with certainty. More's moral judgement is close to Polidore Vergil's, who is quite benevolent regarding human weakness; his style of writing very probably informed Shakespeare's with his dramatic, as opposed to anecdotal, approach.[919]

One of the main sources for the history plays were the chronicles of Edward Hall. His work covers most of Shakespeare's histories up to Henry V, but his work on Richard III seems to be a mere reproduction of More's.[920] Hall dramatised the Tudor myth that Vergil had only outlined and turned it into a national sanctum of orthodoxy. He moralised the events with his own comments to an extent previously unparalleled and draws strong connections between the holy and the profane.[921] At a time when coherent writing was a rarity in a longer work, Hall ordered his writing by the historical pattern mentioned above; creating an intricate chain of events leading up to the punishment of vice and divine reconciliation with the English by establishing the Tudor monarchy is an achievement in itself.[922] Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* was first published in 1577, but in 1587 a second and enlarged edition came out.[923] Holinshed took much of his material from Vergil and Hall; Tillyard condemned his handling of the material as "parrotwise and with little understanding" and even "unintelligent;" for Tillyard, Holinshed "blurs the great Tudor myth."[924] Due to his simplicity, Holinshed made the material easily available at first glance and covered much more material than Hall's Chronicle, so the merit of his work was mainly its utility.[925]

The *Mirror for Magistrates* is one of the best examples of the didactic use of history. Targeting state officials, the work proceeded methodologically by explaining a chosen situation and then drawing parallels with a historical occasion that exemplifies the same political problem. Thus, it aimed at teaching moral lessons about good rule,

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[917] Augustine (1993): Book 5, chapter xxii, 175-176.
[918] Campbell 1947: 64, 67.
[919] Tillyard 1944: 38-39.
[920] Tillyard 1944: 40.
[921] Tillyard 1944: 45, 47.
[922] Tillyard 1944: 49-50
[923] Campbell 1947: 72, 75.
[924] Tillyard 1944: 50, 51.
[925] Tillyard 1944: 51.

political duties, and the well-being of the state and the population.[926] The efforts of the *Mirror* were well received; seven editions were published between 1559 and 1587. The huge popularity of the book shows that it had become commonplace in Elizabethan popular culture by the 1590s. It was a milestone in late Tudor literature as it used history to mirror actual events and it was written completely in poetical form.[927] Campbell calls the *Mirror for Magistrates* "the other offspring" of "the marriage of history and poetry," the other being the history plays; the *Mirror* was printed in the first year of Elizabeth's reign.[928] From the 1563 edition onwards, further material was added in subsequent editions up to the time of Henry VIII; thus, it covered the time span Shakespeare used for his history plays.[929] The *Mirror for Magistrates*' function was merely didactic; rather than stressing the accumulation of historical knowledge, the notions of history as a repetitive pattern, the stress on obedience to the monarchs, and the depiction of civil war as a national tragedy all express Elizabethan orthodoxy.[930]

The kings depicted in the history plays were well-established archetypes in the historical writing of the period. Their examples had been used to mirror actual political events to exemplify political morals; a strategy the history plays also employ. Any alteration by the playwright in his dramas was arbitrary and can be understood as a means of commenting on the politics of the writer's time.[931] In Elizabeth's case, Sir Robert Dudley had long been charged with being "evill counsel." From the beginning of Elizabeth's reign until Dudley's death, he was accused of influencing the queen according to his own political wishes. The charge that Elizabeth was dominated by her favourites was not dropped until the 1590s; public opinion next accused Walsingham and Cecil.[932] Traditional Tudor historiography interpreted the downfall of Richard II and Edward II as caused by corrupted counsellors. Hall explicitly connects the two:

> [U]nprofitable counsailers wer his [king Richard's] confusion and finall perdicion. Suche another ruler was kyng Edwarde the seconde, whiche two before named kynges fell from the high glory of fortunes whele into extreme misery and miserable calamitee.[933]

Edward II, Richard II, Henry VI, and Edward V were kings charged with childishness, immaturity and ambition. Positive examples of good kingship were traditionally Edward III, Henry IV, Henry V, and Edward IV.[934] This enumeration is somewhat problematic, however; Henry IV was a usurper of the throne and deposed God's anointed on earth, a sin for which there was no atonement. Edward IV was a womaniser, a lecher, and an adulterer who was charged with being too interested in his

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[926] Campbell 1947: 110; Campbell 1960: *passim*. In the *Mirror for Magistrates*, deceased English politicians and kings who ended badly hold fictionalised monologues about their careers. Ethics, politics, as well as the stories themselves are then commented on and discussed by the authors of the book. The range of historical figures stretches from the reign of Richard II to that of Edward IV (Tillyard 1944: 72-73).
[927] Campbell 1947: 111.
[928] Campbell 1947: 106.
[929] Tillyard 1944: 72-73.
[930] Tillyard 1944: 89-90.
[931] Campbell 1947: 125.
[932] Campbell 1947: 171-176.
[933] Quoted from Campbell 1947: 170-171.
[934] Tillyard 1944: 63.

own pleasure. Nevertheless, the kings had already been evaluated by historiography, and the use of their reigns for history plays reproduced or challenged these perceptions while providing a vehicle for criticising actual politics at the same time.

2.5.2 Tudor Myth

Medieval history was a strictly religious interpretation of historical proceedings limited to the narrative of the creation and Fall of Man to his subsequent redemption that would culminate in the Last Judgment; Tudor interpretation of history endowed it with a new pattern of cause and effect in political developments as well as exemplary history. Writers like Froissart and Tito Livio had helped to develop this kind of chronicling.[935] The didacticism of history also changed: the historical character used for moral lessons became someone who embodied special vices or virtues. The policy of princes or rulers should be influenced by these examples for the benefit of the common weal – a development due to an emerging national identity.[936] In this vein, the Tudors wanted to counter social insecurity and instability by backing up the Tudor myth that glorified their rule as a part of the natural order and as the redemption from the brutality of the Wars of the Roses.[937]

The Tudor myth did not begin with Elizabeth; Henry VII propagated it to prop up his claim to the throne. Its two main features were first the union of the two houses of Lancaster and York, which supposedly ended the Wars of the Roses, as well as Henry's claim to the throne through his Welsh ancestry. This part of the Tudor myth is rarely mentioned; Owen Tudor, the second husband of Henry V's widow, was allegedly a direct descendant of Cadwallader, the last British king. Henry VII further reclaimed the old Welsh legend that King Arthur was not dead but would return again—suggesting that he and his descendants were "Arthur reincarnate, a claim Henry stressed by naming his oldest son Arthur. The return of the legendary king would usher in a golden time after the unhappy period of the civil wars—calling Elizabeth's reign a "golden age" stands in that tradition.[938] The title of Hall's chronicle echoes the political and programmatic claims of the Tudor myth:

> The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke, beeyng long in continual discension for the croune of this noble realme, with all the actes done in bothe the tymes of the Princes, bothe of the one lineage and of the other, beginning at the tyme of kyng Henry the fowerth, the first aucthor of this division, and so successively proceadyng to the reigne of the high and prudent prince kyng Henry the eight, the undubitate flower and very heir of both the sayd linages.[939]

Thus, the title presents the Tudors as the solution to the civil dissention that had torn England apart for so long, so the Tudors become guarantors of peace and stability by their legitimate claim.

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[935] Tillyard 1944: 24, 25-27.
[936] Tillyard 1944: 28.
[937] Suerbaum 2003: 519. For more perspectives on the Tudor myth and its impact on literary criticism, see Rackin 1990: 40-45.
[938] Tillyard 1944: 29-30.
[939] Campbell 1947: 68.

The history plays are often charged with affirming the Tudor myth, but as Renaissance historiography interpreted the union of the houses of Lancaster and York as redemption from the circle of violence and brutality, the Tudor myth merely echoes the interpretation of Tudor rule as a reign of peace and consolidation after the Wars of the Roses. Of course, the Tudors furthered this view as they supported historians with a positive bias towards their dynasty who praised the restoration of order and peace as a Tudor accomplishment.[940] Due to this hegemonic discourse, many Elizabethans believed that the Tudors were guarantors of national community and keepers of the peace.[941] Tillyard, an ardent defender of the Tudor myth in Shakespeare's history plays, argues that the plays generally represent disorder and civil war the norm, with exceptional victory or peace depicted as threatened and fragile.[942]

The truth of historic events was probably somewhat adapted; Richard III as arch-villain of course made Henry VII look much more glorious and noble. Richard had been a tough monarch but was also a very able administrator and a respected sovereign.[943] However, the Tudor myth lived on even after the Tudors had died out. Shortly after Elizabeth's death, Samuel Daniel wanted to elevate the Tudors—as well as the Stuarts—as the epitome of peace after the struggles of the Wars of the Roses.[944] In 1609, he aimed to

> shewe the deformities of Ciuile Dissension, and the miserable euents of Rebellions, Conspiracies, and bloudy Reuengements, which followed (as in a circle) upon that breach of the due course of Succession, by the Vsurpation of Hen.4; and thereby to make the blessings of Peace, and the happinesse of an established Gouernment (in a direct Line) the better to appeare: I trust I shall doo a greatefull worke to my Countrie, to continue the same, unto the glorious Vnion of Hen.7: from whence is decended our present Happinesse.
>
> In which Worke, I haue carefully followed that truth which is deliuered in the Historie; without adding to, or subtracting from, the general receiu'd opinion of things as we finde them in our common Annalles: holding it an impietie, to violate that publike Testimonie we haue, without more euident proofe; or to introduce fictions of our owne imagination, in things of this nature.[945]

Daniel interprets the Wars of the Roses as "felix culpa" that led to the happiness of Tudor rule.[946] Thus, he elevates the Tudors above all the other reigning houses that came before them. That Elizabeth, as the grandchild of Henry VII—the third generation of Tudors—would be the last of her line was taken by many as proof of history's cyclic

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[940] Suerbaum 2003: 41-43.
[941] Suerbaum 2003: 53.
[942] Tillyard 1944: 7-8.
[943] Suerbaum 2003: 42-43. However, Shakespeare's monster will survive all other historic portrayals.
[944] Campbell 1947: 112.
[945] Daniel 1609: A2v. Originally, his *First Fowre Bookes of the Civile Wars between the Two Houses of Lancaster and Yorke* was published in 1595 (Campbell 1947: 112).
[946] McCoy 1989: 108. Daniel contradicts himself in his work, however. Peace, for him, is never stable or even attractive, but rather an emasculating feature that fosters sluggishness. Besides, he believes that the passing of time can only lead to decay—a belief that is quite contradictory to the statement above. For him, war is brutal, but also invigorating. He even went so far as to state that peace was "basely wasting all the Martiall store / of heat and spirit (which graceth Manlinesse)" (Daniel 1609: R3r-R3v, McCoy 1989: 108, 115).

recurrent pattern.[947] Everything concerning politics, sovereignty, peace and war were in God's hands while men could only strive for glory and power. As God rewards the good and punishes the wicked, the plane of politics was put on par with metaphysics, as cause and effect on the political level were considered an evolution of God's will on earth. Rulers became puppets that acted out a divine plan of revenge and retribution.[948]

History plays condense humanist views of historiography, drama, and didactic use of history. The goals of these dramas range from nation building to immortalising historic heroes, providing political guidance, and criticising leaders' actions in politics and current affairs. As a synthesis of different points of view and an arena of social negotiation, these plays are especially suited for analysing faultlines, myths, and aspirations of an English society that was immersed in massive social and political change. The new medium of the theatre was awkwardly positioned between social and political fronts; thus, it could consciously reflect and criticise social developments and the negotiation of good masculine rule. The following outline will describe the environment in which theatre and its playwrights thrived, the discourses surrounded theatre, and theatre's social role in early modern England.

2.6 The Theatre

In 1576, James Burbage opened the first commercial theatre in Shoreditch, aptly called "The Theatre," just outside of the jurisdiction of the City of London. When the history plays were at their height in the 1590s, the medium of the theatre was still a very new one.[949] Furthermore, as a new medium, the theatre in London was a very ambiguous institution; it was both integrated into the system of patronage and order but also challenged this very order through role-play. It was situated on the south bank of the Thames to evade city officials, yet it was controlled by censorship; it represented social norms as well as deviance like established gender relations—but with all-male troupes.[950] Thus, the theatre both reinforced and contradicted societal norms by negotiating alternatives and difference in a culture that was in the process of redefining itself due to internal and external pressures.[951] The theatre established reciprocal visibility: the audience not only watched a spectacle but was also being watched by their fellow theatregoers.[952] The stage was political since the regulation of the plays as

[947] Campbell 1947: 123.
[948] Tillyard 1944: 189, 198, 205.
[949] Wickham et al. 2000: 330. However, other public playhouses preceded The Theatre, the Red Lion being the oldest of them. Built in 1567, it is older than the Theatre, but nevertheless, it was the most influential, biggest, and most costly playhouse, so the Theatre may be called the first public playhouse of them all (Wickham et al. 2000: 330).
[950] It is important to note that up to 1599, only the texts of the plays were censored. The performances themselves with their improvisation and clowning were harder to control (see Howard 1994: 12). However, the introduction of the Bishops' Ban changed that and also made productions prosecutable that in performance if not in text were deemed seditious.
[951] Comensoli and Russell 1999: 1-2.
[952] Howard 1994: 73. Howard also relates Stephen Gossoon's concerns voiced in his tract *The Schoole of Abuse* about the female theatre-goers to their being seen publicly at the theatre by other men, which could endanger their reputation by being "socially circulated." From that, Howard concludes that the female audience posed a threat to established paternalistic orthodoxy that saw women in the enclosure of the

well as the access to the stage were "political issues," as Jean Howard puts it. In her view, all spectacles of theatricality—royal processions, tournaments, executions and interludes included—were a means of displaying and producing power. The stage, however, was sandwiched between the demands of the market as well as the demands of the censor.[953] Some London City officials wanted to abolish the theatre altogether, as they feared it would foster unrest and subversion. The queen and the Privy Council, however, never supported the request to shut down the theatres but encouraged a system of licensing and censoring stage plays.[954] Thus, the theatre did not serve one but many masters—and therefore did not exclusively give voice to established power.[955]

The theatre in early modern England nevertheless expressed governing discourse; while some playwrights honoured its principles, others like Marlowe contested them on stage. Thus, the theatre was a concrete manifestation of social power and the theatrical qualities of Elizabethan life, it both formed and reacted to the culture it was operating in. Mary Beth Rose describes that:

> drama not only articulates and represents cultural change, but also participates in it; seeks not only to define, but actively to generate, and in some cases to contain, cultural conflict. Far from acting as a fictional reflection of an imagined external reality that can somehow be grasped as true, the drama is a constituent of that reality and inseparable from it.[956]

As a part of reality, theatre also mirrored cultural frictions. Stephen Greenblatt anatomised the ambiguous cultural energy of literature and theatre in his classic book *Shakespearean Negotiations*. According to Greenblatt, literary works and their discussions could influence social and historical developments reciprocally by giving new impulses and reaffirming the status quo.[957] Subversion questioned hegemonic culture by dissecting it or showing alternative realities to expose its mechanisms and machinations. Thus, it opened up the road to criticism.[958] History plays were quite problematic for the political elite in this regard; first of all, they used historic material to criticise and comment on actual politics, and they also showed how the divine right of kings as a legitimisation of rule was lost with the deposition of Richard II. Late Tudor ideology tried to gloss over this problem by the claim that this loss of legitimacy was regained by the ascension of Henry VII, a development parallel to the theological pattern of the loss of paradise and the recovery of the Fall of Man through the second coming.[959] While Tillyard strongly embeds the history plays in this pattern of history, Ribner claims that the providential view of history was already in decline in the 1590s.[960]

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house and that "cheapened" the value of the woman by being gazed at publicly—and empowered her to gaze back (Howard 1994: 75-80, 91).
[953] Howard 1994: 4-5.
[954] Howard 1994: 41.
[955] Howard 1994: 7.
[956] Rose 1988: 1-2.
[957] See Keller 1993: 160-161; Greenblatt 2005: 6; Dollimore 1985: 7-8, 10.
[958] Keller 1993: 162.
[959] Hunter 1996: 230-231.
[960] Ribner 1965: 10.

Nevertheless, the stage was a playground, a space where thoughts, motivations and alternative solutions could be considered and explored. Altman underlines this perception of the stage as an alternative space where society could be renegotiated and imagined differently. Referring to More's utopian negotiation of the state on the page, Altman states: "it uses the stage in the way More uses the printed page—as a privileged sanctuary where heterodoxy may be expressed."[961] In this way, the history plays provided a space that allowed for a more detached perspective of past rulers and events.[962] Furthermore, Renaissance writers understood history as a medium that could convey morals, examples and lessons.[963] Indeed, history plays usually illustrate kings in moments of crisis and how they resolve or are overcome by their problems; thus, playwrights drew parallels to the turbulent days of the 1590s. In 1599, the Globe theatre opened with *Henry V*, a play that like no other reminds the audience of the artificiality and insufficiency of dramatic representation but urges the audience to make an effort to use their imagination to overcome these deficiencies. The play additionally lays bare the theatricality of kingship.[964] The theatre opened up a space for criticism and the negotiation of current political problems; however, this space on stage opened up by history is not a "utopian displacement," as McCoy calls it, but rather a strategy to circumvent censorship and provide a means for criticism by disguising the problems of the day in the trappings of historical events. The plays negotiate political decisions, inner motivations, gender relations, subjectivity, and morality in very complex ways. Thus, the history plays reflect their own times as much as bygone days and national history.[965]

2.6.1 Writers in the Elizabethan Power Structure

As creators of societal critique on stage, the playwrights were not completely free; their scope of action was limited and strongly influenced by censorship.[966] Writing was taken politically seriously, and political censorship had an impact on what could be said openly and how language and rhetoric were used. With a crucial position within the machinery of ideology production, writers could scrutinise and contest the mechanisms of power.[967] Since writers were sensitive to political discourse, they were aware of how stately authority was sustained, negotiated, and contested; as they were not necessarily subversive or completely contained within the system, circumstances made it possible

[961] Altman 1978: 124.
[962] McCoy 1989: 6.
[963] See also Cahill 2008: 166. She mentions the assumption that "history can teach us about the present because history repeats itself" (Cahill 2008: 166).
[964] Döring 2009: 252-254. The opening of the new Shakespeare's Globe in London in 1997 featured *Henry V*. Thus, Döring argues, the cultural heritage of Shakespeare's Globe was supposed to be legitimated, just as the play tries to legitimate Henry's claim to the French throne (Döring 2009: 252-253).
[965] See also Smith 2000: 136.
[966] Arnold Hunt points out that "[e]ffective censorship is invisible" because it not only pervaded the whole of Renaissance publishing as a code or power mechanism, but also because it was a routine procedure of putting a book through the printing press. During the period of 1560 to 1640, however, Hunt detects "gradually tightening controls over the press" (Hunt 2001: 127-128).
[967] Sinfield 1992: 92.

for them to use literature as a site for contest.[968] The culture that brought forth Elizabethan drama was founded in the "power of discursive reasoning," humanist education, joy of playing with language, and the belief in the ability to pass on moral benefits on the audience watching the plays. When that faith died, the character of drama became different as well. [969]

Writers and intellectuals were in a similarly awkward social position as bureaucrats since their class of origin was not necessarily the class they served; they were therefore very sensitive to class structures and power dynamics.[970] Playwrights had relative autonomy because of their status and the cultural institutions they worked through, so they did not necessarily support the ideology of a specific class.[971] This is why the history plays contain both a strong connection to ideological orthodoxy as well as social criticism and deviance.[972] Shakespeare is often seen as a dutiful servant of political orthodoxy, and critics like Tillyard even saw him as the master playwright of the Tudor myth.[973] However, there is evidence to the contrary; Sinfield and Dollimore expressly reject the existence of a unifying, all-encompassing "Elizabethan World Picture" as they believe it oversimplifies the thought construct of the Elizabethans as well as of Shakespeare. While the belief in political hierarchy legitimated by divine order did exist, Sinfield and Dollimore argue that the mystification of the status quo served as a means to stabilise an oppressive regime.[974] Rather, they claim that Shakespeare and his fellow writers did not glorify the Tudors but, if anything, followed a nihilist or absurdist idea of the human condition.[975] According to their interpretation, the history plays display the limitations of the Tudor myth as well as the futility of politics, so they rather

[968] Sinfield 1992: 94.
[969] Altman 1978: 395.
[970] Sinfield 1992: 90-91.
[971] Sinfield 1992: 92.
[972] See 2.6.3 and 2.6.4 below in regard to history plays and masculinity in particular.
[973] Greenblatt 2005: 253. Greenblatt tries to wriggle out of his own suggestion that Shakespeare is quite orthodox by stating that truth itself was "radically unstable." He deems Shakespeare's plays contained "unsettling repetitions" due to "shifting aesthetic assumptions" of "shifting voices and audiences" (Greenblatt 2005: 254). That sounds elusive, even though Greenblatt stresses that Shakespeare *explores* power relations within his culture. The subversive potential Greenblatt can make out in Shakespeare is his intense submission to order and power, whose violence is very unsettling. His form of liberation, Greenblatt argues, is the "*excessive* aesthetic delight" that is released by the "embrace of those very structures" (Greenblatt 2005: 254). See also chapter 2.5.2 in this work.
[974] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 109-110.
[975] A representative of the absurdist fraction is Jan Kott. He states that the Tudor myth was only a political device uncovered in the history plays. Legitimacy or illegitimacy are no issues for him, rather "the king's situation in the system." History is to crush everyone and everything in the end. Man is determined by his situation, and there is no way out. In such a system, there is no space for intervention, subversion or negotiation. Kott's point is, that in the end everything is pointless (Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 110-111). Döring, however, criticises Kott's approach of displacing Shakespeare from early modern England to a twentieth-century setting. Thus, he created "a powerful misreading; Kott was, in a sense, producing his own Shakespeare for specific purposes," (Döring 2009: 242). Another approach is the priority of personal integrity. For Wilbur Sanders, political action is futile as well, as historical process is inevitable. Politics as a field in which the individual can display maturity, responsibility and humanity in the threatening realities of royal life. It does not seem to strike Sanders that the characters also have tendencies towards selfishness or inconsequence (like York in *Richard II*), especially if assigned to those who exert power over others. For him, humans have to mature on the testing ground of history, because for Shakespeare the individual was sacred. According to Sanders, Shakespeare expresses "tragic cynicism" in plays like *King Lear* (Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 111-112).

assert the personal integrity of the protagonists than the effectiveness of political power struggles or the mere unfolding of divine providence in the course of history.[976]

Hegemonic discourse presented the interests of a specific class as if they were universal using the means of ideology, beliefs, practices, and institutions to exploit and suppress subordinate cultures. The dominant identity of the ruling strata was distinguished by certain radicals like class, race, culture and sex—a mechanism by which the subversive subcultures were defined; dissenters were not only persecuted but also made liable for the instability of the ruling ideology.[977] Ideology names what it excludes, and thus has to incorporate the deviant into the system. Therefore, according to Bourdieu, ideologies are always doubly determined; they not only express the characteristics of the class that upholds them but also the specific interests of those who produce them in a special field of production.[978] The theatre as a cultural institution was also doubly determined as it not only displayed official discourses but had also the revitalising effect of subverting social conventions and political positions of the ruling class. Official means were inefficient in containing this dynamic, even though officials tried to curb theatre's edges with censorship. Despite these attempts, the theatre used its potential to represent the rest of society; theatrical representations of social categories can therefore serve as a decoder for the fringes of official social discourse.[979]

Playwrights exerted cultural and political criticism differently; Shakespeare was not as openly defiant as his fellow playwright Marlowe, who questioned the duty of obedience towards authority and, by analysing power mechanisms, dismantled the metaphysical representations of political economy as the constructions that they were.[980] Marlowe lived a life that was conscious of the fact that there was no place for the likes of him in his society and his unrealised rebellion which could only be seen in the space society created for it—in his case in the theatre.[981] The pointlessness of rebellion and individual struggle are themes found in his plays; not only did he question ideology but openly rejected it. In a document that appeared shortly after Marlowe's death, he is said to have called Moses a "juggler," the wandering in the wilderness to be the founding of "everlasting superstition […] in the heartes of people,"[982] and Adam a latecomer in history. He saw the aim of religion simply "to keep men in awe," and labelled Christ a bastard and his mother Mary a whore. These are only a few examples of his many

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[976] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 110.
[977] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 113. Judith Butler thinks of race as an additional "domain of power" that is part of discourse. The frontiers and the meaning of race is formed by a process similar (but structurally different) to the one that produces sex and gender. The taboo of miscegenation and the wish for "racial purity" denote the boundaries of race that are quite similar to sexual discourse. Besides, sexuality is only one constituent of identity for her, just as race, class, and "geopolitical positioning/displacement." These categories are intertwined and give each other additional meaning—so ethnicity can eroticise sexuality or can have a sexual meaning by itself. However, sexual difference is not the most fundamental difference there is, but other categories of diversity might derive from sexual difference (see Butler 1993: 18-19, 116-117, 167-168).
[978] Sinfield 1992: 92.
[979] Zimmerman 1992: 6-7.
[980] Goldberg 1999: 58-59.
[981] Goldberg 1999: 60.
[982] Goldberg 1999: 57.

dissident readings and interpretations of the Bible and Christianity.[983] By striking directly against the religious basis of Elizabethan ideology, he had recognized the subversive potential in the Renaissance state apparatus.[984] In his plays, Marlowe employed all political machinations he uncovered in his criticism to show how they worked in the fictional world of the theatre.[985] In his sober analyses of power mechanisms, Marlowe leaves no space for metaphysical decorum such as the divine right of kings which can be found in Shakespeare; Marlowe's writing is characteristically heterodox, lacks human sympathy, and is preoccupied with power and the powerful. Fascinated by systems of belief and their manipulation, Marlowe demystified authority, only to identify with another form, the cultural antithesis of it.[986] It is remarkable that such subversive and anti-ideological plays as *Edward II* were performed on a censored Renaissance stage; Marlowe was able to use the cultural niche of the theatre to voice his unorthodox opinions that expressed the uncontained side of Elizabethan culture, its "shadow."[987] His plays pose a typically Renaissance paradox: he used all measures of Elizabethan drama to enlarge the understanding and emotional response of his audience only to show that these "inventions" of the stage could avail nothing in life—essentially, wit cannot master or enlighten reality. Marlowe exposed all mental exercises as futile, self-referential systems.[988] His main interest lay in exploring the boundaries of self-creation: how far is self-creation possible, and at what price?[989]

2.6.2 The English History Play: An Attempt at a Definition

The history plays are an elusive genre; many approaches were undertaken to define generic history plays but to no avail.[990] As there are no definite parameters describing what makes a drama a history play, it helps to examine the development of historical plays from their origins onward in order to present a working thesis for the purposes of this analysis.

History plays emerged from the medieval dramatic forms of the miracle play and the morality play. Miracle plays took their material from biblical, hagiographic, or apocryphal sources; they were a very archaic and episodic form of drama nearly without plot, with no intention of linking its scenes causally, and no symbolism.[991] Miracle plays were usually staged by laypeople like members of the guilds at religious holidays to educate the illiterate masses about stories from the Bible or legends of a saint.[992] The morality play was a more refined form of stage-play as it wove events into a plot. Didacticism was more important than fact, and symbolism and allegories were used to

[983] Goldberg 1999: 57.
[984] Goldberg 1999: 55.
[985] Goldberg 1999: 59.
[986] Cartelli 1999: 174-190, 176; Goldberg 1999: 57.
[987] Goldberg 1999: 55.
[988] Altman 1978: 321-322.
[989] Altman 1978: 324-325.
[990] Campbell 1947: 8-17. For an account of Shakespeare's history plays in general, see Rackin 1990.
[991] Clarke 1897: 11, 14; Ribner 1965: 28.
[992] Clarke 1897: 5, 55.

convey ideas and meaning.[993] The universal type of *Everyman* who represented humankind was a means of teaching moral lessons; the audience should be edified and given counsel for a good life by witnessing Everyman's exposure to the personifications of vice and virtue trying to win him over.[994]

Historical drama grew out of the tradition of instructing the audience using allegorical or religious stories; historical drama became increasingly popular in England during the second half of the sixteenth century.[995] By 1580, playwrights had already begun to write plays about historical facts with the intent of educating the audience. Initially, these plays focused on a succession of events and anecdotes rather than on underlying morals or philosophy.[996] The so-called chronicle plays substituted the rigid symbolism of the morality plays with a more direct and factual nature while the ritualistic morality plays still influenced Shakespeare's and his colleagues' writing in the 1590s.[997] That historical drama gained momentum in the late 1580s is often explained by the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588; however, the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicle* in 1587 is a far more reasonable cause for the new popularity of history plays on English stages.[998] While the Armada scare may have influenced this trend, it is a bit one-dimensional to connect a whole dramatic genre to a single historic event.[999] Furthermore, history plays did not only negotiate nationhood and patriotism but many more facets of human existence. Besides, English society experienced an increase in militarism due to the wars against Spain; apart from the military influence on the theatre, war plays also dealt implicitly or explicitly with other conflicts like the Irish and Dutch wars.[1000]

The reason why the history play disappeared from the Tudor stage around 1600 is more concrete; the Bishops' Ban choked the flux of history plays from 1599 onwards. On 1 June 1599, John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Richard Bancroft, Bishop of London, forbade the printing of "histories" that were not authorised by the Privy Council and prohibited the publication of plays that were not properly censored. While the implementation of this ban was irregular, censorship now had a weapon for curbing the publication and production of seditious history plays.[1001] Likewise, satires

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[993] Ribner 1965: 28-29.
[994] Mackenzie 1914: 1-9. Holderness also underscores the accessibility of Elizabethan drama for all social strata that was a "common property" for all. Thus, Tudor drama—and especially the history plays—helped to shape the emergent English nation state (Holderness 1992: 115-117).
[995] Campbell 1947: Preface, n. pag.
[996] Tillyard 1944: 98-99, 100.
[997] Shakespeare's treatment of *Richard III* provides ample evidence (Tillyard 1944: 197). The influence of the morality plays is striking in the ritualism of *Richard III* and his self-characterisation as "Iniquity," i.e. the Vice of medieval morality plays. Tillyard even goes so far as to state that the history plays follow the pattern of the morality plays in so far as the main character was Respublica, or England, respectively. This holds true for the first tetralogy especially (see Tillyard 1944: 208 and *passim*) but not necessarily for dramas of other playwrights.
[998] Tillyard 1944: 101.
[999] Cahill 2008: 10.
[1000] Cahill 2008: 10-11, 12-13, and *passim*.
[1001] Rowland 2005: 18. Hunt explains that censorship had already been established as a pre-publication process due to the royal Injunctions of 1559 that should ban "heretical and seditious books." This law remained valid for the next eighty years and should officially encompass all printed products, but had

and epigrams were forbidden, and the licensing process for history plays and prose about English history was tightened. Works printed before the implementation of the law could also be seized, and on 4 June of 1599, the first books were burned in Stationer's Hall.[1002] The potentially critical nature of history plays could become dangerous to the state, so censorship eventually choked the subversive elements in historical drama, thus killing it off until Elizabeth's death.[1003]

The editors of the *First Folio*, Heminges and Condell, apparently had a distinct idea of what constituted a "history" as a dramatic genre.[1004] The title page of the *First Folio* explicitly announces "Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies. Published according to the True Originall Copies."[1005] Shakespeare's plays that deal with recent English history—the two tetralogies plus *King John* and *All is True* (*Henry VIII*)—were listed in chronological order under the category "Histories" while the Roman plays as well as *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet* were excluded.[1006] The list does not comment on the dates of publication or the genesis of the plays.[1007] However, a clear-cut definition of the dramatic genre of the history play remains elusive as the titles of Shakespeare's history plays in their quarto and folio editions are of no real help.[1008] Often, the original quarto titles of the histories bear the term "tragedy," like *The True Tragedie of Richarde Duke of Yorke*, *The Tragedie of King Richard the Second*, or *The Tregedie of Richard the Third* [sic]. Similarly, the titles of *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Henry IV*, *Hamlet*, and *Troilus and Cressida* were labelled "history." Even more confusing, the term of chronicle history was applied to such diverse plays as *The Chronicle History of Henry the Fift* [sic] and *True Chronicle Historie of the Life and*

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special regulations for "pamphletes, playes and ballettes"; its application was additionally handled quite flexibly (Hunt 2001: 127-131).

[1002] McCabe 2001: 75. McCabe supposes that the main aim of the Bishops' Ban was to enforce the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity; the intertwining of state and church made this possible. He dismisses claims that the bishops wanted to prevent pornography or keep the purity of the population's morality. For him, the prevention of subversion is rather the aim, a process already begun in 1559 (McCabe 2001: 75-77). In his article, McCabe also recounts the aftermath of the Bishops' Ban and its consequences (McCabe 2001: 84-90).

[1003] Rackin claims that Shakespeare's abandonment of the genre killed off the history play at the turn of the century—but the disappearance of history from the stage was most probably due to the political pressures of the Bishops' Ban (Rackin 1990: 31).

[1004] Campbell (1947), 8.

[1005] Hinman 1968: 3. The editors of the *First Folio* had very probably access to the manuscripts or even the prompt books of the King's Men. However, there is no *urtext* of Shakespeare's work, as the quarto versions of previously published plays and the folio versions are not exactly the same, but sometimes even differ in entire passages (Kamm and Lenz 2009: 9).

[1006] Ribner 1965: 6; Hinman 1968: 13. Interestingly, *King Lear* is categorised as a "True Chronicle Historie" in its quarto edition (Leggatt 1996: 11).

[1007] Campbell 1947: 119, 120. The authorship of problematic plays under scrutiny in the analysis, like *Edward III*, will not be commented on, even though Eric Sams provides good arguments for Shakespearean authorship in his edition of the same play. Some critics even doubt that Shakespeare, the glover's son from Stratford, was the author of the plays edited in the *First Folio*. As this is not the focus of this work, the question of authorship will not be discussed here. For a concise overview over the problem of Shakespeare's authorship and the ensuing discourse, see Kamm and Lenz 2009: 12-19.

[1008] Ribner 1965: 1-2.

Death of King Lear and his Three Daughters. "History," therefore, was no indicator of the historical sources of a play but rather indicative of a narration.[1009]

Despite the categorisation of Condell and Heminges in the *Folio*, the genres of history and tragedy were not yet distinct but frequently intermingled; history was merely source material that could be transformed into tragedy.[1010] Listing Shakespeare's histories as a chronological series in the *First Folio* index broke with the unifying concept that a tragedy centred on the life of a single ruler. Leggatt contests that the Shakespearean history plays are a mixture of both tragedy and history that inform each other reciprocally; Campbell tried to separate the tragic and the historic by sorting them to the private and the public sphere respectively.[1011] For kings, however, the private is political; as the spheres cannot be separated, that distinction does not serve as a definition, either.

Some theorists distinguish between chronicle plays and history plays. Tillyard defines history plays by their more complex structure as well as their transmission of philosophy and interest in ideology. The chronicle plays, in contrast, are "practical and not very thoughtful."[1012] Interestingly, Tillyard considers a play like Marlowe's *Edward II* to be a mere chronicle play that "does contain political reflection" but is restricted to the "status of the king and the punishment of overweening political ambition"—a play with "no prevailing political interest."[1013] The analysis of this play in 3.1.3 and 3.5.4 may provide evidence to the contrary. As the distinction between chronicle and history play effectively caused more confusion than clarity, Ribner demanded that the term "chronicle play" be abolished altogether.[1014] Campbell tried to draw the line according to dramatic and non-dramatic historical writing in the Renaissance and not according to classical dramatic genres.[1015] Ribner likewise uses the *meaning* of history in a play as a criterion for definition, claiming that the genres of history and tragedy are inseparable and cannot be defined as mutually exclusive.[1016] Thus, the genre of the English history play is not defined as a dramatic form but by the intention of the playwright and his treatment of historical material.[1017] It follows that if historical source material is not used for a certain purpose in a play, it does not qualify as a history play for Ribner.[1018] Tragedy is no contradiction to history but merely a dramatic form that conveys the meaning of history.[1019] The historical material has to be factual and used for a didactic purpose; legendary histories like folklore tales do not qualify as source material for a history play.[1020]

[1009] Campbell 1947: 8-9.
[1010] Ribner 1965: 26.
[1011] Leggatt 1996: 11-12; Campbell 1947: 16, 17.
[1012] Tillyard 1944: 3, 93-98, 98.
[1013] Tillyard 1944: 106, 108, 120.
[1014] Ribner 1965: 5-6.
[1015] Campbell 1947: Preface, n. pag.
[1016] Ribner 1965: 26-27.
[1017] Ribner 1965: 7; Campbell 1947: 116.
[1018] Ribner 1965: 24-25.
[1019] Ribner 1965: 27.
[1020] Ribner 1965: 25.

However, the plays listed under "Histories" in the *First Folio* might indeed provide a working thesis defining the genre. They all deal with recorded and decidedly English high and late medieval history that helps to explain the nation-building process of England and the struggle for political stability. The editors of the *First Folio* clustered plays on English medieval history that centred on the high nobility and the king as main protagonists. War, politics, and dynastic considerations are intertwined with the life of a single ruler or the struggles of a dynasty. The wars with France established a clear difference between *them* and *us*, thus furthering the process of identification with England as a unified political and national entity. The Roman plays in contrast, though they also deal with recorded history, do not provide means for such close identification with England as a nation. For the purposes of this thesis, the characteristics of the history plays as clustered in the *First Folio* will serve as a working definition for the genre in the 1590s: the plays are mainly based on late medieval English history, centre on a king, and focus on politics and personal conduct while trying to convey a moral or historical message. Though an imperfect definition, these cornerstones all characterise the history plays used in this work.

2.6.3 The History Plays and Anti-Theatrical Discourse

In the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, England lacked a clear successor for an aging queen; the fear of a further Spanish attempt to invade England circulated; and inflation and bad harvests made life difficult.[1021] Since the history plays dealt with good and legitimate rule in the upheaval of this decade, their critical content made them potentially seditious. Their effective ban in 1599 shows that authority was well aware that the plays could endanger social peace, and the history plays fuelled an already ongoing controversy about the theatre that was part of a bigger debate about the use of literary writing and truth for society.[1022] Some advocated the use of history on stage while others condemned its theatrification. Classically, history and poetry were two distinct disciplines that were not really compatible. Aristotle already defined the difference between poetry and history:

> The distinction between historian and poet is not in the one writing prose and the other verse – you might put the work of Herodotus into verse, and it would still be a species of history; it consists really in this, that the one describes the thing that has been, and the other a kind of thing that might be. Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars.[1023]

While big defenders of history, many Puritans attacked poetry and the theatre. They referred to Plato's arguments in the tenth book of the *Republic*, where he charges poetry to have no truth as it is a mere imitation of an idea. Rather than furthering knowledge and rationality, poetry feeds the passions, so the Puritans attacked literature as licentious

[1021] Levin 1994: 9.
[1022] Howard provides a great summary of the anti-theatrical discourse in general and the social implications that discourse discloses in her book *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England*, 22-46.
[1023] Quoted from Campbell 1947: 26.

and untrue while history was true and rational.[1024] Following Horace's arguments, the Puritans condemned the theatre as a pleasurable container for moral poison.[1025] A citation sums up all of the charges against poetry in late Tudor England:

> And for as much as comedies are compounded of fixions, fables, and lyes, they have of divers beene rejected. As touchinge Playes, they are full of filthie wordes, which woulde not become verie lacqueys, and courtisanes, and have sundrie inventions which infect the spirite, and replenish it with unchaste, whorishe, cozening, deceitfull, wanton, and mischievous passions. […] And for that, besides all these inconveniences, Comedians, and stage players, doe often times envie and gnawe at the honor of another, and to please the vulgar people, set before them sundrie lies, and teach much dissoluteness, and deceit, by this meanes turning upside downe all discipline and good manners, many cities wel governed, would never at any time intertaine them.[1026]

The defenders of poetry, however, felt obliged to argue for the moral value of poetry and the theatre.[1027] Tongue firmly in cheek, Sidney stressed the difference between poetic and historical writing in his *Apology for Poetry*, clearly marking his personally preferred mode of writing:

> The historian scarcely giveth leisure to the moralist to say so much, but that he, loaden with old mouse-eaten records, authorizing himself (for the most part) upon other histories, whose greatest authorities are built upon the notable foundation of hearsay; having much ado to accord differing writers and to pick truth out of partiality; better acquainted with a thousand years ago than with the present age, and yet better knowing how this world goeth than how his own wit runneth; curious for antiquities and inquisitive of novelties; a wonder to young folks and a tyrant in table talk, denieth, in a great chafe, that any man for teaching of virtue and virtuous actions is comparable to him.[1028]

Sidney thus charges the defenders of history as a moral and true science with bigotry and nitpicking. Edmund Spenser has a somewhat more balanced view on the difference between a historiographer and a poet. In a letter to Raleigh he writes:

> For an Historiographer discourseth of affayres orderly as they were donne, accounting as well the times as the actions, but a Poet thrusteth into the middest, euen where it most concerneth him, and there recoursing to the thinges forepaste, and diuining of thinges to come, maketh a pleasing Analysis of all. The beginning therefore of my history, if it were to be told by an Historiographer, should be the thwelfth booke, which is the last, where I deuise that the Faerie Queene kept her Annuall feste xii. Dayes, upon which xii. Seuerall dayes, the occasions of the xii. Seuerall aduentures hapned, which being undertaken by xii. Seuerall knights, are in these xii books seuerally handled and discoursed.[1029]

The history plays are a synthesis of historiography and poetry—they employ full creative license in order to fuse historical facts with literature. On stage, they merge what is with what might be, negotiating political issues, alternatives, actions, and the motivations that led to these events. The history plays were the ground where both sides of the controversy could engage each other. Most proponents of literature found their arguments best represented by historical poetry, whereas most opponents of the theatre

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[1024] Campbell 1947: 85-86.
[1025] Campbell 1947: 86-87. See also Gosson 1972: Av-A2r.
[1026] Quoted from Campbell 1947: 92-93.
[1027] Campbell 1947: 86-87.
[1028] Sidney 2002: 89.
[1029] Quoted from McCoy 1989: 135.

would be willing to make exceptions for historical poetry.[1030] Despite the debates about the utility of the theatre and poetry, the history plays were a huge success. Thomas Nashe reports the impact of the performances of Shakespeare's *1 Henry VI* where he praises the merits of history in drama. While criticising the effeminacy of his own time, Nashe argues that literature can bring back the masculine valour of bygone days:

> Nay, what if I prove plays to be no extreme, but a rare exercise of virtue?
>
> First, for the subject of them: for the most part it is borrowed out of our English chronicles, wherein our forefathers' valiant acts, that have lien long buried in rusty brass and wormeaten books, are revived, and they themselves raised from the grave of oblivion and brought to plead their aged honours in open presence, that which what can be a sharper reproof to these degenerate effeminate days of ours? How would it have joyed brave Talbot, the terror of the French, to think that after he had lien two hundred years in his tomb he should triumph again on the stage, and have his bones new-embalmed with the tears of ten thousand spectators at least, at several times, who in the tragedian that represents his person imagine they behold him fresh bleeding![1031]

Thomas Heywood follows this vein; he sees the merit of the plays in their educational conveyance of ethical lessons to the audience to make them better subjects:

> Thirdly, playes haue made the ignorant more apprehensiue, taught the vnlearned the knowledge of many famous histories, instructed such as cánot reade in the discouery of all our *English* Chronicles: & what man haue you now of what weake capacity, that cannot discourse of any notable thing recorded euen from *William* the *Conquerour*, nay from the landing of *Brute*, vntill this day, beeing possest of their true vse, For, or because Playes are writ with this ayme, and carryed with this methode, to teach the subiects obedience to their King, to shew the people the vntimely ends of such as haue moued tumults, commotions, and insurrections, to present thé with the flourishing estate of such as liue in obedience, exhorting them to allegeance, dehorting them from all trayterous and fellonious stratagems.[1032]

The history plays should teach a moral and had a didactic purpose just like historiography. To achieve this end, writers altered and manipulated their source materials frequently.[1033] However, the argument that the theatre provided a means for historical education of the masses was rebutted point by point by John Greene three years after the release of Heywood's *Apology for Actors*. Following the classical arguments against literature, Greene argues that[1034]

> [Heywood] affirmes that Playes haue taught the ignorant knowledge of many famous Histories. They haue indeed made many to know of those Histories they neuer did, by reason they would neuer take the paines to reade them. But these that know the Histories before they see them acted, are euer ashamed, when they haue heard what lyes the Players insert amongst them, and how greatly they depraue them. If they be too long for a Play, they make them curtals; if too short, they enlarge them with many Fables, and whither too long or too short, they corrupt them with a Foole and his Bables: whereby they make them like Leaden rules, which men will fit to their worke, and not frame their worke to them. So that the ignorant instead of true History shall beare away nothing but fabulous lyes.[1035]

[1030] "Poetry" was a much broader term at the time that encompassed creative literature and fiction as well as the literary writing of a poet (see *OED*).
[1031] Nashe 1964: 64-65.
[1032] Heywood 1973: F3r-F3v.
[1033] Ribner 1965: 8. Gosson criticises this practise in Gosson 1972: A2v-[sig.A3r].
[1034] Campbell 1947: 102-103.
[1035] Greene 1973: F2v.

Despite all the discussion about the usefulness of historical drama, history plays helped create a collective national and historical memory.[1036] Pfister even calls the theatre "the most powerful medium of the Early Modern historical memory in England," since it actively furthered the emerging political sense of shared Englishness.[1037] The political impact of the history plays should not be undervalued; Elizabeth was well aware of the fact that history plays could be used to criticise her rule or even incite a rebellion against her.

> On August 4, 1601, William Lambarde "presented her Majestie with his Pandecta of all her rolls, bundells, membranes, and parcells that be reposed in her Majestie's Tower at London," so goes the story, and as she turned over the pages, "her Majestie fell upon the reign of King Richard II, saying, 'I am Richard II, know ye not that?'" And when Lambarde replied with a reference to Essex, the queen added, "He that will forget God, will also forget his benefactors; this tragedy was played 40 times in open streets and houses."[1038]

Essex' co-conspirators tried to recruit the Londoners to their cause by presenting the play *Richard II* the night before Essex' uprising.[1039] The public performance of Richard's deposition and murder were politically problematic; further points of criticism, even though they were not directly presented in Shakespeare's play, were the portrayal of Richard's waste of money, his alienation from his subjects, his involvement in his uncle Woodstock's murder, and his favourites' influence on his politics.[1040] However, it is Shakespeare's most historically accurate play.[1041] The same material caused further scandal when a book with the title *The first Part of the Life and Raigne of King Henrie the IIII* was published by Sir John Hayward and was explicitly dedicated to the Earl of Essex. This work was later used as evidence of the Earl's political aspirations during his trial and resulted in Hayward's summons to court and imprisonment in the Tower. All later editions of the book were eventually burned, and Hayward was re-examined.[1042]

The history plays occupy a place at the intersection of teaching moral examples and good political strategy and expressing political criticism. History plays strengthened the emerging English identity by creating a shared national memory. They did this by linking current challenges to past events.[1043] Hunter muses that the history plays convey

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[1036] See Pfister 2009: 231.
[1037] Pfister 2009: 232.
[1038] Quoted from Campbell 1947: 191.
[1039] Guy 1988: 408. Keller suggests that *Richard II* was not staged because it was about the deposition of a monarch, but rather because it voiced many contemporary complaints of the population, who felt burdened by favourites at court, taxation, and the patronage policy of the queen to incite them to the rebellion (Keller 1993: 162;). This interpretation might be an alternative, but is not very convincing; see also McCoy 1989: 2.
[1040] Campbell 1947: 169. The anonymous play *Woodstock*, however, does explicitly show these grievances and gives a kind of pretext for Shakespeare's subsequent play (Campbell 1947: 169). Sometimes, the play is also called *Richard II Part One* because it shows the story before Shakespeare's *Richard II* sets in.
[1041] John 1912: xiii.
[1042] Campbell 1947: 182-190. Another impact the Earl of Essex had on literary production was the allusion to his awaited victorious return from the Irish campaign in the Chorus of the fifth act in *Henry V*. The Choruses, however, did not appear in the quartos and were first printed in the *First Folio* in 1623 (Campbell 1947: 285).
[1043] Hunter 1996: 231.

meaning and connect "meaning and event" to "negotiate the relation between idealism and fact."[1044] However, the close monitoring, censorship, and eventual ban of history plays proves their social and political importance for late Tudor society; they were a means for expressing and channelling dissent as well as political orthodoxy. Thus, they embody the humanist juxtaposition of differing points of view and do not necessarily allow for a single conclusion but rather widen the audience's perspective of the realities of political life.

2.6.4 Performativity and Gender in the History Plays

Late Elizabethan London was quite conscious of the performative quality of self-representation; not only were the stages sites of performativity and self-production but the whole city was also used as a stage for the royal entries of the queen as well as other formal events such as executions, processions and the like.[1045] The theatre was the most performative social setting of all; the stage was a space for the negotiation of the self, reality, and truth. Plays consciously reflected social and political performances by ridiculing, overstating, praising, or mirroring the norms and ideas that they originated from. Thus, theatre both mirrored social discourse and simultaneously infused it with new material, a reflexive process that fed on itself. Masculinity as a constituent of the male self played a part in social renegotiation because the history plays centred on a king's good rule and the political and private actions of the protagonists.

Apart from its importance in the creation of the male self, gender played a very important part in early modern theatre, which was a homosocial space consisting of all-male troupes. There were various reasons for this oddity—traditionally, medieval mystery plays had been performed by male craft guilds, and plays at the Inns of Court were brought to the stage by students, who were at that time exclusively male. The English opposition to women on stage was not purely a Renaissance preoccupation with female modesty but was particular to England.[1046] On the continent, women commonly featured as actresses by the end of the sixteenth century—even though French, Italian and Spanish societies were also highly concerned with female modesty.[1047] Thomas

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[1044] Hunter 1996: 229, 234. Hunter names the bastard in *King John* as an example who can change the meaning of Holinshed without contradicting him. By using the means of a commentator, meaning can be changed without touching the events. The same is true for a figure like Falstaff. The personal relationship between Hal and Falstaff has to be judged in political terms (Hunter 1996: 238).

[1045] Schruff 1999: 1-2.

[1046] Orgel 1996: 2. It is important to note that England was the only country in Europe that had all-male acting troupes (MacDonald 1999: 103). Whereas other European travellers to England were concerned about women visiting the theatres alone or unmasked, as they frequently did in London, they had no moral problems with women on stage as the English had. The English theatre was even a place of unusual freedom for women at the time—and a large proportion of the audience consisted of women. To be successful, the theatre had to consider women's tastes as well (Orgel 1996: 10-11). Thus Lisa Jardine's claim in *Still Harping on Daughters* (17-31) that the theatre and its eroticism was mainly aimed at men can be rejected. Orgel rather supposes that the theatre showed *cultural* fantasies instead of *male* ones (Orgel 1996: 11).

[1047] Orgel 1996: 1. In Italy and France, actresses were also equalled with prostitutes, but this was no impediment for their appearance on stage. In Spain, both actresses and cross-dressing boys performed on stage. To secure the modesty of the actresses, they had to be married in France and Spain, however (Orgel 1996: 1-2).

Nashe distinguished the all-male English stage from these foreign customs in *Pierce Penniless*:

> Our players are not as the players beyond the sea – a sort of squirting bawdy comedians that have whores and common courtesans to play women's parts, and forbear no immodest speech or unchaste action that may provoke laughter –; but our scene is more stately furnished […], our representations honourable and full of gallant resolution, not consisting like theirs of a pantaloon, a whore, and a zany, but of emperors, kings, and princes, whose true tragedies *Sophocleo cothurno* they do vaunt.[1048]

Nashe prefers the English acting tradition, believing it to be more moral than foreign practices, mainly due to the fact that foreign troupes included female actors. However, he only refers to the public commercial stage. In England, women performed in private and at court; however, acting as a profession was socially unacceptable for women.[1049] In Protestant areas on the continent, such as the Netherlands and Protestant Germany, women were also banned from the stage. There, the theatre in general was perceived as morally dangerous; to solve the problem, public stages were banned altogether.[1050] Critics were not only anxious about moral issues and ambiguous gender roles but also about the mere fact of an actor performing a role they did not occupy in real life. Both gender and class were expressed by dress, therefore if a lowly boy actor wore aristocratic female clothes, he flouted both his God-given sex as well as his social rank; often, the costumes were handed down from the aristocratic patrons of the companies.[1051] Additionally, the boy actor threatened both his own masculinity as well as that of his male audience by seducing them via his role-play. He would incite desire in the men in the audience not only for the woman he impersonated but also for the adolescent boy underneath.[1052] This view derives from the ancient idea that desire is stirred through the perception of the eyes; according to a long-standing tradition that

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[1048] Nashe 1964: 66.

[1049] Orgel 1996: 3-4. Why the English stage did not replace boy actors with women is probably due to cultural and social attitudes of the time towards women (see Orgel 1996: 35). There is evidence, however, that there were hired women performers on stage in the beginning of the sixteenth century in London. Also, actresses performed in Chester during the Middle Ages. Until the 1530s, women were apparently present on the stage, so women were not as absent as performers as usually thought. Besides, continental acting troupes with female members also toured the island. Consequently, female acting must have been tolerated on stage—at least once in a while. However, women on stage were rather females from the continent, so there were no explicitly *English* Elizabethan actresses—consequently women on stage were mostly associated with Roman Catholicism and "otherness." What might have been appropriate for foreign women was not necessarily decent for English women (Orgel 1996: 4-9, 11). The argument that guilds were all-male organisations also does not seem to be true. Female apprenticeship is recorded from the fifteenth century onward and was a commonplace in the early seventeenth century. Until the late sixteenth century, women took part as full members in nearly any trade or guild—women were even registered blacksmiths! They were no widows or other "surrogates" in these trades, but rather fully independent workers who were legally responsible for their work. And their numbers were not small—in Southampton, 48 per cent of all apprentices were women at the beginning of the seventeenth century. When women started to be competition for men during the seventeenth century, they were coaxed out of the organised work force (Orgel 1996: 72-73). There even seems to be evidence that women voted in parliamentary elections during the seventeenth century (Orgel 1996: 74).

[1050] Orgel 1996: 2.

[1051] Orgel 1996: 102.

[1052] Orgel 1996: 27, 34-35. Rainoldes gives a reason for this: Cross-dressing is "a great provocation of men to lust and leacherie: because a womans garment being put on a man doeth vehemently touch and move him with the remembrance and imagination of a woman; and the imagination of a thing desirable doth stirr up the desire," (quoted from Orgel 1996: 34-35).

goes back to Plato, desire enters the soul through the eyes of the lover, so it was a common early modern sexual anxiety that watching a beautiful but effeminate stage actor could provoke homoerotic desire in his male spectators.[1053] Cross-dressing could become a cover for underlying homoerotic energy that lurked beneath heterosexual desire on stage. Anti-theatrical writers such as Prynne and Rainoldes attacked the theatre for its potential for inducing homoerotic desire and consequent effeminisation since confused gender distinctions were thought to lead to lustful, uncontrolled femininity in men.[1054] In addition, the mere coming together in the social setting of the theatre was thought to further moral depravity; Philip Stubbes summed up his fears in his famous comment that after the theatre performances, "euery one bringes an other homewarde of their waie very freendly, and in their secrete conclaues (couertly) they plaie the Sodomits, or worse."[1055] Stubbes did not necessarily fear the incitement of explicitly male-male desire, although Prynne later drew this conclusion, referring directly to Stubbes' previously cited comment:

> Yea witnes […] M. Stubs, his *Anatomy of Abuses* […] where he affirmes, that Players and Play-haunters in their secret conclaves play the Sodomites: together with some moderne examples of such, who have beene desperately enamored with Players Boyes thus clad in womens apparell, so farre as to solicite them by words, by Letters, even actually to abuse them. All which give dolefull testimony to this experimental reason, which should make this very putting on of womens apparell on Boyes, to act a Play, for ever execrable to all chast Christian hearts.[1056]

Thomas Heywood credited the English audience with the ability to distinguish between the character of a woman on stage and the actual boy actor in costume: "But to see our youths attired in the habit of women, who knowes not what their intents be? who cannot distinguish them by their names, assuredly knowing, they are but to represent such a Lady, at such a tyme appointed?"[1057] Heywood, however, does not grant the same ability to the audience in regard to the history plays—he believes that the audience may mistake the actor for the historical figure he represents in these shows since they react to "the person of any bold English man presented and doth not hugge his fame […] as if the Personater were the man Personated [.]"[1058] It is odd that in Heywood's view the audience can distinguish between reality and stage play in one case but not the other. This unsettling juxtaposition of reality and make-believe, and the difficulty in telling them apart make up dramatic discourse in Renaissance England; the theatre and life in general even became metaphors for each other.[1059] Thomas More refers to the dream-like quality of the theatre when he writes:

[1053] Kamm 2009: 83, 27, 34-35.
[1054] Orgel 1996: 27-29.
[1055] Stubbes (1585), N2r. Stubbes used the term "sodomy" to allude to fornication between men and women, so very probably he did not mean male-male sexual activity—just the worst he could imagine (Orgel 1996: 29-30). Jonathan Goldberg additionally argues that Stubbes was not even able to imagine such an abomination as sex between men (Goldberg 1992: 121-122).
[1056] Prynne 1633: 211-212.
[1057] Heywood 1973: C3v.
[1058] Heywood 1973: sig. B4r.
[1059] See for example the frame story of Christopher Sly in *The Taming of the Shrew*, the dream motif in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the stage metaphor for life in *As You Like It.*

> If ye shouldest perceive that one were earnestly proud of the wearing of a gay golden gown, while the losel playeth the lord in the stage play, wouldest ye not laugh at his folly, considering that ye are very sure, that when the play is done, he shall go walk a knave in his old coat? Now ye thinkest thy self wise enough while ye art proud in thy players garment, and forgettest that when thy play is done, ye shalt go forth as poor as he. Nor ye rememberest not that thy pageant may happen to be done as soon as his.[1060]

This dreamlike quality increased gender ambiguity and the uncertain sexual identity of cross-dressing boys as well as the social disturbance of low-class actors impersonating royalty. Opponents to the theatre and London aldermen were not happy with the English compromise of using boy actors for female roles. Stephen Gosson fulminated against the theatre in his pamphlet *The School of Abuse* (1579) that the theatre feminised the mind and induced the audience to vice; Philip Stubbes states his suspicion that men in women's clothes "adulterate the veritie of his owne kinde," and thus distort the essence of the male gender.[1061] Cross-dressing blurred the sign system distinguishing the genders, which posed a threat to male sexual purity as well as class distinctions.[1062] While many anti-theatrical critics feared the dissolution of gender boundaries that delineated masculinity and manhood with the use of boy actors, no one suggested solving the problem by replacing them with women.[1063]

The desired cohesion between the inner and the outer, the inner self and the outer comportment, was deeply unsettled in the theatre by the actors' assuming other identities than their own. As clothing was thought to express the inner essence of a person, changing roles and putting on different clothes changed the essence of the actors as well. Although performance seemed like a threat to personality, it was actually part of the self-fashioning process; personal identity *was* acting, a performance. Thus, Renaissance society accepted and enforced a close connection between acting and the identity of a person.[1064] However, Renaissance self-fashioning and acting display a faultline here; acting was an essential expression of the inner—and if this connection between the inner and outer was not congruent, the outer apparel had a deeply disturbing effect on the body and soul.[1065] This effect is seen in Shakespeare's comedies

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[1060] Quoted from Greenblatt 2005: 26-27.

[1061] Gosson 1972: B3r, C5r-[sig.C6r]; Stubbes 1585: [sig.F6v]; Breitenberg 1996: 160-161.

[1062] It should not be forgotten that the sumptuary laws regulated what kind of dress was allowed to be worn by whom. So the culturally constructed outward sign system that designated gender also marked social hierarchies and was put into legal form—it was legally sanctioned. However, these laws also protected the domestic cloth industry by forbidding the widespread use of imported cloths, dyes, and materials (Howard 1994). The boy actors were also known as "Ganymedes" (MacDonald 1999: 103)—a clear implication of their sexual attractiveness to men. For more on the connection between class and fashion, see Rose 1988: 66-67.

[1063] Orgel 1996: 3. Women had always performed in private performances, in court masques or as dancers during Elizabethan and Jacobean times, but not on the public stage (Orgel 1996: 3). For a discussion of effeminisation through cross-dressing, see Levine 1994: *passim* and MacDonald 1999: 104.

[1064] Thus, the history plays can be read as a continuing process of achieving masculinity. While characters struggle with circumstances, protagonists, settings and audiences, they still convey some ideas about what a male should be like. The used code of masculinity has to be understood by the audience because otherwise the communication would not work out. This decoding is complicated nowadays by the historic distance to the Renaissance. However, as every audience can contextualise the characters for themselves, they get a wider range of meaning in different contexts. The change of circumstances and context also change the meaning of the characters (Smith 2000: 148-149, 160).

[1065] See Smith 2000: 27.

where it seems that gender can be put on and taken off like clothing. The disguised heroines of plays like *Twelfth Night*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *As You Like It* seem to have taken on a genuinely masculine identity (and are accepted as men by the other characters) as long as they are disguised as men. Their masculinity is a performance, a mere matter of appearance. Indeed, "habits," in early modern use of the word, meant both clothing (*OED*, ′habit′ I.1-2) and patterns of behaviour (′habit′ III.8-10). Shakespeare is not the only one who used the performative nature of masculinity for his ends.[1066] According to Elizabethan stage conventions, a character could temporarily shed his or her persona to assume the role of a stage commentator.[1067] Stage characters could switch their identities and their function in a play; when their identities as stage characters changed, that could also influence their humoral makeup and cause them to regress towards the female state. As a result, these men would lose their elevated social position.[1068] These fears prove that male gender was not regarded as stable, and that cross-dressing and assuming other identities would mix up one's gendered self. What really seems to motivate these fears is the threat that the hierarchy between men and women might not be as justified as the gender ideology pretended. Humoral pathology taught that men and women were diverging humoral expressions on a continuum but had the same essence, so the difference between genders was a mere construction that had to be asserted artificially. The humoral body reacted to influences like clothing, behaviour, food, and many other external effects; therefore, men had to display the signs of maleness outwardly and control their masculinity inwardly to keep their inner self congruent with their essence.[1069]

As a result, actors had to take particular care to preserve their masculinity; when Hamlet metatheatrically prompts the actors to "[s]uit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance: that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature," (*Hamlet*, 3.2.16-18) he urges them to merge the inside and outside of their characters to be true to their roles.[1070] Hamlet demands that acting should depict a natural correlation between inner feelings (expressed by outer signs) and actions. Tillyard states that Elizabethans formed their stage characters according to "rigid, academic, *a priori* suppositions" as well as "first-hand observations;"[1071] Tillyard is bewildered by the fact that the Tudor stage could either combine these approaches or jump from one to the other. The change in characters could be explained with the approach of arguing *in utramque partem* or by adapting the character to the needs of the story. However, as the metadramatic Hamlet citation shows, the Tudor actors themselves were interested in a natural way of coherent and emotional stage acting.

[1066] Smith 2000: 3-4.
[1067] Tillyard 1944: 183.
[1068] Breitenberg 1996: 161, 162. Laqueur 1990: 7-8.
[1069] Breitenberg 1996: 162. For further information on humoral pathology and its implications on gender see chapter 2.1.3 and subchapters; see also Siraisi 1994: 123, 134. Siraisi further mentions the time of year and astronomical influences as causes for disease (see also Fletcher 1995: xvii).
[1070] See also Smith 2000: 156.
[1071] Tillyard 1944: 280.

The characters on stage were a mixture of fixed, one-dimensional *types* that hailed from the traditions of the mystery plays as well as the theory of humoral pathology and the emerging idea of the humanist self-fashioned subject.[1072] Socially and literarily defined types such as the *miles gloriosus*, the *scholar*, or the *courtier* provided certain character traits to a figure that also inform the royal personae of the history plays.[1073] The social roles a man had to impersonate made up a large part of masculinity on stage as well as in the real world. The actors themselves were regarded as *persons* whose soul was thought to be the medium that negotiated between transcendence and the body.[1074] These exemplary types were class-related and thus deeply informed by social hierarchies.[1075] Different social strata adhered to different ideals that were mirrored in literature and on stage.[1076] However, these male types share some common ground. First of all, the recognition of status is dependent on the verdict of other men. Male identities relied on social acceptance, and the status was only bestowed if the subject observed a certain set of rules.[1077] Secondly, ideals could also be reversed and parodied. In a parody, the norms and achievements are subverted or ridiculed.[1078] The third common similarity is that all of these ideals are a model of what *should* be, not an accurate picture of what really *is*.[1079] Therefore, the norms and the *status quo* have to be evaluated carefully. Especially in the theatre, this distance is essential—there are no real men on stage, they are fictional characters that might speak eloquently in verse and hold a very high social rank, lead constructed lives modelled to fit the stage, and have to resolve far-reaching problems that might be life-changing—choices normal men do not face on a day-to-day basis.[1080] Besides, ideals of masculinity can be contradictory—no man can perform all the ideal roles expected of him at once, so there are situations when men and male characters on stage might experience tensions or strains due to contradicting expectations.[1081] Likewise, ideal identities are never lastingly achieved—their

[1072] See for example John Earle's typology of man called *Micro-cosmography or, A Peece of the World Discovered; In Essayes and Characters* that was printed as late as 1628 and lists different types of humans and tries to characterise them.
[1073] Pfister 1988: 179-180.
[1074] Smith 2000: 37.
[1075] Smith acknowledges that different social groups in Elizabethan times aimed at different types of masculinity (Smith 2000: 57).
[1076] Smith 2000: 49-51. See further Smith's examples of the Chivalrous Knight, the Herculean Hero, the Humanist Man of Moderation, the Merchant Prince, the Saucy Jack, and the Gentleman that can be found in Shakespeare's plays (Smith 2000: 44-60).
[1077] Smith 2000: 60. Smith elaborates on the necessity of male friendship here. See also chapter 2.2.2.2 in this work. Smith 2000: 66. Hal's and Hotspur's rivalry is an example. It is a contest between the passion of choler and rational calculation. The one's identity is the foil for the masculinity to be achieved by the other. Hal first acknowledges Hotspur as an ideal to aspire to, then kills him in a climactic showdown, and takes over his characteristics in a purified way to finally take his place as a man worth for kingship (see Smith 2000: 65-66). The eulogy Hal bestows on Hotspur's dead body might also be interpreted as an appropriation of characteristics—as the place of the ideal man is "vacant" now.
[1078] Smith 2000: 62-63.
[1079] Smith 2000: 63.
[1080] Smith 2000: 64, 120. These characters are "high mimetic" according to Northrop Frye as they are social superiors to the audience of the theatre (Smith 2000: 119-120). These characters inspire awe on the one hand, as their capacities and (linguistic) force far excel those of the audience, but on the other hand most kings find a tragic end, so that the audience very probably will be happy not to hold this rank or have to take these decisions (Smith 2000: 121-122).
[1081] Smith 2000: 64.

performance always had to be balanced out carefully against competing requirements.[1082]

Despite idealised versions of masculinities in courtier manuals, paintings, and other media, masculinity had to be lived by men of flesh and blood in their own time frame and with personalities that were susceptible to or even threatened by internal or external change.[1083] The characters in the history plays must constantly perform in this tension of historical reality and dramatic make-believe of the stage. They struggle with the situations they find themselves in, with other protagonists, with demands on them as kings, and all this in front of a changing audience. By acting and counteracting within their parts, they convey the idea of what a male might and should be like. The history plays are mainly stories about characters, but their blueprints go back to a factual past that claims to be a chronicle of real events and figures. These stage characters are inseparably linked to their historical circumstances that direct their personal energies towards action. They have a vision of a changeable future, a hope that is usually disappointed. The history play is a good means for conveying the fiction that history provides and leads to cultural meaning, as this fiction is usually employed when either the past or the future are pondered.[1084] In this process, the male self is created and negotiated. However, the history plays are often a discourse between 'history' and 'philosophy' rather than clear-cut examples of ideal royal masculinity.[1085]

Emig perceives the history plays as a decidedly masculine genre.[1086] The history plays "always contain too many men," so it is more than a "historical convention" that the "surplus" of males is an issue in the dramas. For him, this is even a constitutive element in the formation of the early modern subject.[1087] The male individual is burdened with expectations and demands it has to fulfil, even if these demands are contradictory and thus lead to self-destruction. This means that men have to imitate other great men to obtain an exalted position, a concept Emig calls *aemulatio*.[1088] How greatness is defined is a matter of discourse and ideology, therefore, *aemulatio* encapsulates the concept of adapting to outward norms. Masculinity is not an inner quality but an approximation of a social and external norm that may conflict with internal forces and drives. In Renaissance thinking, *aemulatio* eliminated the distance between matters and related them in a "natural twinship" by imitation.[1089] This created a contact that enabled influence or even manipulation; the weaker part may integrate the

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[1082] Smith 2000: 66, 129. Fictional characters should be thought of as a sum of distinct identities, not a single subject, but a sum of different subjects (Smith 2000: 129).
[1083] Smith 2000: 67.
[1084] Hunter 1996: 239-240.
[1085] See Smith 2000: 136.
[1086] Emig 2009: 47. Foucault also mentions *aemulatio* as a structuring concept in Renaissance thinking (Foucault 1970: 19-21). Kamm connects manhood, tragedy, and the sanguine humour (Kamm 2009: 70). Thus, energy, ambition and the height of masculine development are all connected to tragedy, which implies a tragic flaw in the character; it might be asked whether it is sanguinity or adult masculinity itself that is the flaw.
[1087] Emig 2009: 47.
[1088] Emig 2009: 55.
[1089] Foucault 1970: 19.

influence of the stronger part. If that did not occur, the ensuing rivalry led to a fight.[1090] Likewise, men emulating each other can define themselves by both their differences and similarities to others.[1091] By copying others, men can finally surpass them; a man aspiring to status and power has to enter a contact with men already there, so he mirrors them and enters contact. As a next step, one of them has to be destroyed so that the other can succeed. Then, the circle begins anew since there will always be too many men entering the arena and aspiring to power.

Renaissance thinking stressed the desirability of imitating historical examples; the mighty deeds of great men were recorded so that the following generations could imitate their acts and enter the circle of *aemulatio*. History plays were not only thought to instruct the audience historically, but also to provide them with moral examples; thus, the history plays promoted the concept of *aemulatio*.[1092] For Emig, the ideals of masculinity and masculine behaviour connected to classical ideals are seen in dead bodies on stage and are "always already nothing, a ghost, and at the same time the spirit that moves upon the face of the subject."[1093] The motivating moment of masculinity is always evasive, contradictory, and usually fatal. Emig concludes that this web entangling men is a "death sentence"; the web "is this fatal tradition that feminist theory calls 'patriarchy'."[1094] Rhetoric is not only a means of self-assertion, it is also a weapon used in the conflict of *aemulatio*. The virtues men aspire to are passed on via rhetoric, and rhetoric affirms and maintains a monarch's power by engaging in linguistic rituals of flattery or oaths of loyalty. However, language is also the weapon that can lead to the downfall of great men. The use of language is always an act, a performance of power as well as a tool of masculinity.[1095]

Roman values and thinking deeply informed humanist education and early modern thinking.[1096] Elizabethan pupils were exposed to Roman philosophical and moral issues through the Latin texts they used in school. Tracing their mythological origins back to Brutus, the grandson of the Trojan Aeneas, the Elizabethans established a personal link to antiquity, rather than merely an educational connection.[1097] The highest values an Elizabethan man could exhibit were the stoic ideals "constancy, resoluteness and stability," concepts that the Roman writer Seneca had demanded of men in his *Sententiae*. Wisdom, not brute force, should be exerted in the application of power.[1098] However, the most striking structural difference of the Roman plays and the histories is that the former are set in a republic, and the latter in a monarchy. In a monarchy, genealogical legitimacy and royal succession qualify some men for power but limit other men from accessing this power, while in the Roman plays, heroic deeds and

[1090] Foucault 1970: 20.
[1091] Emig 2009: 59.
[1092] Pfister 2009: 231.
[1093] Emig 2009: 59.
[1094] Emig 2009: 59.
[1095] Emig 2009: 55.
[1096] On humanist education and its failures see Esler 1966: 58-66.
[1097] Emig 2009: 48. Stow already disclaimed this legend in his *Survey*, but it was still referred to (Rowland 2005: 14).
[1098] Emig 2009: 53.

bravery count as legitimisation. Therefore, the male surplus that Emig detects is not as pressing in the English history plays as there is only a limited pool of men qualifying for the crown and thus the access to legitimate power. The Wars of the Roses, however, prove that a certain "surplus" of potential rulers can be seen at a time when different noble factions vied for the throne.

Many different discourses, ideas, and normative expectations influenced men—and especially kings—in their male gender construction. Not only the fashioning of an individual self, but also the relationships with women or other men were dependent on how masculinity was conceived and asserted. Now, the parameters defining masculinity and how masculinity can be read must be defined. As Judith Butler stated that gender was a performative act, it is made culturally legible by a set of codes; in the following, a semiotics of masculinity shall be developed to decode and read masculinity on the Tudor stage.

2.7 A Semiotics of Masculinity

The previous part of this work outlined several discursive fields that circumscribe the vast territory of male self-construction; these chapters provided an overview of the ideas, concepts, and political bases that formed the discourses around early modern masculinity, power, and rule. They informed not only the notion of what a man was or should be like but also structured his relationships to women or other men. To be culturally legible, masculinity is constituted by a conglomerate of specific signs on the early modern stage, and as the theatre is an audio-visual art, characters on stage can only reveal their thoughts and values by making them public to the audience via signs that have to be decoded; in the dramatic text, various codes like costume, gestures, and language convey meaning.[1099] In order to find out how the masculine gender is constructed in the plays, the highly arbitrary system of linguistic and conventionalised signs must to be extracted. This work primarily considers the signs in the text; a full analysis of text-external signs and codes added by a director for performance are beyond the scope of this work but will be alluded to when appropriate. The underlying parameters of masculinity construction may then be condensed into workable tools to find a semiotics of masculinity that helps to analyse how the early modern history plays constructed royal masculinity in the 1590s.

As the plays were written for performance on the stage, the actors portraying kings had to use strategies to communicate both masculinity and kingship to their audience; their main explicit means are *speech* and *actions*. While Pfister stresses that the relation between the two might be relative or even non-existent, speech is in fact a form of action.[1100] This relation—and even the friction—between speech and actions will be

[1099] See Pfister 1988: 7-11. The codes that pertain exclusively to an actual production like lighting, the physiognomy of the actors, and gestures cannot be commented on if they are not mentioned in the text or stage directions. It might happen that the analysis will refer to a production or a film, if it helps to make a point in the analysis. Productions of a play, whether on stage or on the screen, are always an interpretation and therefore text-external.
[1100] Pfister 1988: 119.

taken into account for this analysis, contrasting inner motivation and the "inner truth" of monologues with outer behaviour and pretension in public speeches. The character's self-construction is crucial in this respect; as the idea of an individual self was not thought to be inwardly private but showed in the process of balancing the inner soul with outer behaviour and signs, the inner self could be read as an outward reflection of inner processes.

On stage, characters have to express their self through observable means; one of the most direct means of expression and interaction is *speech*. Speech has various forms and appears directly in soliloquies—like in personal musings, inner monologues, and individual thoughts—as well as in dialogues. For interpretation and analysis, one must consider the style of language in an exchange, as well as metaphors or connotations that are invoked. In the plays, prose and verse are important as sociolects, but wording should be further scrutinised if it is peculiar.[1101] Words are codes and signs for how the world is constructed via language; the way things are expressed also forms a separate reality on stage and creates meaning. A king builds up his power base with words and interprets and creates his world via language; his use of metaphors projects images into the hearer's mind that explain how he perceives the world.[1102] Therefore, it is essential to examine the metaphors and the registers of speech used in different contexts to grasp the meaning of what is said inclusive of all connotations and cross-references. Ambiguities or ironies, for example, open up a space of meaning and interpretation that adds significantly to the impact of the events presented on stage. Diverse modes of speech such as public, private, and reflective talk as well as the use of prose and verse within a text must be examined, though it is debatable whether private speech exists for a king, whose actions always bear an importance for the rest of his state. Furthermore, speech can work explicitly or implicitly, so these two levels of meaning have to be kept apart and scrutinised separately. Speech is not only a means for relating to others but also an expression of a king's relation to his self and the position he occupies. The way in which a royal character reflects on a given situation reveals how he relates his self to the demands placed on him due to his social role. This form of self-identification via speech is not only restricted to the figure of the king. Other characters can and do express their thoughts about their sovereign and thus add significance to the image that the king himself projects. Questions that reflect on the king's image include: Do characters speak differently when the king is absent or not? Do they say what they mean or do they betray the king? What do they say about the king himself? Do they share his perception of himself or do they have alternative views?

Actions are a more energetic means of expression on stage. There are explicit and implicit deeds within the text, as either expressed by the primary text—spoken language—or the secondary text like stage directions. Looking at royal men begs the question of whether there is a proscribed way in which kings should act. The consistency of their actions, reactions to their environment, and their appearance as

[1101] Pfister 1988: 120-121.
[1102] An example is Henry V's speech before Harfleur. The sexual rape imagery used to express the rage and brutality of war parallel the penetrating force of Henry's army and himself in France.

themselves or in disguise are important clues. The appearance of the king in disguise is especially relevant as it discloses the connection between the inner and outer and has important consequences for the construction of the royal self. The male self and the male in relationships are the inner and outer components of masculinity. But is this relation stable or does the king play a role? And if so, which one? The role model a king follows is also a key indicator; while chivalry was an exemplary ideal, there might also be other roles to be imitated or invented. Does the king scheme and deceive his subjects and peers or does he show his "true face"? Is he "himself" or not? That question is broadened by examining the king's relationship to decorum and regalia. Does the king feel comfortable with them or would he rather abandon them? Linked to this consideration is the evaluation of a king's rule and its legitimacy. The litmus test for a good ruler is his ability to control his passions; if he is subject to his own desires, he is deemed unfit to rule over others. Regal comportment and the fulfilment or avoidance of regal duties are therefore essential for decoding how a king constructs his self. Does the king bear himself like a royal? Does he have doubts about his social role or does he show inner majesty that confirms his suitability for the role? Additionally, royalty was strongly connected to the metaphysical, so the king's relationship to God and his divine responsibility as God's anointed on earth are vital components of his suitability for the kingship. Does the king see the transcendence of his body politic? Or is the king only interested in his power and his own will?

In addition to speech and actions on stage, the textual "body" informs answers to the previous questions; a text may critique royal actions or add further meaning to the action on stage. By opening up different fields of meaning, new connotations and possibilities of interpretation arise for the audience. Furthermore, the text may use subversive strategies to undermine the action shown on stage; if it does so, this new context imbues deeds and speech with additional meaning. A text may implicitly evaluate the king and his actions, as well as his identification with his role. In sum, a reader has to look out for a sub-text to be deciphered. The main interest of this work, however, is how the text relates to the connection between ruling ideology and masculinity; the strategies used to display masculinity in the plays weave a net of meaning that shows what it signified to be a male and a king. The following parameters shape hegemonial masculinity for the English nobility most evidently, deriving from the discussion of masculinity construction in chapter two of this work:

- The importance of hierarchies connected to the notions of order and obedience
- Male self-assertion through aggression and dominance
- The contrast of rationality and self-control versus humoral pathology and passions
- The contrast between sexuality, love, and friendship
- Royalty, power, and rule

These criteria form the structural basis of hegemonic male gender construction in early modern England and will be the structural guidelines for the following analytical subchapters. They will aid in the scrutiny of the construction and evaluation of masculinity on stage in the setting of the history plays. The following chart shows the structure of the analysis:

Construction of Royal Masculinity / Means of Analysis	Hierarchy	Dominance	Rationality versus Passions	Love and Sexuality	Royalty and Rule
Speech					
Actions					
Textual Evaluation					
Coherence with Hegemonic Masculinity					

The upper horizontal line denotes the aforementioned parameters that outline the construction of royal masculinity, whereas the vertical line denotes the means of the theatre that express these constitutive parameters. The chart is the blueprint for the analysis that will examine how the denominators of royal masculinity are expressed by the main protagonists' speech and deeds, and how the text itself evaluates these speeches and actions. An analysis of the strategies of masculinity and the signs conveying maleness on stage will show whether these signs conform to hegemonic masculinity; where there are alternative masculinities presented on stage that do not conform to orthodox ideology, these alternate views will be assessed.

The previous chapters exposed the fact that the discourses surrounding these parameters can be contradictory. The borders that delineate established orthodoxy become visible by faultlines and conflicting demands ideology imposed on men; when a character experiences a clash of motives, he may feel immobilised, which makes it impossible to act or to reach a decision. Thus, looking at the borders of established ideas of masculinity will help to delineate ruling discourse and help define alternative masculinities. However, the underlying structures of masculinity can also be complementary, at times there are synergies between these points. Amorous relationships provide one example: love and passion may intertwine—or they are regulated by self-control. The analyses will take these conflicting or complementary strategies into account. The dramas will serve as textual examples and may give cross-references to other plays if adequate.

The kings of the history plays are usually the main male protagonists; they originate from the English high nobility, a very small, elite social group that is confronted with a normative concept of their selves and their masculine gender because of their elevated social role. The forces of Fortune, the forces of an inimical world, or wrong moral choices might lead to the downfall of tragic heroes. The majority of the kingly

characters usually do not achieve their cultural ideal of masculinity and do not live up to official ideology or social norms.[1103] How and why most of them fail will be scrutinised in the analyses of the plays.

Masculinity can further be examined through a male character's social connections: does he stand alone, is he loved, and is he supported by others, or does he injure the ones closest to him emotionally? This work will also consider gender, namely examining whether the king interacts differently with certain males and why as well as how the king treats females.

Kings do not act in a social vacuum; the presence of a king in the play, whether he searches for company and reaches out to others or prefers to be left alone can indicate how a king positions himself in his society. Kings, given their role, nearly always have to interact with others. For this reason, the question of how others such as their peers or commoners evaluate the king's actions often influences the plot and the development of the story. Peers' or commoners' counteractions trigger reactions from the king, so the interdependence of action and reaction must be considered. Additionally, it has to be scrutinised what kind of a ruler and leader the king is—is he a lone wolf, a solitary leader, or does he stress his bond with his "brothers in arms"? How "organic" is his rule, and how embedded is it in the social structures around the king? As a public personage, the actions of the king, whether as private as his procreative activities or as public as declaring a war, are of social and political import. As Renaissance England had already developed and discussed concrete ideas about how a prince or king should act, there was no codex for the behaviour of princesses and queens, however, so there are many complex and sometimes conflicting notions and aspects that mirror this time's quest for a new ethic in politics. This search is personified in the figure of the king and the play's quest of how to exact authority well.[1104] This fact increases the importance of the history plays on the Elizabethan stage for the political discourse of the Renaissance.

An examination of signs denoting royal masculinity consists of two parts: kingship and being male. Kingship is associated with definitive signs and surroundings; the sceptre and crown are signs of monarchy, as are the globe and sword. The court and the battlefield are typical settings where kingship is enacted. If a king is on stage, then, it is necessary to distinguish if he appears as himself or as someone distinctively different and whether he moves in a setting common for a king or not. In this category, the analysis will concentrate on the tangible aspects of kingship. In addition to the outer signs of kingship, this work examines political actions, namely the way in which kings fulfil their duties and role. The first consideration is whether the king is legitimate and rules within the aura of divine right. In Tudor orthodoxy, there is a correlation between the two bodies of a king; the king's physical body is connected to his metaphysical *maiestas*—the part of the king that never dies—and is furthermore intrinsically intertwined with the common weal of his realm. How are the two bodies connected in the plays? Is order established in the kingdom, and do hierarchies function? Is there any

[1103] See Smith 2000: 138. However, it is important to note that tragedy is triggered by the tragic flaw in the main character.
[1104] Schruff 1999: 2-3.

imbalance in either the body private or the body politic or is there any excess, any lack of control that could be deemed "unmanly" by the standards of the Renaissance? Macrocosmic and microcosmic relations always mirror each other, therefore analogies between the person of the king and the commonwealth are important signals.[1105] Another aspect is the relation and validation of the private and the public. Often, there is a bias in the depiction of both spheres, usually reserving the public for men.[1106] Marriages, children, and sorrows have an equal urgency in both men's and women's lives but men and women may differ in what they express and what they hide.[1107] As all the main characters as well as the playwrights are men, the treatment of the public and private spheres will be taken into account.

Masculinity and kingship do not exist on their own but are socially assigned to others, as well as expressed and developed by values, virtues, and actions. This analysis will unearth how royal masculinity influences relations to others, and how the signs of masculinity are revealed in the king's interaction with other characters. The relationships of a king with other people were generally structured by the principles of hierarchies and order; patriarchy was a system that ordered relations between sexes as well as between older and younger people, so social status emanated from patriarchal structures and also influenced relations between men. In male-female relations, asymmetries of power were an additional issue to generational order, often accompanied by social misogyny. Between men, status denominators were important. The relationships with either sex are under scrutiny, especially of what nature they are: are they sexual or familial? Is there friendship or hate? Does rivalry establish a close link? Do they take place in war or in peace? If a king finds himself in a war, how does he act in the field? How does he conduct his policies? Does he act according to virtues expected of him, like justice, self-control, rationality, martial prowess, honour, and responsibility? And how does he treat his troops?

Masculinity, the second part to consider in royal masculinities, is somewhat more complex. Smith defined an ideal early modern male in Tudor England as a) not a woman or effeminate in any sense, b) English, c) a gentleman or nobleman, and d) sexually involved with women—and therefore not a "sodomite."[1108] These characteristics concretise the aforementioned parameters of what "makes a man" and will be additional criteria for the analysis of the plays. The textually inherent evaluation and the grade of coherence with ruling ideology will further show how drama positioned itself within orthodox discourse. If literature—and thus drama—is accepted as an expression of behavioural codes and a reflective technique, the analysis of the chosen plays will enlighten the understanding of how early modern royal masculinity was encoded, constructed, and reflected on by the contemporary history play. In a

[1105] Besides, macrocosmic omens or abnormalities usually signal that something special is going to happen on earth. The birth of kings (or the omens of their downfall) are often accompanied by strange apparitions in the sky or other signs denoting something extraordinary (see also Smith 2000: 140).
[1106] Filene 1987: 111.
[1107] Filene 1987: 112.
[1108] Smith 2000: 104. The positive entities mentioned above are formulated from Smith's negative antitheses of masculinity.

conclusion, the results of the analysis will be combined so that the construction of royal masculinity in late Tudor England can be made palpable.

The figures on stage are based on historical characters but are also deliberate constructions by the playwrights; thus, they are determined by the closed and finite information given in the text, constructed to serve theatrical needs.[1109] Ontologically, a fictional stage character cannot be scrutinised according to essentialist psychology.[1110] These characters are constructed by the means of text, language, and action, issues that show that the figures are as constructed as the royal masculinity they perform on stage. As the royal personae in the plays are stage characters, they are highly influenced by the *episteme* of their age and move within the bounds of the culture they spring from. Nevertheless, inner motivations and the concept of masculinity that inform the characters are crucial for analysis. These inner motivations have two underlying bases—virtues and values. They belong to different spheres but are interdependent: virtues denote the positive personal qualities that are part of a character's self whereas values are the desirable norms that are the bases of what a society holds dear.[1111] Personal virtues are infused with what is important for the society in which an individual lives; values in turn are influenced by the individuals that live within that society. These two influences, both personal and social, manifest themselves on stage in how characters deal with the challenges they face. Within the context of the underlying structures of values and discourses of their culture, characters can develop strategies to meet the demands of the situation they are in. The aim of the action is then to achieve goals that seem desirable by a certain culture or an individual. The competence to react to a situation accordingly is learned through culture. In the analysis, then, employed strategies, their aims, and the characters' position in regards to established cultural and social norms must be evaluated to see if these strategies are employed within or outside of the frame of ruling discourse. The essential question is whether they use the symbols and norms of their culture, and to what effect.

As the plays were often employed in order to criticise contemporary problems and politics, the connection of the action on stage with the past and the Renaissance present will be commented on where possible. One historical event, for example, that many history plays allude to, is Richard II's murder; Earl Rivers recalls Richard II's murder before his execution at Pomfret castle in *Richard III*: "O Pomfret, Pomfret! O thou bloody prison, / fatal and ominous to noble peers! / Within the guilty closure of thy walls, / Richard the Second was hacked to death, / And, for more slander to thy dismal seat, / We give to thee our guiltless blood to drink," (*RIII*, 3.3.8-13). Likewise, Henry V prays before Agincourt that God might forgive his father's sin of murdering Richard: "Not today, oh lord…" (*HV*, 4.2.274-287). *Henry V* is a play that explicitly points to the future reign of Henry VI, and foreshadows his loss of France as well as his subsequent

[1109] Pfister 1988: 160-161.
[1110] Traub calls the temptation to treat stage characters like real-life people the "anthropomorphic fallacy" (Traub 1992: 4).
[1111] See the definitions in the OED.

political downfall in the epilogue.[1112] The reign and conquest of Edward III and his seven sons are frequently referred to as a kind of historio-mythological past that evokes strength and legitimacy to the present of the plays. The quasi-hagiographic figure of Edward III is a reference that founded a sacred myth reiterated in the history plays.[1113] Thus, Henry V's victory at Agincourt becomes a re-enactment of the English victory at Crécy that legitimised Edward III's claim to the French throne.[1114]

[1112] Tillyard 1944: 147-148.
[1113] Pfister 2009: 234-235.
[1114] Pfister 2009: 235. This statement is problematic in so far that it is the successes of the Black Prince that secured Edward III's claim to the French throne (also at Poitiers); see chapter 3.2.1.

3 Analysis

In the following, the practical application of masculinity discourses will be under scrutiny in the selected plays *Richard II*, *1* and *2 Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *1 Henry VI*, *Richard III*, *Edward II*, *1* and *2 Edward IV*, and *Edward III*. According to the parameters of masculinity mentioned above, the plays will be analysed in thematically ordered blocs. Hopefully, the analyses will expose whether the plays are congruent or contrary to hegemonic masculinity; a general evaluation will end each unit. Mostly, the analyses will focus on the kings as main protagonists, but here and there other aristocratic characters will feature to prove a point. As hierarchies are not only important for masculinity or kingship but are the underlying structure of social interaction in the Renaissance, hierarchy, order, and obedience will feature as the first thematic bloc. Then, male self-assertion through aggression and dominance will focus on the more belligerent aspects of masculinity; as kings are often involved in wars and fights, this chapter concentrates on martial activity. The next thematic unit deals with the internal self-construction of masculinity, the struggle between rational self-control and the physical passions. This part looks at the fashioning of the self against physical and humoral desires. The focus then changes from the self to the interaction with others; the rather intimate relationships around friendship, love, and sexuality will be looked at. As a last thematic unit, the reigns of the kings are under scrutiny; the royal protagonists' approach to kingship, power, and rule will be discussed. Finally, a conclusion will sum up the findings and evaluate the image of masculinity in the history plays.

3.1 Hierarchy, Order, and Obedience

The medieval theory of divine right is crucial to understanding the main conflicts of the history plays that centre on legitimacy, succession, and finding a place in the order of things.[1115] The kings are a part of a dynamic social system in which they have to assert their leading position. To exert their power, monarchs are dependent on obedience, and most struggle with the disobedience of their subjects. Each king evaluates and tackles this challenge differently; some are more successful than others—especially Henry IV, who is constantly revisited by his own political mistakes. In the process of problem solving, the tension between the monarch as a private person and the monarch as a ruler emerges, exposing the kings' different strategies to work out that friction.

3.1.1 "Every Subject's Duty Is the King's"—Before Agincourt

Obedience and order depended not only on the subservience of the subjects but also on the responsible government of the monarch that should prevent any cause for

[1115] Howard observes that history plays are always concerned with the legitimacy of the monarch, and the impression of legitimacy is both dependent on the monarch's production of gender differences and on the powerful subordination of the feminine to masculine authority (Howard 1988b: 261-262; 274-275; Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 132, 322).

opposition. One of the most thorough and explicit discussions of this responsibility is portrayed in *Henry V*. In the crucial scene on the eve of the battle of Agincourt, Henry wanders in disguise through his camp at night to find out about the morale of his army. Thus, he runs into the conversation of three ordinary soldiers, John Bates, Alexander Court, and Michael Williams. In the longest dialogue he delivers in the play, Henry himself formulates the underlying dilemma of the responsibilities between king and subject.[1116] The soldiers discuss their feelings about the battle the next day; one of them, Bates, argues that he does not want to see the dawn of day because he thinks it could be his last (*HV*, 4.1.86-87). It is Williams who asks Henry how their superiors evaluate the battle to come and who he is (*HV*, 4.1.94). Henry calls himself a "friend" serving under Erpingham (*HV*, 4.1.90; 92) whose coat he wears. Erpingham—according to Henry—likens the situation of the English to shipwrecked men on a beach who might be washed away with the next tide (*HV*, 4.1.95-96). His answer to Williams' question does not really show whether he speaks the truth or not; the metaphor however indicates that Erpingham (or Henry) deems the situation desperate. Bates then wants to know if Erpingham shared these thoughts with the king, which Henry negates. This starts off Henry's own argument that Erpingham should not disclose this negative evaluation to the king because the "King is but a man, as I am" (*HV*, 4.1.99). Erpingham's fears should not instil anxiety in the king or dishearten him. His reactions are difficult to evaluate as he moves in a grey area; as a man in disguise, he is not his royal self. That leaves open two possibilities: either he assumes a different role and tells his real mind, or he wants to test the soldiers and their allegiance by playing the devil's advocate. Henry's statement is nevertheless double-edged: with the obvious statement "the King is but a man, as I am," he uses a circular argument—it is the king speaking underneath his disguise, and, as such, he is not "but" a man due to his elevated position. The arguments he uses to strengthen the claim that the king is just a normal man limited by the common *conditio humana* are not as straightforward as they may seem at first glance (*HV*, 4.1.99-104). "The violet smells to him as it doth to me" (*HV*, 4.1.99-100) is again a circular argument as the king speaks; however, Henry has laid aside his regalia and approaches the soldiers as one of them. Thus, he comes with his "body private" devoid of any metaphysical endowment, claiming just normal humanity.

Henry's disguise allows him to speak his true feelings; as a recognisable king he could not admit fear. Even though also a king can feel anxious, his fears would dishearten the whole army and thus risk the whole campaign due to his elevated position. Henry explains: "Therefore, when he [the king] sees reasons of fears, as we do, his fears, out of doubt, be the same relish as ours are. Yet, in reason, no man should possess him with any appearance of fear, lest he, by showing it, should dishearten his army" (*HV*, 4.1.104-108). Despite the clear message on the surface, this passage is more intricate. In "as we do," Henry implicitly admits that he is afraid and thinks that "out of doubt" the king fears to the same degree as a simple soldier. In the next sentence, however, he claims that the king should not *show* his fear because due to his position of a leader—which renders him essentially different from a simple soldier—he would

[1116] Schruff 1999: 121.

weaken the morale of his army. Thus, the king is both alike and different from the soldiers because he might fear but is not allowed to show it; apparently, this is what Henry actually feels at this very moment but cannot say so directly. Bates gets the gist of the argument but turns around the outcome—while the king might show outward courage, inwardly he wishes himself anywhere except on the battlefield. Bates believes that the king wishes himself in "Thames up to the neck" and would love to be there to escape the battle (*HV*, 4.1.109-113). Henry cannot accept this; his answer only thinly veils his real identity when he claims to "speak my conscience of the King. I think he would not wish himself anywhere but where he is" (*HV*, 4.1.113-115); his corroborative oath "by my troth" (*HV*, 4.1.113) indicates that escaping battle would compromise his aristocratic honour, a heavy charge that would not weigh as heavily for a commoner. Nevertheless, this statement is ambiguous. "I will speak my conscience of the King" might mean that he will confess to what he *thinks* of the king as a third person—or that he will admit what his royal conscience or the body politic within him induces him to. The subjunctive "would" in the following sentence does not necessarily indicate that the king decidedly does not wish himself anywhere else—but that he *should* not wish to escape due to his royal status. However, even that is not entirely clear.

Bates is not impressed; rather, he wishes the king were alone in the field so that he could be ransomed and many soldiers stay alive (*HV*, 4.1.116-117). Henry cannot take this and immediately questions Bates's loyalty to the king, assuming he just said this to test the allegiance of the others (*HV*, 4.1.118-119). Henry ambiguously claims that "Methinks I could not die anywhere so contented as in the King's company, his cause being just and his quarrel honourable" (*HV*, 4.1.120-122). As he *is* the king, he has to die in the king's company anyways; however, he implies that it is an honour to die in the king's presence, especially when fighting for a just cause which sanctions war for Christians. While Henry claims that the war is "just and honourable," the legitimacy of the war had to be explained to him in a confused and not really clear analysis by the Archbishop of Canterbury (see *HV*, 1.2. 35-95). The question remains whether Henry himself really believes in the justice and honour of this war or whether he merely wants to boost the wavering morale of his men. Williams' simple retort "That's more than we know," (*HV*, 4.1.123) undercuts the king's claim of legitimacy; rather, the soldier neither supports that it is an honour to die in the presence of a king nor that the war is just. Bates backs up Williams and adds that the soldiers should not even strive for this kind of honour as it is "more than we should seek after" (*HV*, 4.1.124).[1117] For the simple men, it is enough to know that they are fulfilling a subject's duty of obedience that in any case "wipes the crime of it out of us" (*HV*, 4.1.126-127). Thus, Bates establishes a metaphysical tie between the monarch and his subjects: the obedience towards their sovereign has a direct, even cleansing, impact on their souls that does not make them accountable for any wrongdoing that might occur in the service of their king. Williams adds that the king has to answer for the righteousness of his cause—if

[1117] Malcontent soldiers are a theatrical means to express criticism like the question whether sovereigns can forfeit their right to rule if they do not care about their subjects enough. Malcontents, however, should be unconditionally loyal to their sovereign despite the monarch's (possible) neglect of their causes (Keller 1993: 107-109; Esler 1966: 202-243).

his war was not just, he has to account for its casualties (*HV*, 4.1.128-134). Obedience binds master and subject together reciprocally: as the soldiers are bound to their sovereign by the religious duty of obedience, so is their sovereign responsible to see that God has the soldiers die "well" (*HV*, 4.1.134-138)—a charge Henry will later disavow.

But Williams further charges the king with the moral responsibility for those that die for him on the battlefield: as few will die prepared and at peace with their lives ("I am afeard there are few die well that die in battle," *HV*, 4.1.134-135), they will die in sin. Thus, the king is responsible for the damnation of their souls as his subjects could not refuse to fight, bound by obedience to follow their king into war ("Now, if these men do not die well, it will be a black matter for the king that led them to it—who to disobey were against all proportion of subjection," *HV*, 4.1.136-138). Here, Henry is directly confronted and challenged with his personal responsibility for the souls of his soldiers who cannot win; either, they refuse to fight and thus sin by not obeying their king, or they die during service and thus sin as well. And as the king is responsible for his cause, the soldiers put their lives, potential widows, and orphans on his head. The king's special privileges are compensated by special responsibilities—an Elizabethan concept of rule.[1118] However, Henry begins to squirm in his argumentation when he is charged with the liability for the well-being of his soldiers' souls. He tries to argue his way out of his responsibility, citing the example of a son who gets shipwrecked and dies on a journey for his father; while the son has bad luck, death in combat is a much more probable outcome for simple soldiers awaiting an impending battle. Therefore, his examples of commissioners who die doing their jobs for someone else do not really fit (*HV*, 4.1.139-145). The asymmetry of power implied in the examples of the father-son and master-servant relationships are intended to parallel the connection between king and soldier; but while the king may not necessarily aim at the deaths of his subjects, the war he began is the immediate cause of his soldiers' deaths. Henry does not want to acknowledge this fact and turns Williams' argument around to claim that no king, "be his cause never so spotless," (*HV*, 4.1.149) can fight only with soldiers who have a clean conscience (*HV*, 4.1.149-157). Rather, the soldiers themselves have to account for their deeds before God and no one else; he turns death into a just punishment for those who did wrong before the war by claiming that war is God's vengeance to evildoers (*HV*, 4.1. 158-161). Everything that happens in the course of a just war, then, would be just as well. While Henry's argumentation evokes the concept of a trial by combat, the soldiers claim that without the king, they would not face the threat of death—a truism that Henry does not acknowledge. Thus, the king eludes his direct responsibility for his soldiers by arguing that he simply makes God's divine justice happen: "Every subject's duty is the King's but every subject's soul is his own" (*HV*, 4.1.164-165). This sentence sums up the asymmetry of power in the bond between king and subject—the subject has to fend for himself but owes his king obedience whereas the king is not responsible for the welfare of his subjects but may demand the subject's service, even risking his own life. Henry's conclusion is cynical: every soldier should prepare for death and confess

[1118] Eisaman Maus 1997: 722.

his sins to God, so that they can be absolved. Then, death can even be advantageous as he will meet his maker with a clean conscience. This claim harks back to Luther's idea that no one but God can have authority over souls.[1119] Henry refuses to take moral responsibility for the fate of his soldiers; while he initially made the point of human sameness between the king and the common soldier, he now turns his initial argument around, stressing their essential differences. He distinguishes between the king's violence, which is the violence of war and God's instrument of vengeance, while the violence of his subjects is merely criminal.[1120]

Bates seems to be satisfied with these explanations; he takes responsibility for his own soul and wants to fight "lustily" for the king's cause (*HV*, 4.1.173-176). Henry adds that he heard the king say he would not be ransomed (*HV*, 4.1.177-178), but Williams detects propaganda behind this statement. He thinks that this statement should make the soldiers fight cheerfully as they, the simple footmen, will not be able to check on this statement later as they will be killed (*HV*, 4.1.179-181). The king is simply no commoner and will not be treated as one, despite all protestations to the contrary. Henry's answer is cryptic and ambiguous: "If I live to see it, I will never trust his word after" (*HV*, 4.1.182). First, he *is* the king—if he dies he will of course not see the king be ransomed; second, as Williams points out to Henry, the threat of not believing the king's word does not effect anything because a simple soldier cannot threaten the king or even reach him with contempt—it simply does not affect the monarch's elevated position (*HV*, 4.1.183-187). Henry feels offended by this truth, so Williams offers him a challenge that they will fight out if they both survive the battle (*HV*, 4.1.188-190). Henry accepts and the two men seal it with their gloves as tokens (4.1.191-205). Thus, the conflict is not solved but deferred; besides, Henry's promise to challenge Williams even in the king's presence is mean (*HV*, 4.1.201-204). To challenge someone in the monarch's presence was forbidden—and how could Williams challenge someone in the presence of the king who eventually *is* the king? Thus, Henry accepts the challenge of an inferior and simultaneously impedes this very subject to fulfil his promise, comprising the soldier's honour. The discussion ends with Bates' admonition to keep English unity in the face of the French threat; Henry agrees and tries to direct the energies against the French, claiming that the king will be amongst the ones clipping "French crowns" (*HV*, 4.1.206-211). Then, the soldiers exit the stage.

The discussion about the relationship between the king and his subjects with their respective responsibilities shows how differently the protagonists evaluate the situation; Williams is relatively immune to propaganda and manipulation whereas Bates' doubts are more easily appeased. Williams is well aware of the theatricality and artificiality of power that surrounds the person of the king; he also knows that the superiors stage their behaviour for the morale of their soldiers. Howard questions the sincerity and reliability

[1119] Luther 1983: 61. In the original, Luther writes: "Viel närrischer ists's aber noch, wenn man sagt: Die Könige und Fürsten und die Menge glauben so. Mein Lieber, wir sind nicht getauft auf Könige, Fürsten noch auf die Menge, sondern auf Christus und Gott selber. Wir heißen auch nicht Könige, Fürsten oder Menge, wir heißen Christen. Der Seele soll und kann niemand gebieten, er wisse ihr denn den Weg zum Himmel zu weisen. Das kann aber kein Mensch tun, sondern Gott allein."
[1120] Eisaman Maus 1997: 722; see also Campbell 1947: 276-279.

of the king's role-play in these lines; the king may not really mean what he says and just wants to reach his own goals.[1121] Henry apparently just does that: while he first stresses the sameness of the human condition in both the king and the common soldiers, he later turns his argument around and stresses the difference in responsibility between them; while he acknowledges that he needs the service of the soldiers which he may claim due to the quasi-metaphysical bond of obedience, he apparently cannot bear the responsibility the soldiers lay on him. Consequently, the power asymmetry burdens the subjects disproportionately. This conflict also shows up in his meta-theatrical role-play: Can a king, even in disguise, put off all his royalty and just be human? Henry's reasoning in the beginning of the scene seems rather ironical and ambiguous; he cannot leave his role and cannot make himself "equal" to his subjects. His body natural as well as the body politic are centred around the upper spheres of being human—it is in his royal nature not to be equal, as his later reactions to their charges show.[1122]

3.1.2 "Have I No Friend?"—Kingship Facing Rebellion

Rebellion—dissention channelled into force—was a controversial issue in Renaissance literature; while stability and order were the foundations of an ideal reign, rebellion was its antithesis, which violently voiced conflicting interests, questions of royal legitimacy, and power struggles.[1123] This chapter will highlight three plays focussing on the question of political rebellion and how the monarch reacts to them. The plays are the first part of *Edward IV*, and part one and two of *Henry IV*; here and there, flashbacks to *Richard II* will help to delineate the conflicts of a king who was initially a usurper to the throne himself. Heywood and Shakespeare tackle the problems surrounding the rebellions quite differently; a comparison between the diverse approaches of textual evaluation will lead to a bigger picture of how rebellion, its social causes, and the reaction of the kings were negotiated on the late Tudor stage.

The first scene of *Edward IV* already confronts king and audience with the news about a rebellion flaring up; however, the king will never have direct contact with the insurgents throughout the play. To reinstall the incarcerated Lancastrian Henry VI to the throne, "the bastard Falconbridge" marches towards London. As his support increases along the way, the messenger fears that the growing rebel army will take the capital if they do not face a proper defence (*1EIV*, 1.137-145). Edward is not surprised by the news; he states that he had suspected the discontented Falconbridge to rebel one day (*1EIV*, 1.152) and is willing to "break his neck" (*1EIV*, 1.147). But instead of letting deeds follow words, the king postpones mustering an army to the next day and delegates the charges to his courtiers Sellinger and Howard. Despite the danger, Edward intends to spend the rest of the night with his bride and family "in feast and jollity" (*1EIV*, 146-163). Only interested in his own pleasures, the king does not do anything to save the threatened London; he even delays the messenger to London with letters to the city officials that he does not bother about. Instead, he inquires if supper is ready (*1EIV*,

[1121] Howard 1994: 147.
[1122] Smith 2000: 14-15.
[1123] See chapter 2.3.2.2.

1.159-163). In the same scene, Edward had confronted his incredulous mother with his politically imprudent choice of a bride; his irresponsibility now shows on a larger level—the king does not care for the protection of his subjects from a serious threat but delays the matter and only thinks about his personal pleasures. Apparently, Edward is a person who thinks that crises will solve themselves as his retorts to his mother's criticism show (*1EIV*, 1. 8-10; 12-15).

Falconbridge grandiloquently claims to fight for the legitimate claim of the incarcerated Lancastrian King Henry VI against the Yorkist Edward; but it soon becomes clear that he also wants to assert his own bastard nobility through his leadership (*1EIV*, 2.9-18, 22-25, 27-38). To strengthen his soldiers' support, Falconbridge assures them that his quarrel is "lawful," "just," and "honourable" and not motivated by mere social distress (*1EIV*, 2. 12, 24, 27-32, 40). Even though the rebels claimed to have a noble cause, Falconbridge gives away his real aims that are not selfless and or uneconomic just a few lines later:

> We will be masters of the Mint ourselves,
> And set our own stamp on the golden coin.
> We'll shoe our neighing coursers with no worse
> Than the purest silver that is sold in Cheap.
> At Leadenhall we'll sell pearls by the peck,
> As now the mealmen use to sell their meal.
> In Westminster we'll keep a solemn court,
> And build it bigger to receive our men.
> Cry Falconbridge, my hearts, and liberty!
> (*1EIV*, 2.49-57)

Rather than reinstalling the incarcerated Henry VI, Falconbridge himself wants to hold court and exert economic power; as master over the Mint he intends to create decadent abundance for everyone. Instead of demanding the liberty from Yorkist rule, Falconbridge plans a subversion of the old order and the "law" (*1EIV*, 2.41) he initially wanted to reinstall. Thus, the motives for the rebellion are contradictory; the restoration of Henry VI cannot be accommodated with holding court himself. This faultline pervades the course of his rebellion—personal and political aims are helplessly intermingled and create a logical antagonism. The rebels themselves do not see the contradiction between the claims and further develop Falconbridge's economic utopia; they imagine plundering Cheapside to enrich themselves, envision London as a "feast" for "hungry travellers," and imagine free food and wine for all. Any opposition will be silenced with murder (*1EIV*, 2.66-72, 76-86, 89-100). The liberation of Henry VI is a mere pretext for the legitimacy and justice of the rebellion to install a land of Cockaigne without money and free food and drink for all. This utopia should work on the basis of terror to make all artisans and workmen comply with this economically problematic claim. Falconbridge's noble talk is just exposed as a populist and irrational mockery of the higher ideals of law, order, liberty and legitimate rule he alluded to initially.

Instead of the king, it is the city officials who mobilise London against the impending rebel invasion (*1EIV*, 3.4-7, 15, 47-48). The mayor is so worried about the safety of his city that he will stay awake all night to take personal responsibility for it (*1EIV*, 3.17-22). Without any external help, the council develop plans and tactics on how to defend the city against the rebels (*1EIV*, 3.52-54, 71-84) and are ready to defend

London even with their lives if need be (*1EIV*, 3.93-96) while the king is notably absent, carousing with his courtiers and family. As the rebels officially strike at Edward's legitimacy, it is the Londoners who defend it while the king seems he could not care less. It is not clear if Edward's inactivity is motivated by his political irresponsibility or if it is the actual rule and not legitimacy that counts for him; in that case, he might think he has nothing to lose. Despite his causes, he leaves his subjects to fend for themselves when the rebels attack. That he does not appear on stage for eight scenes in a play bearing his name is a strong indicator that Edward is not interested in the rebellion and the charges against his rule.

Falconbridge finally demands entry to the city to free Henry VI, but the aldermen deny him passage; the Lord Mayor asks who wants "entrance as he were a king" (*1EIV*, 4.5-6). The Lord Mayor rightly assumes that the rebels want to fight against the king and thus disturb the peace of the country, so he claims that he does not have a warrant to let them into the city (*1EIV*, 4.11-14). Falconbridge repeats his wish and believes that the power of his name can shatter the fortifications of the city (*1EIV*, 4.15-24). His bombastic language seeks to underscore the righteousness of his claim, but it has no effect on the loyal subjects within the walls. A dialogue between the two parties about allegiance to the true sovereign proves that the city council is determined to defend King Edward's royalty while Falconbridge argues for Henry VI's legitimacy. Matthew Shore defends the Yorkist claim to the throne, arguing that it is more legitimate than the Lancastrian claim attained by a *coup d'état* (*1EIV*, 4.25-36). When Falconbridge learns that this alderman is Matthew Shore, he threatens to rape his wife Jane, the "flower of London" (*1EIV*, 4.40-41) with the words "Thy wife is mine, that's flat. / This night, in thine own house, she sleeps with me," (*1EIV*, 4.46-47). What began as a discussion about legitimacy and fealty turned into an attempt to blackmail and humiliate the citizens into compliance; the conquest of a wife was equal to the complete defeat and humiliation of a man, especially so if it happened within the premises of his own property. The rebels are not only willing to spoil the material belongings of the Londoners but consider their wives fair game as well. Instead of liberating the old King Henry VI, the prime motive of the rebels is the hunger for power, forced submission, and loot. Instead of legitimate royalty, they want to install secular, brutal power exercised by themselves.

As a loyal subject, the mayor refuses Falconbridge's repeated claim to enter. Finally, the attackers leave with the promise to attack again (*1EIV*, 4.49-72). Thus, they expose their grandiloquent threats to be hollow. Interestingly, it is the loyal citizens who prove to be the keepers of order and security by defending the city successfully. Their resistance is not only motivated by their having their livelihood to defend but also by their deep devotion and loyalty to the absent monarch. Their loyalty, and not the king's majesty, thus upholds the current order; the king's absence exposes obedience to be a creed without substance that has to be enacted to become real. Thus, the Recorder's claim that the citizens bear their swords in the presence of the king (*1EIV*, 4.27) is both understandable and dubious; the king's presence—or rather his body politic—dwells where there is allegiance to him. However, the king is not there, and the citizens of London are strengthened by the mere belief in the quasi-metaphysical power of the

king's body politic. The connection that the Recorder establishes between subjects and their sovereign is in this case unilateral—the subject is bound by his allegiance to his king, whereas the sovereign has no binding commitment to his subjects. Indeed, he leaves them alone, dismantling this belief in the political bond between the members of the commonwealth as a void. Nevertheless, the citizens are successful defending their city—whether it was their belief in Edward or their need for self-protection that made them prevail is not entirely clear.

Before the rebels attack again, the mayor calls on "God and our king" for strength (*1EIV*, 5.4-15). The king as God's anointed on earth, however, is still conspicuous for not being present; the apprentices are nevertheless encouraged by the mayor's speech and want to fight for London's liberty. Motivated by the honest "ancient custom of our fathers" (*1EIV*, 5.16-25), civil duties, their resolve shows when one of the apprentices confronts the rebels Spicing, Smoke, and Falconbridge with their cowardice and ulterior motives (*1EIV*, 5.26-36). While the aldermen refer to their loyalty to the king to keep up public order, the normal burghers want to defend their private business and bourgeois livelihood—thereby displaying a much more practical acumen (*1EIV*, 5.37-51). While the different social strata have different motivations for their resistance, they are united in their fight for London. The mayor is amazed by the valour and "Englishness" the apprentices show in their eagerness to defend their city and keep up order (*1EIV*, 5.55-64), a stark contrast to the rebels' subversive lust for social chaos, murder, rape, and looting (*1EIV*, 5.65-87). To approach their foes directly, the mayor orders that the city gates be opened (*1EIV*, 5.115-118), a chance that Falconbridge wants to use to storm the city. To urge his men onwards, he promises that the first one will get the most beautiful woman and Cheap as a reward (*1EIV*, 5.119-123) while he had claimed "the flower of London"—Jane Shore, allegedly the most beautiful woman in town—for himself.

But the rebels are beaten back, and Spicing urges a retreat. The suggestion makes the infuriated Falconbridge question Spicing's valour—and thus his honour as a man (*1EIV*, 6.1-15). Deeply wounded, Spicing turns to leave his former leader, asking everyone supporting him to do so as well (*1EIV*, 6.16-22); when Falconbridge sees that most of his supporters want to leave, he changes his strategy and praises Spicing whom he calls a "dirty slave" in an aside (*1EIV*, 6.23-37). Falconbridge uses his campaign to feed his vanity and narcissism that threatens to divide the rebels. They lack a unifying goal; the conquest of London seems to be unachievable, and Falconbridge is unable to keep the rout together. Eventually, Spicing and Falconbridge are reconciled, and they retreat to Mile End Green to gather strength for a new attack (*1EIV*, 6.38-52). When the rebels attack anew, Falconbridge claims that he has a right to the throne himself: "I am a gentleman as well as he [Edward]; / What he hath got, he holds by tyranny," (*1EIV*, 9.12-13). His statement not only alleges that the king is unfit to rule as he is a tyrant; it also implies that any gentleman has a right to rule. Even though it sounds noble, this claim is awkward as it comes from a bastard. Shortly afterwards, Falconbridge refutes the idea of nobility as the grounds for rule and claims that "The meanest soldier [should be] wealthier than a king" (*1EIV*, 9.21). What sounds like a ground-breaking idea for social change is really his attempt to enrich his soldiers with spoil after the defeat of London. However, Falconbridge acknowledges that the citizens will resist him to

protect their property; they are resolved to win, even without the help of their "ling'ring king" (*1EIV*, 9.65-67) and the bastard is impressed by their "chivalry" and "fortitude" (*1EIV*, 9.70-71; 78). Independent of social rank, the citizens show great strength and resolve; but while all of the citizens want to keep harm from their families and property, only the city officials explicitly express their allegiance to Edward as a reason to fight off the rebels. The king does not enact his role as head of the realm, however; the citizens are successful in fending off the attacks while his place is vacant. Their victory and bravery instilled by their bourgeois motivations are a telling comment on the king's role in times of crisis.

The aldermen ridicule the rebels; Matthew Shore declares the threats of the rebels to be "wind; / Not of sufficient power to shake a reed" (*1EIV*, 9.85-86, 96-97), and alderman Josselyn thinks that Falconbridge's fight for the Lancastrian king is a "pretense" that is just as true as the city's weakness without the king (*1EIV*, 9.125-130). Josselyn discovered that the rebels intend to get spoil; their claim to liberate Henry VI is just a sham. Indeed, Spicing verifies Josselyn's perception:

> Come on, my hearts! We will be kings tonight,
> Carouse in gold, and sleep with merchant's wives
> While their poor husbands lose their lives abroad.
> (*1EIV*, 9.168-170)

Spicing's characterisation of a king as an overly rich man who cuckolds merchants is not as unrealistic as it may seem; while it counterpoints the royal ideal, it is an exact description of the king who exploits his subjects both financially and sexually. Besides, he does not care about the effects on his subjects or his realm. Just as Spicing predicted, the later cuckolded Matthew Shore will try to emigrate and live abroad, even though he will die in London.

The king finally arrives after the citizens successfully beat back the rebels for good. The mayor as a staunch loyal subject anticipates the visit thus:

> Marshal yourselves, and keep in good array,
> To add more glory to this victory:
> The King in person cometh to this place.
> How great an honour have you gained today?
> And how much is this city famed for ever,
> That twice, without the help either of king,
> Or any, but of God and our own selves,
> We have prevailed against our country's foes?
> Thanks to his majesty assisted us,
> Who always helps true subjects in their need.
> (*1EIV*, 9.179-188)

His speech is ambiguous: the mayor claims that the presence of the king will "add more glory" to the victory while it honours the Londoners who defended themselves without any outside help. The city won fame by its victories to secure the country against its enemies. And while he stresses that it was the citizens' valour alone that defeated the rebels, he declares that the king had "assisted us" "in their need," a strange claim for a king who had lent no hand in the fight whatsoever. The only help they got is from God, who is the true majesty that helps believers in distress—and themselves. However, as the aldermen had always referred to their belief in Edward's legitimacy,

the mayor could refer to the king's body politic as royal assistance that was the support that helped them win. While Edward's royal person may be surrounded with glory, he has not yet done anything to fill it with life. Rather, it is just a borrowed, hollow glory of no substance. When Shore and the mayor expressed their eagerness to defend King Edward's reign as loyal subjects, it could be that they simply used Edward's reign as a synonym for the established order that renders the king a symbol for a civilian order; however, it is the king himself who disturbs this very order in the course of the play—an irreconcilable paradox that will culminate in the subsequent reign of Richard III, who turns the symbol of kingship into a selfish quest for power.

After the defeat, Falconbridge is captured on the run by the vice-admiral and the captain of the Isle of Wight. Charged with piracy, collaboration with the French, and involvement in burning Southampton, Falconbridge does not fear to be executed straight away as death cannot harm him because life is worth nothing (*1EIV*, 15.22-32, 42-55). His captors urge Falconbridge to "ask forgiveness of thy king" and remind him to take care of his "soul's health" before his death (*1EIV*, 15.58; 57). Asking which king they mean, he makes clear that he does not consider himself a subject of Edward's who usurped the throne illegitimately (*1EIV*, 15.60-63). Charged with treason, Falconbridge defends Henry VI's legitimate royalty in a manner that reminds of Shakespeare's *Richard II*:

> […] Lancaster is king.
> If that be treason, to defend his right,
> What is't for them that do imprison him?
> If insurrection to advance his sceptre,
> What fault is theirs that step into his throne?
> O God, thou pouredst the balm upon his head:
> Can the pure unction be wiped off again?
> Thou once did crown him in his infancy:
> Shall wicked men now, in his age depose him?
> O, pardon me, if I expostulate
> More than becomes a sinful man to do;
> England, I fear thou wilt thy folly rue.
> (*1EIV*, 15.65-76)

Falconbridge's definition of royal sovereignty is quite orthodox; despite any human efforts, the balm cannot be washed off of an anointed king. Consequently, he reasons that it cannot be treason to fight for the true, legitimate king—rather, the one usurping the throne is the traitor. As Edward had committed the sin of deposing Henry VI, Falconbridge truly predicts that England will "rue" the social chaos that is going to ensue; besides the doom of the Shores, the continuation of the Wars of the Roses expose the destructive forces Edward's reign has on a personal level for his subjects. However, the tension between Falconbridge's words and deeds is both consistent and a paradox. While his insurgency against a usurper is a logical consequence of his allegiance to Henry, his plans for heading a social revolution and installing a moneyless economy based on force is not consistent with his claims of being a good subject who wants to liberate his legitimate monarch. Thus, he lays open the contradictions of rule, legitimacy, and the personal strife for power. Calm about his impending death, Falconbridge is proud of being "a gentleman, / A Neville, and a Falconbridge beside," he exits to his death lamenting his failed love to "old Plantagenet" (*1EIV*, 15. 79-107).

While discussing how to secure their reward and how to use it, the news about Henry VI's death reaches the vice-admiral and the captain; there are rumours that the old king was murdered. The two of them, however, are not interested and only care about their reward and Falconbridge's execution (*1EIV*, 15.108-133). Despite their public offices, the intricacies of legitimate kingship do not seem to be on their agenda. The voice that publicly challenged Edward's claim to the throne is silenced by now; with Henry's death, nothing can impede his reign anymore.

While in *1 Edward IV* the king is not really involved in the rebellion, Henry IV's reign is highly troubled by his combat against his enemies. And whereas in *1Edward IV* a bastard noble uses the question of legitimacy as a cover-up for his personal greed, the rebels in *Henry IV* are members of the high nobility who articulate the question of legitimacy much more emphatically, even though personal advantages are also a motivation. Henry, despite acting more kinglike in personally taking responsibility for the realm, experiences less support. His party is no longer united, and he obsessively fears potential traitors. Thus, he is much less self-secure despite his concern and determination to do his best for England. While Falconbridge revolts against the social order and uses Henry VI's legitimacy as pretext, the rebels in the *Henry IV* plays directly oppose the person of the king whom they themselves helped to install on the throne. The plays centre mainly on the rebellion while leaving out other problems that plagued Henry's reign like the troubles with Wales, Scotland, and France, as well the frictions with the Lollard movement that is the background for the plot of the *Oldcastle* plays.[1124]

Henry Bolingbroke starts out as a rebel of sorts himself; when King Richard II disinherits him during his banishment, he returns armed and without permission to claim his due. In the process, he gathers support and finally deposes Richard to rule himself as Henry IV. His ensuing reign, however, is marked by unrest from the start; Aumerle, the Abbot of Westminster, and the Bishop of Carlisle plot against Henry's life (*RII*, 4.1.311-323). However, Henry pardons the repenting Aumerle due to the intervention of the Duchess of York; the other conspirators are hunted down and executed (*RII*, 5.3.23-143). The most troublesome and lasting opposition, however, comes from Northumberland whom Richard called the "ladder wherewithal / The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne" (*RII*, 5.1.55-56). Northumberland is not content with his reward for his services and begins to fight his former protégé. Thus, Henry faces opposition from the supporters of the old King Richard, and his disappointed former supporters who think he withholds them their due. In contrast to *Edward IV*, the king directly intervenes in the conflict. But he is less than self-assured; he feels isolated as his former friends fight him, the comportment of his son Hal distresses him, and he faces the resistance of Richard's partisans. The king wishes to be "rid […] of this living fear" (*RII*, 5.4.2) and asks "Have I no friend?" (*RII*, 5.4.4). Henry's courtier Exton understands that the king wishes the deposed Richard dead and murders him at Pomfret (*RII*, 5.4.7-11). Meanwhile, rebels have burnt down

[1124] Campbell 1947: 228.

Cirencester; the Northumberland party, however, inform Henry that some of the insurgents could be taken or executed, and the king promises them a remuneration for their service (*RII*, 5.6.1-23). When hearing that Exton killed the deposed king (*RII*, 5.5.105-118), Henry unhappily but truly predicts that the murder will fall back on his reign and the realm (*RII*, 5.6.30-36). To atone for the sin of propping up his reign with blood and murder, Henry promises to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and pays Richard respect in mourning him (*RII*, 5.6.45-52). However, the promise will never be realised and his guilt will indeed haunt his reign; even his son Hal will go on to struggle with this sin and ultimately pray that it will not fall back on him. Hal himself tried to atone for his father's sin that lies like a curse on Henry's reign. The disturbance of social order caused by deposing and killing an anointed king disturbs the course of history up to the Tudors by triggering the Wars of the Roses.

Despite his wish for peace in the country, Henry is unable to contain the dissenting voices. The crusade to the Holy Land should unite his nobility in a single cause to dispel the tendencies towards civil war (*1HIV*, 1.1.1-33). The political struggles of the body politic also show in the body private of the king who feels "shaken" and "wan with care" (*1HIV*, 1.1.1). The preparations for the crusade are halted by turmoils in Wales and on the Scottish border. Henry Percy, the son of Northumberland called Hotspur, fought against the Scots and is unwilling to surrender his prisoners to his sovereign (*1HIV*, 1.1.34-94), a grave offence. Henry has to cancel his plans of going to Palestine and has to deal with matters closer at hand (*1HIV*, 1.1.99-106). The Northumberland fraction shall defend themselves against the charge of disobedience; to assert his majesty against the Percies, Henry intends to "be myself, / Mighty and to be feared" (*1HIV*, 1.3.5-6). When they arrive, Henry dismisses Worcester for pressing home the fact that it was his family who enthroned Henry (*1HIV*, 1.3.10-20). Hotspur defends himself for keeping his Scottish prisoners by blaming the king for the cause thereof:

> But I remember, when the fight was done,
> When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
> Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
> Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dressed,
> Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin, new-reaped,
> Showed like a stubble-land on harvest-home.
> […]
> With many holiday and lady terms
> He questioned me; amongst the rest demanded
> My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.
> I then, smarting with my wounds being cold –
> To be so pestered with a popinjay! –
> Out of my grief and my impatience
> Answered neglectingly, I know not what –
> He should, or should not – for he made me mad
> To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,
> And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman
> Of guns, drums, and wounds, God save the mark!
> (*1HIV*, 1.3.29-34, 45-55)

Effectively, Hotspur argues that he felt insulted by the effeminate behaviour of the royal legate who did not correspond to his ideals of soldierdom, personal pride, and

masculinity. Thus, Hotspur establishes a dichotomy between the sophisticated court and the old aristocratic ethos of Hotspur's lineage; Henry understands that Hotspur's pride articulated itself and does not accept this excuse. That Henry does not trust the Percies becomes clear when the case of Mortimer arises; the Percies want to have him ransomed as he is a prisoner of the Welsh enemy, Glyndwr. The king does not intend to ransom him, for he thinks he is a renegade and does not believe that he fought valiantly; rather, he reminds Hotspur of his duty to hand over the prisoners and exits (*1HIV*, 1.3.74-122). This scene not only exposes the king's fear of rebellion and disobedience he himself creates; it also shows the different values underlying the behaviour of a king trying to establish his reign and an old established family who believe in their ancient rights and independence. It is telling that Henry feels threatened by any little hint of disobedience; having gained a throne himself, he knows that he can easily lose his if he does not secure his royalty against all eventualities. While the rebellion against Edward IV was rather a rebellion *for* Henry VI, any opposition against Henry IV is directed against his very person.

While Hotspur rails against "this unthankful king / As this ingrate and cankered Bolingbroke," Northumberland tries to calm down his son (*1HIV*, 1.3.123-135). They not only want to have Hotspur's brother-in-law Mortimer ransomed, they are further certain that he was declared the successor of the childless Richard (*1HIV*, 1.3.138-155)—the first incident of questioning Henry's legitimacy they themselves helped to install on the throne. They resist Henry as they are disappointed and resent the sophisticated ways of the court; this discontent now turns to a question of legitimacy. The Percy family have to back up the true and legitimate claimant Mortimer instead of further supporting a king who is a "thorn" and a "canker" in the realm (*1HIV*, 1.3.156-185). To get rid of Henry, the Percies plan to raise an army in Scotland; the Archbishop of York and the Lord Scrope will join forces with Mortimer and the Welsh against Henry (*1HIV*, 1.3.255-293). Even though the rebels are united by the third act, there are rifts between the parties; while the alleged magician Glyndwr tries to install awe in Hotspur by the cosmic signs that appeared when he was born, he utterly fails (*1HIV*, 3.1.12-60). Even though they try to concentrate on their common goal of overthrowing Henry and partitioning the realm among themselves, Hotspur is not content with his part in the plan. Glyndwr's unwillingness to alter the plans causes further discord (*1HIV*, 3.1.67-137). The conspirators take their leaves from their wives trying to smooth over the conflict and planning to take action (*1HIV*, 3.1.138-261).

The king feels more and more isolated; he thinks that the political upheaval and the misconduct of his son Hal are a divine punishment for his deposition of King Richard (*1HIV*, 3.2.4-17). Even though Hotspur is up in arms against his king, Henry approves of Hotspur who is more interested in matters of state and is more valiant and experienced in battle than is his degenerate son. The king is so desperate that he accuses his son to undermine his kingship just like the Percies; he feels that Hal's unprincely behaviour threatens the line of succession and thus the order of the realm (*1HIV*, 3.2.93-128). Challenged to prove his innate royalty, Hal promises to revenge Hotspur's treason in single combat to prove that he is Henry's son; a victory over the proud warrior Hotspur would wipe out his former shame. Henry is reassured by Hal's promise and

entrusts him with a military command against the rebels (*1HIV*, 3.2.129-161). Overly cautious to guard against threats from many fronts, Henry is already prepared for battle when he is informed to meet the rebel army at Shrewsbury (*1HIV*, 3.2.164-180).

Right before the battle, the rebels learn that their senior leader, Northumberland, excuses himself due to sickness, news that endangers the whole enterprise. While Worcester suspects that Northumberland's illness is a sham, the rebels decide to fight despite the heavy impact on their army. Worcester warns that as the challenging party, the rebels have to avoid any negative impressions so as not to weaken their enterprise from within (*1HIV*, 4.1.13-75). Hotspur does not share these fears; rather, he reasons that their share of honour will be bigger the fewer they are. For him, everything up until now went according to plan; his ally Douglas the Scot also does not feel fear in the situation (*1HIV*, 4.1.75-85).

The approach of the royal army makes a grand and martial impression, among them the Earl of Westmorland with Prince John, and the king with Prince Hal all up in arms (*1HIV*, 4.1.86-111). Hotspur is nevertheless eager to fight against Hal and only wishes for Glyndwr's army to arrive (*1HIV*, 4.1.112-125). On hearing that Glyndwr cannot gather his forces immediately, Douglas and Worcester are disheartened, but Hotspur urges on the remaining rebels to muster their armies speedily against the men of the king and, if need be, "die all, die merrily" (*1HIV*, 4.1.125-135). The rebels' party, however, is divided on how to proceed; while Vernon and Worcester cautiously prefer to wait to launch an attack, Douglas and Hotspur want to go to battle the same day—they are eager to fight despite tired horses and the lack of enforcements. The king's messenger interrupts the debate with an offer from Henry who wants to know the rebels' charges against his person; if the insurgents feel that their service for the king was not rewarded appropriately, he is willing to compensate them with interest and to pardon their treason (*1HIV*, 4.3.1-53). Hotspur criticises that when Henry was weak and needed support, he appreciated Northumberland's help without fulfilling his vow to pay him back accordingly. Now, after the discontent of the Percies moved them to oppose the king, it suits him to promise a reward. Hotspur further accuses Henry of regicide and to have passed over the designated successor to the throne, the Earl of March, whom he does not want to ransom from Welsh captivity (*1HIV*, 4.3.54-98). Hotspur plays a double game here; first, he claims that the Percies are discontent about the missing reward for their support to install Henry on the throne before declaring that Mortimer, Early of March, is the true claimant of the throne. That he also conspires on the rebels' side is not mentioned. Hotspur has personal antipathies against Henry due to his actions against himself and his family. According to him, Henry breaking oath upon oath made the rebels gather an army; they not only wanted to protect themselves but also fight a king whose legitimacy they doubted (*1HIV*, 4.3.99-107). When pressed for an answer to the king, Hotspur wants to withdraw with the others to work on a decisive list of grievances. The messenger shall meanwhile secure safe passage so that Westmorland may safely hand over the message the next morning (*1HIV*, 4.3.108-115). The absence of Northumberland and Glyndwr has effects on the other confederates; the Archbishop of York counsels Hotspur to wait to launch an attack; he fears that the rebel army will not withstand the king's. Fearing about his own safety, the Archbishop nervously

continues writing letters to his "other friends" (*1HIV*, 4.4.1-40). Effectively, the Archbishop has also left the rebel cause to save his own skin.

Even though the day of the impending battle begins with a bloody sun, Prince Hal and the king do not feel frightened and are positive about the outcome of the conflict (*1HIV*, 5.1.1-8). Henry welcomes the entering rebel messengers Worcester and Vernon; the king is not happy about the rebels' abuse of his trust and their forcing him to war. He wants to know if Worcester is willing to "unknit / This churlish knot of all-abhorrèd war" to become an obedient subject again that serves the realm better than a rebel (*1HIV*, 5.1.9-21). Worcester is quite conciliatory; he addresses Henry as "my liege" and claims that he would rather spend the end of his life in peace and quiet, so Henry wants to know what motivated him then to join the war. Worcester argues that the king had extracted his favour from the Percy family even though they were the first supporters of his sole and legitimate claim to his inheritance; but when Henry seized the moment to become king himself, he broke his initial oath. After having become great with the help of the Percies, he would not let them near anymore, so Worcester blames Henry to be the cause of this. The Percies feel abused, threatened, and betrayed despite their initial support (*1HIV*, 5.1.22-71). Henry defends himself against these heavy charges by attacking the Percies to promote these arguments to make their rebellion seem justified to "fickle changelings and poor discontents" (*1HIV*, 5.1.72-82). The question of legitimacy that would have made the rebels' claim much more viable against Henry's, is not brought forward, but the king seems to be insecure as he knows that the charges are true to a certain extent.

Hal tries to prevent a big loss of life by challenging Hotspur to a single fight to solve the conflict and bids Worcester to transmit his praise of Hotspur whom he considers particularly brave, valiant, and bold for his age, shamefully acknowledging that he did not pursue chivalry as he should have (*1HIV*, 5.1.83-100). Hal's praise of Hotspur's valour makes his opponent so big that a victory over him would increase Hal's own honour and masculinity. Hal's offer not only proves that he takes on personal responsibility in times of crisis but also shows a stark contrast to the rebels who neglect the commonweal for their own satisfaction and the honour of their houses. Henry renews his offer of peace; if the rebels reject it, they will have to go to battle (*1HIV*, 5.1.101-114). While the king anxiously tries to appease his former friends, Hal does not believe that the opponents will accept; he knows about Hotspur's and Douglas' inclination to war. Even though he still hopes for peace, the king orders everyone to their charge to await the rebels' answer (*1HIV*, 5.1.115-120). After leaving the king, Worcester discloses that he does not want to convey the king's renewed peace offer to Hotspur as he thinks that it would damage the rebels' cause either way. Their renewed loyalty would always be suspect to the king who would find a cause to punish them one day. And while Hotspur's rashness could be explained by his youth, Worcester's and Northumberland's opposition will fall back on them. To save his own head, he intends to hide the king's offer with Vernon's help (*1HIV*, 5.2.1-26). This dishonesty even among the rebels themselves shows that their cause is motivated by mere selfishness; rather than defending their family's honour against an illegitimate usurper, they only further their own advantage and pride. Indeed, Worcester conveys the message that

there is "no seeming mercy in the King" and that Henry wants to fight immediately (*1HIV*, 5.2.30-40). Hotspur eagerly receives Hal's challenge to single combat and wants to know if the prince talked contemptuously about him—but Worcester praises Hal's modesty who had paid his respects to Hotspur's worth as if he had dared a brother. Hotspur rouses his men to fight; in his hurry, he postpones reading letters he just received until after the fight (*1HIV*, 5.2.45-88). When a messenger announces the king's approach, Hotspur eagerly wants to stain his sword with the "best blood that I can meet withal" and goes off to battle (*1HIV*, 5.2.89-100).

The problem of Henry's legitimacy surfaces again during battle; Douglas meets Sir Walter Blunt disguised in royal robes who, when confronted, answers that he is indeed the king. After Douglas has killed his opponent, Hotspur explains that there are many others who are clad like the king (*1HIV*, 5.3.1-29). What started out as a safety measure for Henry shows the underlying problem of the play—having deposed God's anointed, the role of kingship becomes arbitrary. Anyone can put on royal garments and pose as the king but regalia do not make a king alone. Meanwhile, Hal displays more and more princely qualities; when Falstaff plays a trick on him, he reproaches him that it is no time to "jest and dally now" (*1HIV*, 5.3.39-54). Hal supports his father with fighting and counsel despite a bleeding wound, so in times of crisis, the king's party proves itself (*1HIV*, 5.4.1-23). When Douglas enters and discovers the king, he exclaims "What art thou / That counterfeit'st the person of a king?" (*1HIV*, 5.4.26-27), concretely expressing Henry's legitimacy problem.[1125] Henry identifies himself as the king and defies Douglas; while the rebel muses that his counterpart could be another fraud, he feels that "thou bear'st thee like a king" (*1HIV*, 5.4.28-37). Henry apparently embodies the whole comportment and charisma of a king which lends him a certain intrinsic legitimacy; his kingship, therefore, is not only a borrowed item. Hal rescues his father from great distress and puts Douglas to flight. Having saved the king wins him his father's thanks and proves to him that he never aimed at the king's life as was often claimed (*1HIV*, 5.4.38-56).

After the king exited, Hotspur and Hal face a showdown that only one of them will survive (*1HIV*, 5.4.58-69). When Hal eventually kills Hotspur, Percy claims that he can bear the loss of his life more easily than the honour Hal gained by killing him. By having overcome the leader of the rebel party, Hal had made a part of his reformation speech come true. But instead of glorying in his deed, Hal performs "rites of tenderness" on the dead Hotspur lying at his feet, praising him and covering his face with his own favours he wore during battle. Even though he would not have praised the living Hotspur thus, Hal now wishes that Hotspur's shame will not survive (*1HIV*, 5.4.70-100). By killing Hotspur, Hal not only gave the rebels a decisive blow but also established his own fame in emulating and overcoming his enemy; the rivalry between the two established a very close bond between the men, and now he can take Hotspur's vacant place as example of chivalry—his "rites of tenderness" are a testimony to the

[1125] To be a counterfeit was a common derogatory charge against actors (Howard 1988b: 270).

bond that death established between the two young men.[1126] This is a good example of how men bond through fighting and competition; by praising Hotspur's valour and chivalric qualities, Hal diminishes himself and thus increases his honour and manliness in case of a victory over his opponent who wishes to "embrace" the prince "with a soldier's arm" (*1HIV*, 5.2.73)—an embrace that will end in death for one of them. When Hal kills his opponent, he performs "rites of tenderness" on Hotspur's body, honours him, and maintains his dignity by covering the dead man's face instead of revelling in his victory. By these "rites of tenderness," death established a close bond between them, a bond even tightened by the sexual connotation direct combat almost always has in the plays. The proximity the two young men shared in their showdown conferred Hotspur's place and estimation to Hal, already engendering the warrior he is going to become in *Henry V*.

Now that the rebels are defeated, temporary peace is re-established in the kingdom. Henry makes the rebels—especially Worcester—responsible for the loss of life; Worcester has to accept his inevitable fate and is executed with Vernon while the king wants to decide on the sentence of the other rebels later (*1HIV*, 5.5.1-15). Apparently, the king wants to be just and does not want to give rise to further unrest by severe measures. Douglas the Scot got caught on the run; Hal gets his father's permission to "dispose of him" and orders his brother John of Lancaster to set the Scot free due to his valour in combat (*1HIV*, 5.5.16-34), exercising royal justice and clemency. The problems with the insurgents are not completely solved yet, however; the king orders his son John and Westmorland to confront Northumberland and the Archbishop of York who allegedly arm against the king. Henry himself and Hal will head towards Wales against Glyndwr and Mortimer (*1HIV*, 5.5.35-45). To establish lasting peace and to win "all our own," all the rest of the rebels shall be uprooted and defeated (*1HIV*, 5.5.45).

But instead of solving the conflict for good, Henry just causes alternative war theatres; the subsequent play on Henry's reign, *2 Henry IV*, begins with the figure of Rumour who introduces the audience to the still unsolved problem of rebellion. Northumberland had indeed only faked his illness and heard rumours that his son had won the battle of Shrewsbury and killed Prince Hal (*2HIV*, 1.0.1-40). Lord Bardolph informs Northumberland that King Henry is "almost wounded to the death," Hal killed, the king's partisans dispersed, and the battle won by the rebel fraction. His news is from "one […] well bred and of good name" who only allegedly came from the battlefield (*2HIV*, 1.1.1-27); then, Northumberland's servant Trevers reports the exact opposite (*2HIV*, 1.1.28-48). Morton, a messenger directly from Shrewsbury, confirms Travers' news and adds more details. Northumberland is grief-stricken about his son while Morton recounts Hotspur's death that induced the remainder of the rebel army to take to flight. Worcester and Douglas were taken prisoners, and the victorious royal army is now on their way to Northumberland (*2HIV*, 1.1.48-135).

[1126] Falstaff's later claim to have killed Hotspur is a parody on Hal's chivalric pathos (*1HIV*, 5.4.110-157).

Northumberland, torn between emotions, is determined to confront and oppose the king, even willing to cause chaos and "[l]et order die." Northumberland fell into a passion, an excess that cannot result in anything good, so Lord Bardolph and Morton try to calm down their master and appeal to his wisdom: if he falls, the other rebels will perish as well (*2HIV*, 1.1.136-164). Morton reminds him of Hotspur's readiness to assume risk, so his death was always a possibility. It is interesting that Morton and Lord Bardolph make their master think about the outcomes of uncontrolled wrath; the two also remind Northumberland that they will venture forth again with the Archbishop of York who is also up in arms. The rebels think that York's spiritual influence over his soldiers will guarantee allegiance for their cause, even more so as Henry was involved in Richard's murder. Northumberland is thankful for the advice, for his rage and grief had "wiped it from [his] mind"; he now wants to prepare prudently for the defence against the king (*2HIV*, 1.1.165-214).

The Archbishop of York positively evaluates the situation of the rebel army. While Hastings is sure that that this army can oppose the royal force, Lord Bardolph wants to know whether it can also succeed without the support of Northumberland; he wants the men to be self-sufficient and independent of Northumberland's support. The Archbishop agrees to the suggestion to wait until Northumberland's men arrive not to repeat Hotspur's tragic error at Shrewsbury to have attacked without proper reinforcements. Hastings is sure of their advantage as the king's forces are dispersed on three fronts, namely France, Wales, and in the north with empty coffers. It is rather unlikely that the king will draw his forces together to form a superpower; this would render the king vulnerable on the other fronts (*2HIV*, 1.3.1-80). The Archbishop adds a new facet to the rebellion; he feels that the realm is sick with over-indulgence. The people are sick and tired of Henry and want Richard back as the past and the future seem better than the present. The Archbishop however doubts the support of the common people—many commoners had cheered Bolingbroke before he had become king (*2HIV*, 1.3.81-108).

Northumberland discusses his war plans with his wife and widowed daughter-in-law; Northumberland feels that his "honour is at pawn" and that he has to "redeem it" by going to war (*2HIV*, 2.3.1-8). Lady Percy, his daughter-in-law, cannot believe that his honour is now dearer to him than when he let down his own son at the battle of Shrewsbury—not only did he put both of their honours at stake, but Hotspur died as a consequence. She argues that Northumberland would wrong his son's honour if he now wanted to defend his own honour in a war that can be fought without his help (*2HIV*, 2.3.9-44). Despite her compelling speech, Northumberland decides to go to war, but both women advise him to flee to Scotland—if the rebel army prevails, he can reinforce their power (*2HIV*, 2.3.50-61). Northumberland cannot decide what to do; he would like to join the Archbishop's army but feels he cannot, so he takes the women's advice and retires to Scotland until time and chance will solve his inner conflict (*2HIV*, 2.3.62-68). His dependence on women's advice and his own indecision show that he is not the master of himself—a bad omen for the rebel cause.

Only in the third act does the king appear; in an exchange between Poins and Prince Hal (*2HIV*, 2.2.23, 30, 36-42), the audience learns that the king is sick. He is plagued by

sleepless nights trying restlessly to work out alliances to restore peace. Henry soliloquises about his insomnia that is caused by his cares and political duties while his simple subjects are blessed with sound sleep (*2HIV*, 3.1.1-31).[1127] Warwick and Surrey keep the king from his ruminations when they enter to discuss the state of the kingdom. While the king is quite negative about the state of things, Warwick thinks that Northumberland "will soon be cooled" (*2HIV*, 3.1.32-43). Henry would love to believe that the situation could change fundamentally, but the Percies have been troublemakers since Richard's reign, changing their loyalties according to their liking. Northumberland was one of Henry's closest friends and supporters against Richard who had prophesied that enmity between Northumberland and Henry would corrupt their relationship. While the Percies charge Henry with the usurpation of the throne, Henry claims that he never intended to become king but "that necessity so bowed the state / That I and greatness were compelled to kiss" (*2HIV*, 3.1.44-74), turning himself into a victim of time. Warwick tries to calm Henry down, claiming that Richard merely guessed that Northumberland had the potential to disappoint Henry in the future after having been betrayed by him himself. Henry muses whether Northumberland's rebellion was a historical necessity which consequently has to be tackled like a necessity (*2HIV*, 3.1.75-88). Warwick again has to calm down the king who worries about the strength of the rebel army that unreliable reports usually augment the power of the enemy; apart from intelligence Warwick received about Glyndwr's death, Henry's army shall win. He then bids the exhausted and nervous Henry to go to sleep; the king complies and promises that if circumstances were not as adverse, he would be off to the Holy Land as promised (*2HIV*, 3.1.90-103). This scene exposes how deeply the conflict affects the king's mind and body and how complicated the relationship between Henry's body politic and body private is. Warwick has to calm the tired-out king's fears who is extremely anxious to prevent further unrest but to no avail.

Meanwhile, the rebels' preparations for a new battle are in full swing. Waiting for the report of some scouts, the Archbishop of York informs the others that Northumberland retired to Scotland and will not support them. Mowbray feels that the rebels' hopes for success are shattered when the news arrives that the royal army is approaching with the exact number of soldiers the rebels had estimated (*2HIV*, 4.1.1-23). Before the rebels can attack, Westmorland of the royal army enters as a messenger and challenges the opponents; if rebellion appeared in its true guise of baseness and riotousness, the gentlemen present would not have taken part in the insurrection. He wonders how a man like the Archbishop of York with his age, wisdom, and established post can engage in a deathly and bloody enterprise like this civil war (*2HIV*, 4.1.25-52). The Archbishop explains himself with a metaphor: like a body that is sick with overfeeding has to be let blood, the kingdom suffers from Richard's death. He claims that the rebels' injuries outweigh the damage caused and that current events forced them to take action; the rebels were not granted access to the king whom they presented with a list of grievances even though they wanted to establish a lasting peace "Concurring both in name and

[1127] Erasmus comments on the burden of responsibility and cares the king carries; he shall watch so that the others can sleep soundly (Erasmus 1997: 25, 27).

quality" (*2HIV*, 4.1.53-87). When Westmorland asks for details about the proceedings, the Archbishop's answer is obscure: "My brother general, the commonwealth / I make my quarrel in particular" (*2HIV*, 4.1.88-94). Either he thinks that the state of the commonwealth is generally reason enough to rebel, or, as the Norton editors claim in a footnote, the Archbishop makes "the cause of the commonwealth his own because all men are his brothers."[1128] Westmorland is not convinced; then, Mowbray asks why those who "feel the bruises of the days before" may not defend their honours. Westmorland defends the king, claiming that it is the times and not he who injures the rebels even though in Mowbray's case no one infringes his honour. Mowbray refers back to how his father lost his honour due to the duel with Henry Bolingbroke that King Richard broke off, a reason Westmorland does not accept (*2HIV*, 4.1.95-137, see *RII*, 1.1. and 1.3). Rather, he wants to know the rebels' grievances and promises them an audience with the "princely general" Lancaster. If he finds their complaints justified, they will get satisfaction, and all enmity between the two parties will be forgotten (*2HIV*, 4.1.138-144). While Mowbray is sceptical and scoffs that the offer is motivated by mere cunning and not love, Westmorland tries to convince him that the offer was motivated by "mercy, not from fear" (*2HIV*, 4.1.145-156). Mowbray feels offended and resists any rapprochement, and Hasting asks whether the prince has the legal authority to decide such grave matters, a doubt Westmoreland dismisses (*2HIV*, 4.1.157-165). With no arguments left against the offer, the Archbishop of York conciliatorily accepts and hands over a list of grievances whose gratification will make them lay down their weapons. Westmoreland takes it and promises them a meeting in sight of the battle lines to decide about the fulfilment of the grievances, and the Archbishop agrees (*2HIV*, 4.1.166-180). After Westmoreland is gone, Mowbray feels that their peace conditions cannot hold, an objection Hastings does not share. But Mowbray contradicts with Worcester's arguments, claiming that even if the king accepts their conditions, he will forever doubt their allegiance after pardoning them, so the rebels will never be fully able to please him (*2HIV*, 4.1.181-194). The Archbishop, however, claims that the king himself is weary of the ceaseless and petty grievances and wants to keep a clean slate before he dies (*2HIV*, 4.1.195-202). In his eyes, the king has a much graver problem:

> […] for full well he knows
> He cannot so precisely weed this land
> As his misdoubts present occasion.
> His foes are so enrooted with his friends
> That, plucking to unfix an enemy,
> He doth unfasten so and shake a friend;
> So that this land, like an offensive wife
> That hath enraged him on to offer strokes,
> As he is striking, holds his infant up,
> And hangs resolved correction in the arm
> That was upreared to execution.
> (*2HIV*, 4.1.202-212)

The king will never be able to root out opposition as it is so deeply ingrained within the state; the king's friends are his enemies and vice versa. Thus, the king cannot

[1128] See footnote 5 p. 684 on *2HIV*, 4.1.93-94.

effectively act against them as generally the partisan lines are so intermingled that they cannot be easily separated—the realm is sick indeed. Hastings believes that Henry already spent his power and is too weak to punish them effectively (*2HIV*, 4.1.213-217). Then, Westmoreland invites the party to meet with Prince John who greets them all with wine and a jolly countenance. He accuses the Archbishop of abusing his spiritual position to raise subjects against God's anointed king, thus disturbing both temporal and spiritual peace (*2HIV*, 4.1.222-256). York defends himself and claims that "time misordered" compelled them to unite rather than the intention to disturb the king's peace; rather, an earlier list of grievances that had been dismissed at court caused this discontent, so the satisfaction of their demands would immediately calm down this unrest (*2HIV*, 4.1.256-268). As a counterpoint, the irritable and discontented Mowbray makes clear that they will fight it out to the last man, and Hastings adds that the conflict will last as long as there will be new generations if need be (*2HIV*, 4.1.269-275). John then swears "by the honour of my blood" to redress the grievances. Now that the claims of the rebels are satisfied, he invites them to drink with him on their re-established friendship, bidding them to discharge their army (*2HIV*, 4.1.278-291). York takes the prince's word; when they drink together, Westmorland says that he will show his love "more openly hereafter" (*2HIV*, 4.1.292-302), a foreboding of his plot. Mowbray apparently feels that something is going wrong and cannot be happy (*2HIV*, 4.1.305-306, 314). Lancaster bids Westmorland and the rebels to dissolve their respective armies; they follow the order and exit (*2HIV*, 4.1.317-322). When Hasting returns with the news that the rebel army is now dispersed, Westmorland arrests him along with York and Mowbray for high treason. The rebels are incredulous that their trust was thus abused and question the fairness of the proceedings, but Prince John only promised to give the rebels redress for their grievances which will be their punishment. Their own foolishness led them to their execution (*2HIV*, 4.1.323-349). When Prince John wants to ascribe the lasting victory over the rebels to God, claiming that "God, and not we, hath safely fought today," the whole procedure rings false and hollow; they lured their opponents into a trap by abusing their naivety rather than "honestly" fighting it out (*2HIV*, 4.1.347). In an attempt to underline the justness and rightfulness of the events, Prince John wants to use the convention of ascribing the victory to God, questionable as it may seem.

The sick king is on his deathbed but still desperate to go on the crusade to the Holy Land—everything is prepared, but, despite lacking the strength to go, Henry has to wait for the repression of the rebels (*2HIV*, 4.3.1-10). His big project to legitimise his kingship will never come true; in the face of pressing political problems, his plans for the crusade are completely unrealistic. Henry feels alone and unhappy; he asks for Hal, whose conduct grieves him—but the prince is out hunting with his Eastcheap crew (*2HIV*, 4.3.12-20, 50-66). The king is frightened about Hal's future reign; Henry perceives of it as a nightmarish threat for the kingdom. Even though Henry is relieved about the complete defeat of the rebels, he cannot cherish the news because he feels too sick and faints (*2HIV*, 4.3.80-111). While Warwick claims that "these fits / Are with his majesty very ordinary," his son Clarence argues that the king is too worn out by the strains of the conflicts and cannot stomach the care of rule any longer. Extraordinary

signs in nature and the cosmos indicate that something important is about to happen (*2HIV*, 4.3.114-128). The king recovers and demands quiet, so he is borne to another chamber with his crown placed on a pillow beside his bed. When Hal finally arrives, his brothers are full of sorrow while he is absolutely unaware of the state the king is in. On hearing that his father is very unwell and swooned on hearing the news concerning the rebels, Hal jovially answers "If he be sick with joy, he'll recover without physic" (*2HIV*, 4.3.131-145).

The others retreat to another room, and Hal stays with his father to meditate on the crown as a symbol for the responsibility that awaits him when he will succeed. When Hal cannot perceive Henry's breath anymore, assuming him dead, he puts the crown on his head and walks away. Finally, the king awakes to find the crown gone, a discovery that deeply saddens and troubles him; he assumes that his son just wishes for his end to take over the reign and feels that all his struggles and cares for the kingdom have come to naught. When Warwick recounts that he found the prince bemoaning his father's death, Henry reproaches his son for his crown-snatching, confronting him with all his disappointment, reproaches, and bitterness about Hal's unprincely conduct (*2HIV*, 4.3.146-215).

Despite Hal's good service at Shrewsbury, Henry fears that the realm could descend to chaos under his son's rule (*2HIV*, 4.3.220-265). Hal promises to be a good king and defends himself, properly subordinating himself under his father's majesty that he assuredly did not want to infringe. Rather than snatching the crown for pleasure, he wanted to struggle with it like a "true inheritor" (*2HIV*, 4.3.266-304). Thus, Henry is reconciled with the last person he feared to be an enemy; this moment between father and son is not only a passing on of advice but also of royalty. Consequently, father and son share and establish male-male bonds; Henry now can wish that his son's reign will be less troubled than his. He advises him to "busy giddy minds / With foreign quarrels" to prevent civil unrest at home. Henry also confesses his guilt in having gotten the crown due to "bypaths and indirect crook'd ways." Hal accepts the responsibility of kingship and promises to defend it at all costs despite the murky acquisition of the crown (*2HIV*, 4.3.305-352).

Now, with the reconciliation and the lasting establishment of trust, Henry's deepest worries and inner conflicts are brought to an end. In the presence of all his sons he now can cherish the victory over the rebels and feels happiness and peace. Now, reconciled with himself and the world around him, Henry can finally fulfil a prophecy that predicted him that he would die in the Holy Land; he learns that the chamber where he swooned first was called 'Jerusalem', so he wants to die there (*2HIV*, 4.3.353-368).

Hal keeps his promise as newly crowned Henry V; meeting Falstaff on his way after the coronation, he rejects him and bans all his former companions from court. Instead of Falstaff, he adopts his former adversary, the Lord Chief Justice, as his main councillor and promises to make his reformation come true (*2HIV*, 5.2.101-144, 5.5.45-69). Henry V establishes order and stability by taking on the responsibility of kingship and forswearing his old ways, fulfilling his father's wish to maintain sovereignty with dignity. In his person, the civil unrest is overcome and stability can be restored to the

country—a feat that was not granted to Henry IV who was unable to root out rebellion despite his deep personal involvement. Even though Henry IV had personally struggled to establish a peace, it is his son Lancaster who finally defeats the rebels with a trick; just as the Lancastrians gained the crown illegitimately, peace is not achieved by honest and established ways. The old king struggles with his guilt in Richard II's death that he perceives as a curse on his reign. Consequently, he is a grief-stricken, unhappy, anxious, and sick ruler who only sees potential enemies around himself; the state the kingdom is in might mirror the body private of the monarch. Despite his attempts to establish peace and befriend his foes, he never succeeds—and there always lingers something not quite honest about him. Only the reconciliation with Hal on his deathbed after the defeat of the rebels enables him to die in peace, thereby allowing Hal to install new vigour and legitimacy to England.

3.1.3 "Let Us Leave the Brainsick King"—Edward II and the Barons' Revolt

Edward's first appearance on stage already sets the scene for the conflict with his barons that will pervade the play. Edward, accompanied by his peers, asks his barons for the permission (*EII*, 1.1.77) for some cause or other; later in the discussion, it becomes clear that the issue is Gaveston's return from exile to England (*EII*, 1.1.80, 82-89). In an aside, Edward claims to have "his will" in the matter, despite the opposition of the barons (*EII*, 1.1.77-79). While it is astonishing that a sovereign king asks for his peers' "grant" (*EII*, 1.1.77), he sounds like a spoiled child who wants to have his will in any way possible. As in an exposition, Edward's dependency on the barons and their constricting influence on him sets the scene for the conflict between them. When he openly confronts Mortimer and Lancaster with the danger of opposing a king, Lancaster wants to know why Edward insists so much on the presence of his favourite and threatens him with insurrection (*EII*, 1.1.91-106). It is Edward's brother Kent who reminds the barons of his father who could arbitrate a dispute with his royal looks, admonishing them to keep their respect. However, his warning that they could face execution for their obstinacy is lost on them (*EII*, 1.1.107-119). Edward weakly utters that he wants to see his wish granted (*EII*, 1.1.120). His wording "would wish" is not a form of order but comes from someone begging a favour; his father's stately look, that was enough to establish peace, does not work for him. Edward is reduced to arguing with his barons that they would give in to his wishes. Mortimer rather emphasises his opposition, neither willing nor able to control his temper, he threatens the king in a most presumptuous manner (*EII*, 1.1.121-122):

> Cousin, our hands I hope shall fence our heads,
> And strike off his that makes you threaten us.
> Come, uncle, let us leave the brainsick King,
> And henceforth parley with our naked swords.
> (*EII*, 1.1.123-126)

Mortimer makes clear that he wants to have Gaveston's head and is confident about the barons' inclination to defend their position in armed fight. Mortimer is openly defiant by addressing the king informally and calling him "brainsick." The "naked swords" he refers to were often a metaphor for virility and the male member, the social extension of the male into the social space, so Mortimer's threat is not only an attack on

Edward's royal authority but also on his masculinity.[1129] The barons are powerful as the population supports them against the king, while Gaveston is absolutely unpopular (*EII*, 1.1.127-129). Lancaster openly faces Edward with the choice to either change his mind or have his throne and Gaveston's head drowned in blood (*EII*, 1.1.127-133). Lancaster calls Gaveston a "minion" (*EII*, 1.1.133), clearly indicating that he is the king's homosexual lover.[1130]

Edward is enraged about the barons' presumption to "overrule" their sovereign in this way (*EII*, 1.1.134-138). When Edward is finally reunited with Gaveston, Edward wants to have his ways and tries to wriggle free of the barons' influence and attacks the church in the person of the Bishop of Coventry who is not happy to see "that wicked Gaveston" returned. Edward and Gaveston in turn make him responsible for Gaveston's exile and threaten him with revenge. When Coventry protests that he only did his duty and would do so again, Gaveston sneers at the bishop while the king openly attacks him—a heavy irreverence against the institution so closely bound to the throne (*EII*, 1.1.175-188). Kent tries to dissuade his brother from abusing the bishop, admonishing him that he might cause severe problems by reporting any mistreatment to the pope—but Gaveston answers in Edward's stead and craves revenge. Edward has a different idea: he delivers the bishop to Gaveston's mercy, seizes all his goods, and makes Gaveston the new Lord Bishop; as Gaveston wants to have the bishop die shamefully in prison, Edward sends him off to the Tower. When the bishop is led out, Edward advises Gaveston to seize Coventry's goods and even offers him protection for his safe return—apparently Edward already senses that Gaveston is endangered and his actions not approved of (*EII*, 1.1.189-204).

And indeed, the mistreatment and dispossession of the bishop only deepens the rift with the barons and fortifies their resolve to oppose the king; instead of asserting his rule, Edward effected that they now wish for Gaveston's death, "that peevish Frenchman," whose social advancement they cannot stomach (*EII*, 1.2.1-19). Lancaster criticises the physical proximity between the king and his minion, especially his strong position granted by royal patronage ("Thus, arm in arm, the King and he doth march – / Nay more, the guard upon his lordship waits, / And all the court begins to flatter him," *EII*, 1.2.20-22). The close physical contact between king and his friend also struck Warwick; Mortimer rather thinks that the court endures Gaveston not only because he is close to the king but because the courtiers lack the mettle to speak up against him; true nobility "of mind" as the nobles present it would drag Gaveston from the king's side and hang him. He is not only a danger to the kingdom but also threatens the position of the nobility (*EII*, 1.2.23-32). Thus, Mortimer junior fears that Gaveston endangers the political influence of the established nobility through his closeness to the king. The Archbishop of Canterbury furthers the opposition of the barons by recounting the mistreatment of the Bishop of Coventry whose ritual robes were torn, who was manhandled, stripped of his goods, and shackled; the archbishop is so incensed that he

[1129] See Smith 2000: 32.
[1130] A footnote relating to *EII*, 1.1.133 on p. 119 explains that „minion" derived from the French word *mignon*, meaning „sweet" and denoting a homosexual lover.

does not hesitate to join the discontented barons in their cause (*EII*, 1.2.33-45). For the established authorities like the nobles and the clergy, Gaveston disturbs the order of the realm by his social mobility. For the barons, it is not the king's behaviour that is problematic; they identify the influence of his favourite as the distortion of order, degree, and decorum that threatens the privileges and the influence of the old order. Even though the peers claim to uphold the order to prevent the kingdom from slipping into chaos as reasons for their opposition, it will revert into hunger for power and gain a dynamic of its own.[1131]

When the barons are confronted with the marital woes of Queen Isabella, Edward overstepped a further mark for them; she claims that Gaveston deprives the queen of her husband:

> For now my lord the King regards me not,
> But dotes upon the love of Gaveston.
> He claps his cheeks and hangs about his neck,
> Smiles in his face and whispers in his ears;
> And when I come he frowns, as who should say,
> 'Go whither thou wilt, seeing I have Gaveston.'
> (*EII*, 1.2.49-54)

Mortimer junior tries to calm her down and promises that the barons will fight against Gaveston, even if the king should lose his crown as a consequence. As it is an ideologically difficult stance to risk the deposition of the king in order to keep the order, the Archbishop of Canterbury warns the barons to openly rebel against God's anointed; however, all of the party agree that Gaveston has to be removed, even by the means of war if need be (*EII*, 1.2.56-63). Isabella begs them not to fight and would rather endure her situation than tolerate a civil uprising against the king. The archbishop proposes a compromise—the barons as official councillors of the king will meet with him and confirm Gaveston's banishment; if that should not come to pass, the barons will rise in revolt (*EII*, 1.2.64-78). Isabella bids "sweet Mortimer" not to fight for her sake, but Mortimer claims he has to if words will not prevail (*EII*, 1.2.80-82). Thus, Mortimer tries to reinstall order in a chivalric manner as a duty he cannot escape; however, he pretends to fight for Isabella's position and honour while mingling his own political aims into his pursuit. The opposition against the king is already gaining momentum towards the egotism of the barons. While Isabella portrays herself as doleful queen who would rather endure her sorry state than brook open revolt against the king, there is a first approximation between Isabella and Mortimer who promises her help; their

[1131] The legal basis for the barons' opposition to their king was the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum*, a part of the corpus that defined the law of chivalry (Pronay and Taylor 1980: 20-21, 161-173; McCoy 1989: 34-35). It gave high feudal officers a lot of constitutional authority like granting the Steward, Constable, and Earl Marshal the power to appease discord between the king and his magnates or between the magnates themselves by forming a parliamentary commission to keep the peace (Pronay and Taylor 1980: 87-88; McCoy 1989: 35). Thus, some took the *Modus* as a justification of the barons' rebellion against Edward II, led by the Steward and Constable (McCoy 1989: 35). Vernon-Harcourt recounts the rebellion against Edward II and his connections to Gaveston and the Despencers; he states that Edward II was "not unlike his grandfather Henry the Third" as "[b]oth kings were foolish and grievously extravagant; both had a most awkward predilection for unpopular foreigners," (Vernon-Harcourt 1907: 142; 143-147). Pronay and Taylor cite arguments for and against the validity of parliamentary deposition of Edward II (Pronay and Tailor 1980: 96).

common adversary bonds the two together to become an adulterous couple later on. Edward, in the meantime, furthers his political downfall by the neglect of both his marital and political duties.

The barons are astonished to find Gaveston enthroned at Edward's side—Isabella's place—when they meet with Edward to have his friend banished. They cannot understand the king's estimation for someone who is not his equal (*EII*, 1.4.1-17). Mortimer junior does not brook to be thus "over-peered" by a social upstart and predicts the downfall of both Edward and Gaveston; Edward orders Mortimer to be arrested for his presumption, but Mortimer senior countermands Gaveston's arrest at which the nobles draw their swords in the presence of the king, a grave offence (*EII*, 1.4.18-21). The peers assert their power while the king cannot withstand their resistance; in an attempt to keep order for their own advantage, the peers disrupt it to an even worse extent than Gaveston ever did. Kent admonishes them to remember their duty towards their king; claiming that they know their duties, they seize Gaveston (*EII*, 1.4.22-23). Edward, completely outmanoeuvred, asks where they will take Gaveston, threatening to kill them if they do not stay. He is completely powerless and has nothing to put up against the peers; Mortimer senior understands this well and forbids his king to threaten, claiming that they are no traitors. Gaveston wants to tell Edward what he would do if he were king but is cut off by Mortimer junior who reminds him of his lowly social status (*EII*, 1.4.24-29). Edward tries to enforce his royal will, claiming that he could make them all stoop to Gaveston even if he were only a peasant; but Lancaster does not bear to be thus humiliated (*EII*, 1.4.30-32). The barons take Gaveston and Kent who is charged of favouring him as well, and they are both led away under guard (*EII*, 1.4.33-34). Edward cannot bear to be "thus overruled" and offers them to lay hands against his person, his throne, and the crown, offering them to the barons (*EII*, 1.4.35-38). While he feels helpless against the barons' violence, he tries to show them that they are effectively taking over his royalty—for he is wax in their hands. Instead of being restricted to their station, the peers inform their king that he should rule them better; they will not accept a social upstart over them. Edward is so enraged he cannot speak anymore: "Anger and wrathful fury stops my speech" (*EII*, 1.4.39-42). Instead of counteracting the barons' coup effectively, his feelings inhibit him to act accordingly as his inability to control his passions renders him unable to act or speak up. Thus, any resistance or alternative strategy of action is denied him; without words, the king cannot control his subjects and is subjected himself to their actions.

The Archbishop of Canterbury confronts the king with the barons' resolution to have Gaveston banished, urging him to subscribe; he even threatens the unwilling Edward to discharge the lords of their allegiance to him. Edward knows that he cannot risk getting into problems with the archbishop, the legate of the pope; Mortimer junior would not disapprove and suggests that the king could be disposed after the archbishop's curse and they could elect another king. This not only shows Mortimer's contempt for Edward but also shows that kingship has no metaphysical significance for him and is a mere instrument of power. But Edward is still unwilling to yield and would rather lose his crown in this battle of wills than give in; but he tries appeasement as a new strategy and installs Canterbury as Lord Chancellor, Lancaster as High Admiral,

elevating the Mortimers to the rank of earls. Warwick and Pembroke are rewarded with offices as well (*EII*, 1.4.43-69). Politically, Edward is apparently not interested in his rule as he declares that

> […] If this content you not,
> Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,
> And share it equally amongst you all,
> So I may have some nook or corner left
> To frolic with my dearest Gaveston.
> (*EII*, 1.4.69-73)

All he wants is his private peace with Gaveston; if the barons want to have the rule, he is willing to concede it to them. The Archbishop and the barons are not moved, though and urge Edward to subscribe the banishment. Mortimer junior asks incredulously why they should "love him whom the world hates so"; Edward's answer is both clear and tender: "Because he loves me more than all the world" (*EII*, 1.4.74-77). He feels valued as an individual by his friend, a love that he would do anything for. Besides, Edward's refinement cannot brook that his nobility treats his beloved so very rudely. Finally, Edward is bullied into signing the document, and the king complies, crying. The barons are content and busy to proclaim the banishment; when Edward is left on his own, he bewails his fate of being subjected to the power of a bishop. His decidedly Elizabethan tirade against the Roman Catholic Church ends in his resolve that the peers shall not survive their treason (*EII*, 1.4.78-105). This pattern will repeat itself over and over again: Edward only finds his resolve after the barons are gone—while he is directly confronted with their claims, he is unable to act or counter their offensive opposition but lets himself be bullied into compliance, unable to oppose them or effectively protect Gaveston.

Isabella is still desolate that her husband rejects her, but she is willing to continue to love Edward, even if it is in vain (*EII*, 1.4.187-197). Lancaster assures her that Edward's "wanton humour" will pass now that Gaveston is gone but Isabella wants to fight for Gaveston's repeal because Edward will banish her his presence if she does not. Lancaster and Warwick flatly deny her wish, but Mortimer asks if she really wants Gaveston back; she affirms—"as thou lovest and tend'rest me" (*EII*, 1.4.198-212). The use of her language shows that the approximation between Mortimer and Isabella has reached a new stage now; Isabella admits that she does not want to plead for Gaveston but for herself, so she talks with Mortimer in private about Gaveston's repeal (*EII*, 1.4.213-229). The result is astonishing: Mortimer agrees to bring back Gaveston to England—not for his sake but "for our avail – / Nay, for the realm's behoof and for the King's" (*EII*, 1.4.242-243). Mortimer's considerations to fight Gaveston in England where he lacks friends instead of letting him go to exile where he could buy himself support shocks the other barons. Further, Mortimer hopes that Gaveston's pride will abate if his exile is repealed (*EII*, 1.4.244-262; 264-277). If the plan does not work out, a pretext will do to start a revolt and get rid of the king's minion; Mortimer is sure of the people's support for the barons because they "cannot brook a night-grown mushroom – " (*EII*, 1.4.284). So if the people and nobility will join forces, the king cannot keep his favourite (*EII*, 1.4.279-291). The barons agree to Mortimer's plan and Isabella is highly grateful for the barons' support (*EII*, 1.4.292-299).

Finally, Edward is reconciled with the nobles and rewards them with high posts—his strategy to bind people to him (*EII*, 1.4.341-366). He stylises himself as the sun melting away hatred ("And as gross vapours perish by the sun, / Even so let hatred with thy sovereign's smile;" *EII*, 1.4.342-343). It seems that Edward eventually understood what good regiment is about; he appoints Warwick as his "chiefest councillor," and claims that "These silver hairs will more adorn my court / Than gaudy silks or rich embroidery" (*EII*, 1.4.346-348). As experienced councillors were a guarantee for good rule, so Edward now hedges his bets; however, when it is Mortimer's turn to get a post, the randomness of the procedure becomes evident—or is it rather the king's need to please? Mortimer junior seems inclined to walk away, unwilling to be reconciled with his king—but Edward offers him the post of commander of the fleet; or if this does not please him, he will become Lord Marshal of the kingdom (*EII*, 1.4.341-357). Mortimer's reply is both clear and evasive: "My lord, I'll marshal so your enemies / As England shall be quiet and you safe" (*EII*, 1.4.358-359). The two—the king and Mortimer—probably have a very different idea who the enemies of the king are; Mortimer, of course, identifies Gaveston as a source of physical and political corruption of the king, stirring up the quiet of England and the social order. Thus, Mortimer's answer is rather a declaration of war. For Isabella, however, the world seems perfect again: "Now is the King of England rich and strong, / Having the love of his renownèd peers" (*EII*, 1.4.367-368). Edward heartily agrees, but his first order is Gaveston's return, urging on the messenger (*EII*, 1.4.369-372). So, his friend is still his chiefest concern, and nothing changed. On top of it all, a feast and a tournament shall celebrate the return of his friend, and he shall be wedded to the late Earl of Gloucester's daughter. Edward bids the nobles to support the festivities—if not for Gaveston, then for his sake. Warwick assures the king of compliance and all except the Mortimers exit to the feast (*EII*, 1.4.374-386). When the two of them are alone, Mortimer senior advises his nephew to be more positive towards his king. In contrast to the younger Mortimer, he evaluates Edward's character in a much more complacent and forgiving way:

> Leave now to oppose thyself against the King;
> 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:
> Great Alexander loved Hephaestion;
> The conquering Hercules for Hylas wept;
> And for Patroclus stern Achilles drooped.
> And not kings only, but the wisest men:
> The Roman Tully loved Octavius,
> Grave Socrates, wild Alcibiades.
> Then let his grace, whose youth is flexible,
> And promiseth as much as we can wish,
> Freely enjoy that vain light-headed Earl,
> For riper years will wean him from such toys.
> (*EII*, 1.4.388-402)

After the reconciliation, there is no more reason to oppose the king for Mortimer senior; in his eyes, Edward is young, mild, calm, and promising. That he is obsessed with Gaveston is a whim that will pass with time and is in no way threatening; therefore, Edward should be granted his will. What is striking about this passage is the

list of male-male couples that seem to exculpate Edward's male-male passion as something completely normal. Even though these men are bound together in a not necessarily physical friendship, homosexual overtones are not completely erased. However, Mortimer junior is not content with the situation. His answer is just as revealing about his motives as about himself:

> Uncle, his wanton humour grieves not me,
> But this I scorn, that one so basely born
> Should by his sovereign's favour grow so pert,
> And riot it with the treasure of the realm
> While soldiers mutiny for want of pay.
> He wears a lord's revenue on his back,
> And Midas-like he jets it in the court
> With base outlandish cullions at his heels,
> Whose proud fantastic liveries make such a show
> As if that Proteus, god of shapes, appeared.
> I have not seen a dapper jack so brisk;
> He wears a short Italian hooded cloak,
> Larded with pearl; and in his Tuscan cap
> A jewel of more value than the crown.
> Whiles other walk below, the King and he
> From out a window laugh at such as we,
> And flout our train and jest at our attire.
> Uncle, 'tis this that makes me impatient.
> (*EII*, 1.4.403-420)

It is not the male-male passion that bothers Mortimer—it is the disruption of social order that Gaveston's proximity to the king causes. He has access not only to honours but also to revenues and shows off his new riches by literally carrying them on his back while soldiers are ill-paid. The very refined and costly way in which Gaveston does it really bothers Mortimer—his fashions are Italian and Tuscan while his "outlandish" entourage gives a dazzling appearance with their "fantastic" liveries while Mortimer is not able to keep up with him; he admits that being laughed at from above by both the king and Gaveston because his train and attire really enrage him. This adds insult to injury: Mortimer's pride and honour are touched by someone more lowly born, and he is further ridiculed because of his looks. That clothing is a status symbol and marks the character of its bearer is important here; the plain Englishman Mortimer feels threatened by the outlandish social climber. Consequently, it is more Mortimer's personal pride that is disturbed, not necessarily the order of the realm. His uncle tries to calm him down, reminding him of the reconciliation with the king; but Mortimer junior is only willing to serve the king if things change for real—if not, he cannot bridle his pride and will not tolerate a social upstart (*EII*, 1.4.421-425). Mortimer junior's list of grievances against Gaveston and Edward's relationship starts as a conventional complaint against a favourite of the king who, in the eyes of the courtier, gets too many favours. But eventually, the real issue is not the favours and titles themselves but the fact that financial means are drained for dress. This creation of an outer self in such a way distorts reality and assigns different roles to both Gaveston and the king as well as to the other courtiers; thus, the roles of spectator and audience are messed up.[1132] Altman hints

[1132] Altman 1978: 361-362.

at the possibility that this speech is a "resistance of the moral world to any departure from 'the way things are'."[1133] But Edward is the king, and as such he is the fountain of all favours, posts and elevations, as he, at least officially, is God's anointed on earth. A courtier, especially one who also vies for power, is not in a position to criticise the king's will or call him "England's scourge" (*EII*, 3.2.73). Mortimer's discontent is a clear indication of his insubordination and personal pride.

The reconciliation between the king and his nobles proves brittle when Edward waits eagerly for Gaveston's arrival and impatiently fears that his ship got wrecked. Mortimer junior is annoyed with the king's solitary focus on his minion and reminds Edward that the French king's recent invasion into English territories should get more attention; Edward, however, dismisses the invasion as "a trifle" and wants to expel the intruder "when we please." Rather, he is more interested in the mottoes and devices of his nobles for the upcoming tournament. Both Mortimer's and Lancaster's are allegorical images about the hated and corrupted social climber Gaveston, allusions that Edward immediately understands. The duplicity of the peers enrages him as they still seek Gaveston's destruction despite their reconciliation with their king (*EII*, 2.2.1-35). Isabella tries to assure her husband of the barons' love, but Edward is adamant: "They love me not that hate my Gaveston" (*EII*, 2.2.36-37). The king makes allegiance dependent on the acceptance of Gaveston, and thus draws the trenches between himself and his peers; he even threatens the barons that he will pull them down if they dare to touch Gaveston (*EII*, 2.2.38-46). Even though the king deeply misjudges his power, Mortimer junior senses that his initial plan will not pay off when Lancaster announces the arrival of "his lordship" (*EII*, 2.2.47-49).

Edward is overjoyed when Gaveston arrives; he likens the pain of the partition to the longing of the lovers of Danaë who pined away in desire after she was locked up in the tower (*EII*, 2.2.50-58); this sexually charged image is a further indication that the relationship with Gaveston is sexually consummated. Gaveston replies equally well polished with a metaphor and compares his happiness with a shepherd's joy of spring after a long winter (*EII*, 2.2.59-63). But the joy of reunion does not last; none of the nobles are happy to see Gaveston, and when Edward bids them to welcome him, they sneer at Gaveston's new titles, causing a brawl (2.2.64-71). The barons call Gaveston a traitor and are disposed to kill him if occasion arises—and indeed Mortimer junior injures him (*EII*, 2.2.73-85). To protect his minion from further harm, Edward has Gaveston led away—but instead of arresting Mortimer or taking measures against the others, Edward merely banishes Mortimer junior from the court, a punishment the latter does presumptuously not even accept (*EII*, 2.2.88-89). Instead of showing his power he so often talks about, Edward's measures against his rebellious nobles are ineffective. Instead, he faces growing opposition: when Lancaster threatens to "hale [Gaveston] by

[1133] Altman 1978: 362. Altman interprets Edward's character as a weak, world-flying dreamer, calling his predilection in a masque "tastes" of "languid cosmic indecorum." However, Altman's interpretation of the masque is not quite correct. It *is* clear that male genitalia are meant, so definition, clarity, and hierarchy are evident. The male possessive pronouns and the whole narrative also make it clear it is a male that is watched. In accordance with the Greek model of *paedophilia*, it is a boy that is watched and adored, so established hierarchy is not questioned (see Altman 1978: 363-369).

the ears to the block," Edward warns the nobles to look after their own heads. Warwick, however, admonishes Edward to rather look after his crown. With this mark overstepped, Edward sees no other resolution than preparing for war (*EII*, 2.2.90-98). It is remarkable how Edward inadequately reacts to the barons' presumption; facing open threats and a physical attack on Gaveston, the worst he can inflict is Mortimer's banishment from court, a punishment that the peer does not even accept. Edward's inefficiency in facing the barons is striking, it seems he is somewhat reluctant to really put their heads into question. He likewise does not implement his former offer to leave the kingdom politically to his peers so that he may have "some nook or corner left / To frolic with my dearest Gaveston" (*EII*, 1.4.72-73), so apparently Edward still has an interest in his position as a king. He tries to force the nobles to accept Gaveston as one of them with the power he claims and that he still clings to—but he does not use effective strategies against the nobles' resistance. War is not the only alternative left to him to subdue his peers; in fact he had endured insults, pride, and even the use of weapons in his presence, so the gap of action from complete inefficiency to war is inexplicable.

Before the nobles can face Edward's army, they get the news that Mortimer senior was captured by the Scots; Mortimer junior wants him to be ransomed by the king as his uncle was taken in Edward's war (*EII*, 2.2.99-118). Even though the tension between the monarch and his peers is at a height, there is apparently still some sense of political responsibility left that connects king and subject. Lancaster accompanies Mortimer while the others prepare for war. Disposed to force his suit if the king will not grant it, Mortimer does not act like a humble petitioner (*EII*, 2.2.119-127). Indeed, the king is not disposed to receive anyone, so they force their way through. When he sees Mortimer and Lancaster, Edward turns to go but Mortimer confronts him with his news. The king, unwilling to pay the ransom, advises his nephew to ransom his uncle on his own account—so Mortimer wants to threaten Edward into compliance, but all Edward grants is the permission to beg for funds throughout the realm (*EII*, 2.2.130-145). Lancaster supposes that Gaveston is behind all this while Mortimer feels his honour is tainted by the suggestion to beg for money, so he seizes his sword, even though he and Lancaster just want to speak their minds openly (*EII*, 2.2.146-153). They used the threat of violence as a means to force Edward to listen to them and confront him with their political grievances: Edward's power and financial resources were drained by entertainments and lavish gifts to his minion; there are many political fronts where Edward is defeated; and politically, Edward is isolated. They even claim that he failed in his marriage. All who lend the court splendour and magnificence have left, and Edward is not even able to protect his own people against the Scots. The people despise their king and mock him in ballads, and the one time Edward went to war it was a disaster. Instead of trusting in such a failed king, Mortimer will sell a castle to ransom Mortimer senior, and the nobles will use their personal resources and rise in revolt to amend all these political ills (*EII*, 2.2.154-196). Having had their say, they leave. But instead of taking the nobles' charges to heart, Edward is enraged. He has not yet dared to revenge his injuries on the nobles as "their power is great" (*EII*, 2.2.199), but now he feels it is the time to vent his fury and fight them, even risking to become "cruel" and

"tyrannous" in the process (*EII*, 2.2.197-204). His brother Kent fears Gaveston to be the "ruin of the realm and you" and bids Edward to banish his friend—but instead of taking advice, the king calls his brother a traitor and throws him out, isolating himself completely because he cannot bear other opinions on Gaveston that his own. On his own again, Edward fantasises about a life with Gaveston at Tynemouth without having to care about the peers (*EII*, 2.2.205-220). Edward's longing for a tranquil life with his friend shows how unreal Edward's wishes are—Gaveston is all that is on his mind, and his need for privacy occludes his sense for political duties that Lancaster and Mortimer reminded him of. This single-mindedness is the symptom of his humoral excess that makes him lose his ratio—unable to see anything clearly anymore, Edward stumbles towards his eventual fall.

Kent joins the barons; met with suspicion, he has to put his honour at stake to be accepted. Kent only justifies his change of sides with his "love to this our native land;" further reasons were communicated to Lancaster but are not reported in the text (*EII*, 2.3.1-15). The barons plan an attack on Tynemouth to get Gaveston who "frolics with the King;" they make sure only to get hold of Gaveston but not to touch the king (*EII*, 2.3.15-28). When they finally attack, Edward fears for Gaveston and orders him to take a ship to Scarborough while he himself will escape by land with Spencer. Edward, who had vowed to have war, does not face the barons but flees. While Gaveston is sure that the barons will not touch their king, Edward does not trust them; apparently, an attack on Gaveston equals a personal attack on himself. Before his escape, Edward takes his leave from both Gaveston and his wife Margaret but not from his Queen Isabella; after being reminded by Isabella, Edward bids her farewell—but "for Mortimer, your lover's sake" (*EII*, 2.4.1-14). Isabella, left on her own, bewails the fact that her husband evades all her approaches, even though she still loves none but him and wishes for a lasting union (*EII*, 2.4.15-21). When the barons enter and find only the queen, Mortimer cuts her lament about her situation off to ask where the king has gone (*EII*, 2.4.22-31). Isabella fears for the king, but Lancaster assures her that they just want Gaveston and would never touch their sovereign. Assured, Isabella gives away that Gaveston and Edward fled separately to weaken the forces of their opponents who immediately follow Gaveston's route by boat (*EII*, 2.4.32-50). When Isabella wants to follow her husband, Mortimer proposes that she could join them, but she does not want to fuel Edward's suspicion towards her marital fidelity; Mortimer assures her that she should "think of Mortimer as he deserves" (*EII*, 2.4.51-59). When all are gone, Isabella's closing speech shows that Edward's suspicion might not be without cause, however:

> 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;
> 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 has robbed me of his love.
> But yet I hope my sorrows will have end
> And Gaveston this blessèd day be slain.
> (*EII*, 2.4.60-70)

For the first time, she openly expresses feelings for Mortimer as her husband denies her any sexual contact; even though she still intends to give Edward a second chance, she will take political consequences and join her brother in France if he does not show any inclination towards her. That Edward and Isabella have a son is mentioned for the first time here; however, Isabella hopes that the primal cause for her problem, Gaveston, will be killed so that she will not have to resort to her plans. Isabella had already collaborated with the barons and indicates that her patience regarding her husband is over. Thus, Edward himself caused his wife's opposition through continuous neglect.

The nobles arrest Gaveston on his flight; Mortimer addresses him, summing up all the grievances against him, as "Thou proud disturber of thy country's peace, / Corrupter of thy king, cause of these broils, / Base flatterer, yield!" (*EII*, 2.5.1-11). Lancaster likens Gaveston to Helen of Troy who caused the Trojan war and wants him to prepare for death (*EII*, 2.5.14-18). Warwick wants to have Gaveston hanged immediately but then grants him the privilege of beheading as he is the king's favourite (*EII*, 2.5.19-28), a more honourable death due to his status. Gaveston, however, is only concerned about the fact that he has to die (*EII*, 2.5.29-31). The Earl of Arundel arrives with the king's wish to see Gaveston a last time before his execution, knowing he does not have a chance to save his friend's life. While Gaveston hopes, Warwick is not willing to grant the king's wish and wants the deed done, and Mortimer would also rather send Gaveston's head to the king (*EII*, 2.5.32-54). Arundel assures the barons on the king's honour that Gaveston will be sent back—but the peers do not believe these promises. They even refuse Arundel's offer to let his own honour act as a guarantee because they do not want to wrong a gentleman (*EII*, 2.5.57-70)—the king cannot be trusted when it comes to Gaveston. Pembroke pleads on the king's behalf and offers his honour as a guarantee to bring Gaveston to the king and back again with Arundel. Warwick does not trust the whole business as he fears Gaveston might escape (*EII*, 2.5.74-85). Mortimer finally yields despite Warwick's continuing resistance; he muses in an aside how he can undermine the meeting with the king (*EII*, 2.5.86-98). On their way, Pembroke invites Arundel to visit his house and wife. The horse-boy is left alone with Gaveston and a few of Pembroke's men while the gentlemen exit (*EII*, 2.5.99-111). Warwick then takes his chance and abducts Gaveston against the horse-boy's protest; he values his "country's cause" higher than honour and trust in his friend Pembroke. Gaveston knows that he will not see Edward again, and they exit the stage (*EII*, 2.6.1-19). Warwick's treachery shows that the rebels are no unified group fighting for a common goal anymore; at least Warwick, one of the leading figures, does not trust his friend Pembroke but rather wants to ensure Gaveston's death and acts on his own, true to old aristocratic autonomy.

When Edward learns that Gaveston is dead, he is ready to take action against the peers' presumption, backed up by Spencer's encouragement (*EII*, 3.1.1-31, 98-147). A messenger from the barons arrives and urges Edward to get rid of Spencer junior, Gaveston's replacement, to rely on their counsel. If he follows their advice, they will accept and cherish him as their sovereign (*EII*, 3.1.148-155, 166-171). Confronted with conditions again that should secure the barons' political influence, Edward simply wants to be left in peace; there should be no one, he claims, who should prescribe their

sovereign "his sports, his pleasures, and his company." Instead of separating from his new favourite, he embraces him instead. Rather, he sends the message that he will avenge Gaveston's death "with fire and sword" Now, finally, does Edward begin to campaign against his barons (*EII*, 3.1.173-184). Until then, Edward had only talked about his intention to fight, but now, after his minion is killed, is he compelled at last to act. With their message, the peers showed that it was not mere favouritism they opposed its political influence. Edward seems to need a close friend by his side and immediately adopted Spencer in Gaveston's stead, a decision he does not allow anyone to interfere with.

When Edward eventually fights against the barons, he is not willing to yield to a retreat—his mind is solely set on revenge. When the rebels enter, the two parties taunt each other as traitors—Pembroke labels Spencer a "base upstart," just as Gaveston before him (*EII*, 3.2.1-21), but Spencer senior lectures Pembroke about a subject's duty:

> A noble attempt and honourable deed
> Is it not, trow ye, to assemble aid
> And levy arms against your lawful king?
> (*EII*, 3.2.22-24)

Edward wants to have the nobles' heads for their treachery (*EII*, 3.2.25-26); but Mortimer junior reverses the bonds of obedience and asks Edward whether he wants to fight his own subjects:

> Then, Edward, thou wilt fight it to the last,
> And rather bathe thy sword in subjects' blood
> Than banish that pernicious company?
> (*EII*, 3.2.27-29)

Both sides employ the reciprocal duties obedience between master and subject for their own ends. Edward is inclined to bathe his sword in his subjects' blood and even wreak havoc on "England's civil towns" (*EII*, 3.2.30-32). That the civilians will have to pay for the strife of wills between their king and his peers is indeed "a desperate and unnatural resolution," as Warwick comments (*EII*, 3.2.33). They all go off to battle again, and all claim the help of England's patron saint St. George for themselves (*EII*, 3.2.34-36). The two parties meet again with the barons as prisoners of Edward's who interprets this moment of triumph as the result of the justness of his cause; the barons will now have to rue Gaveston's murder (*EII*, 3.2.37-45). Edward dismisses Kent's protestations that the barons fought for the country's good and sentences Warwick to death because he killed Gaveston against the law of arms. Warwick is not too impressed by his "but temporal" death that cannot touch his soul or conscience; Lancaster and he stoically go off to suffer death (*EII*, 3.2.46-65). Evoking the image of the realm as a living organism, Mortimer laments that the death of these senior peers "maimed" England. Mortimer is ordered to the Tower while all the others shall be executed (*EII*, 3.2.66-70). Before Mortimer exits to his imprisonment, he utters his true motivations for the first time:

> What, Mortimer! Can ragged stony walls
> Immure thy virtue that aspires to heaven?
> No, Edward, England's scourge, it may not be;
> Mortimer's hope surmounts his fortune far.

(*EII*, 3.2.71-74)

This little passage shows that he not only rebelled for the country's good but has political aspirations for himself that are not stifled by his imprisonment. While Mortimer exits to his incarceration, Edward triumphs and proclaims himself crowned anew (*EII*, 3.2.75-76), unaware that the danger continues unabated.

Indeed, the rebels have gathered strength, Mortimer has escaped, and Isabella found support of their cause abroad. Not only do Mortimer's motivations for political success show that the cause of the rebels has fallen apart, but Kent rues his defection to the rebels and his betrayal of his brother Edward. Now, the rebels appear traitorous to him, and he charges Mortimer to want Edward's life. Meanwhile, Mortimer and Isabella have an adulterous affair, and Kent plans to deceive the rebels to save Edward's life (*EII*, 4.6.1-18). His meditations are interrupted by Isabella and the entrance of her entourage that consists of Mortimer, Prince Edward, and John of Hainault. Isabella conventionally ascribes her victory to the justness of her cause and God; she also creates Prince Edward Lord Warden of the realm, effectively a viceroy that was installed during the minority of a king. Effectively, this is a blank charter as she bids them to "Deal you, my lords, in this, […] / As to your wisdoms fittest seems in all" (*EII*, 4.6.28-29; 19-29). While Kent worries about Edward, Mortimer claims that the king's fate is in the hands of the realm and of Parliament (*EII*, 4.6.30-37). However, an aside discloses that Mortimer and Isabella do not trust Kent (*EII*, 4.6.38-42). Kent simply mutters to himself that Edward is the ruin of the realm (*EII*, 4.6.45); in this simple sentence Kent's dilemma shows: on the one hand, he owes Edward obedience and loyalty as a brother and as a subject, but he also acknowledges that Edward's style of reign proved disastrous to the kingdom. Isabella claims to be unhappy that she was forced to go to war but was compelled by her love for her country. Mortimer tells her not to worry as Edward had caused her and the country harm, so they had to amend it. When he sentences Spencer senior to death as a rebel, Spencer lectures Mortimer that a rebel is one who fights against his king—so he, having fought for Edward, is no rebel (*EII*, 4.6.63-72). Mortimer does not want to listen and orders his henchman Rhys ap Howell to hunt down the fugitive king. He and Isabella shall, in the meantime, think about their fate (*EII*, 4.6.73-79).

When the Spencers and Baldock are executed and the king imprisoned, the rebel party revel in their success; what had begun as a chivalric pursuit to rid the country of corruptive influences on the king had become a self-serving scramble for power. Mortimer's speech both discloses his feelings as well as his agenda—and his use of his relationship with Isabella:

> Fair Isabel, now have we our desire.
> The proud corrupters of the light-brained King
> Have done their homage to the lofty gallows,
> And he himself lies in captivity.
> Be ruled by me, and we will rule the realm.
> In any case, take heed of childish fear,
> For now we hold an old wolf by the ears,
> That if he slip will seize upon us both,
> And grip the sorer, being gripped himself.
> Think therefore, madam, that imports us much

To erect your son with all the speed we may,
And that I be protector over him,
For our behoof will bear the greater sway
Whenas a king's name shall be underwrit.
(*EII*, 5.2.1-14)

Mortimer had the "desire" (and thus a humoral issue causing excess) to access power and get Queen Isabella.[1134] The supporters of the king are dead, and the "light-brained King" is in safe custody, but Mortimer needs Isabella and her son as pawns for political legitimacy so "we will rule the realm"; however, he wants her to be "ruled by me" and thereby sets the tone in political matters. Even though Edward might be in prison, the "old wolf" could tear himself free and fight back even fiercer than before. To prevent any such a thing, he has to install Prince Edward as king so that Mortimer might effectively rule as protector over him. The name of the prince as king will legitimise the political actions of him and Isabella pulling the strings in the background. Mortimer and Isabella do not foresee, however, that the "old wolf" biting back will not be Edward himself but eventually his son the prince, which is not part of the plan. Isabella, who has completely fallen for Mortimer, wants to be sure that her son will be safe—with that boon, she will subscribe anything against her husband (*EII*, 5.2.15-20). Mortimer wants to wait until Edward is deposed before he acts—but wants to be "let […] alone to handle him" (*EII*, 5.2.21-22) with Isabella's blank charter that allows him to have free range with the king. When the Bishop of Winchester enters with the crown that the king had "willingly" resigned, the prince is immediately sent for by his overjoyed mother (*EII*, 5.2.23-36). The bishop exits, and Mortimer is now in possession of the privy seal and thus holds the power to rule in his hands. To prevent any possibility of the king's liberation, he plans to hand Edward over to a place that is only known to Mortimer and Isabella. The wording "where he lieth" could also indicate Edward's burying ground, so it is not quite clear what Mortimer really intends with the king. His henchmen Gourney and Maltrevers help in dealing with (or rather dispatching of) Edward (*EII*, 5.2.37-41). Even though Isabella wants Edward to be killed, she does not want to be held accountable to the deed for her own safety. Mortimer, having asked for a clear answer of Isabella's in the matter, cuts her off; the king shall be left to Maltrevers and Gourney. He orders Gourney to mistreat Edward in any way he can; through the king's abuse, Mortimer himself will rise to absolute power, claiming even to be able to control Fortune's wheel.[1135] Edward shall be made weary by being transported to different places every night and mistreated by "bitter words," an order Gourney promises to obey (*EII*, 5.2.42-65). When the letter to Edward's warden Berkeley is about to be posted, Isabella plays her double game and sends a jewel as a token of her labours to free her husband and her love to Edward (*EII*, 5.2.66-71). Thus, she adds hope and longing to the hopeless situation of the king. Mortimer is pleased by her show of devout wife.

When the prince enters with his uncle Kent, the rebel pair wants to fend off any influences the renegade Kent might have on the prince as they need young Edward as a

[1134] That the personal pronouns are not capitalised indicates that Mortimer does not use the *pluralis maiestatis*; in spoken language, this is not distinguishable.
[1135] See Smith 2000: 94-96 for further details about the wheel of fortune.

shield for their own plans (*EII*, 5.2.73-78). After the king is taken care of, the next stage of their plot sets in; Mortimer offers Kent the protectorship over the prince, but he of course refuses and claims that the queen should have the task. The prince is not happy about the prospect of becoming king—he thinks of himself as too young and wants "him" to reign—probably his father, but it is not quite clear from the context (*EII*, 5.2.79-92). While Isabella tries to assure the prince that it is "his highness' pleasure," the prince wants to see his father first. Kent backs up his nephew's wish and shrewdly asks whether the king is already dead. He is not convinced by Isabella's "No, God forbid" (*EII*, 5.2.93-99). Mortimer reproaches Kent's inconstancy that led to Edward's imprisonment, a fact that Kent wants to amend. But Mortimer thinks that Kent is hardly a good example for a prince and should not be near him or trusted (*EII*, 5.2.100-106). The prince believes in Kent's repentance, but Isabella wants to lead the prince off with Mortimer to de-escalate the situation. Because the prince would accompany his mother but not Mortimer, Mortimer shows his true face and threatens to use force and carry the prince away if he does not follow on his own accord (*EII*, 5.2.107-111). The prince is led away by Mortimer while calling for Kent's help, but Isabella decrees that he will stay with her before she exits. Kent, now alone on stage, plans to rescue his brother Edward and exact revenge on both Mortimer and Isabella (*EII*, 5.2.112-120). Finally, it will be the prince who avenges his father's death, even though Mortimer feels invincible after the late king's murder.

> As for myself, I stand as Jove's huge tree,
> And others are but shrubs compared to me.
> All tremble at my name, and I fear none;
> Let's see who dare impeach me for his death.
> (*EII*, 5.4.11-14)

When Prince Edward is eventually king, he learns that Mortimer and his mother are responsible for his father's death. Instead of becoming Mortimer's puppet, the young king seeks to revenge Edward II's murder. He pursues the support of the council chamber for his cause as he feels that he is not yet powerful as a young man (*EII*, 5.4.15-21). Accusing Mortimer of the murder, Edward III sentences him to death while Isabella tries to calm down her son's rage. But he forbids any intervention and accuses her of compliance with the deed. Mastering his own feelings and the people around him, the young king assumes power over himself and uses all the means of authority he has (*EII*, 5.4.27-37). Mortimer thinks it "scorn to be accused" (*EII*, 5.4.39), and proudly does not take the situation seriously. Edward III however claims that "in me my loving father speaks / And plainly saith, 'twas thou that murd'rest him" (*EII*, 5.4.41-42). By speaking with all royal authority transferred to him, the young king asserts his legitimacy through succession—something his father was unable to achieve. Mortimer does not take the challenge seriously until he is confronted with the letter ordering Edward's death (*EII*, 5.4.43-50). The king orders Mortimer to be drawn, hanged, quartered, and beheaded and does not give in to his mother's pleas. Mortimer himself is too proud to beg for his life "unto a paltry boy" (*EII*, 5.4.57) and accepts his death sentence unemotionally. There is nothing to grieve about as he had reached his goals and now accepts the turn of the wheel of fortune. Rather, he now "scorns the world, and as a traveller / Goes to discover countries yet unknown" (*EII*, 5.4.51-66). Edward III

takes Isabella's plea for her lover's life as proof that she conspired in her husband's death, so he confines her to the Tower until she is to be tried—and makes sure that she will not get any pity from him despite his tears (*EII*, 5.4.68-92). Meanwhile, Mortimer's head is laid on the late king's hearse; by having the usurper executed and the funeral rites for his father prepared (*EII*, 5.4.93-102), Edward III reestablishes the order that his father was unable to keep; like a phoenix from the ashes, royal *dignitas* is reinstalled by the courageous action of the young king against all rebels including his own mother. Eventually, he will become the founding figure of English royal bravery.

Edward II falls because he is obstinate against anyone who either confronts him with political necessities or has a different opinion on his minions; a kind and refined spirit, he seems to wish for private happiness and is absolutely out of his depth in handling opposition. He first tries to rely on his royalty, but the barons do not respect it—he lacks a strategy to make them comply with his wishes, and when directly confronted with their charges, he becomes speechless and immobile. Seeking the emotional warmth of friendship, he neglects all other duties, a flaw that just makes the barons stronger. For his private pleasure, he lets everything fall apart and finally wonders how he ended up in a dungeon. The lack of responsibility as well as the strong wish for a private and calm life shows in Edward's offer to hand over the reign to the barons; however, he strangely clings to his kingship until the end.

3.1.4 "Bypaths and Indirect Crook'd Ways"—Legitimate Rule

The basis of effective and unquestioned rule is legitimacy derived from unbroken succession, kingship is metaphysically endowed by a coronation ceremony that involved anointment since the Middle Ages.[1136] While *Edward III* echoes the issue of legitimacy here and there, it is Shakespeare's second tetralogy that heavily centres on legitimacy and rightful succession. The problems begin when Richard II deprives Bolingbroke of his inheritance; thus, he breaks the chain of legitimate succession and eventually causes his own downfall.[1137] This disruption of patriarchal ties between father and son is an indicator of a general social dysfunction.[1138] Bolingbroke—now King Henry IV—will confess at the end of his life that he is guilty of having cut the line of succession in usurping Richard's throne and that his political integrity is therefore spotted:

> […] God knows, my son,
> By what bypaths and indirect crook'd ways
> I met this crown; and I myself know well
> How troublesome it sat upon my head.
> To thee it shall descend with better quiet,
> Better opinion, better confirmation;
> For all the soil of the achievement goes
> With me into the earth. […]
> […] All these bold fears
> Thou seest with peril I have answerèd;

[1136] Kantorowicz 1957: 44-49.
[1137] Schruff 1999: 172-173.
[1138] Schruff 1999: 176.

For all my reign hath been but as a scene
Acting that argument. And now my death
Changes the mood, for what in me was purchased
Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort,
So thou the garland wear successively.
(*2HIV*, 4.3.311-318; 323-329)

Henry interprets the troubles he meets during his reign as direct consequences of his usurpation. However, he thinks that passing on his crown to his son Hal will endow his son's future reign with more legitimacy and thus lead to a calmer and less problematic kingship. Hal accepts the succession and promises to defend the inheritance from his father:

You won it, wore it, gave it me;
Then plain and right must my possession be:
Which I with more than with common pain
'Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain.
(*2HIV*, 4.3.349-352)

Thus, the crown is officially passed on from father to son, establishing a bond between the two men and legitimising Hal's rightful succession. However, it is problematic to "rightfully maintain" something gained by "indirect and crook'd ways" as it cannot be possessed "plain and right." While the succession from Henry IV to Henry V as such may be legitimate, the possession of the crown went awry by Bolingbroke's usurpation, a curse that to a certain extent will haunt the succeeding monarchs up to Henry VII. Bolingbroke had vowed to go on a crusade to the Holy Land to atone for his involvement in Richard's murder—a vow that is never realised (see *1HIV*, 1.1.18-29, 47-48 and *2HIV*, 4.3.336-340). And while Henry V's reign indeed works out more smoothly and is never questioned by anyone other than himself, the ghosts of the past begin to rise again for Henry V before the decisive battle of Agincourt.[1139] Henry follows his father's advice to "busy giddy minds / With foreign quarrels" (*2HIV*, 4.3.341-342) in his French campaign, and his political planning seems to work out smoothly. But in this moment of personal distress, Henry V feels the need to pray and addresses the shaky grounds that his reign stands on by admitting that his father usurped the throne.[1140] Just after he meditated on his relationship with kingship and the crown, Henry puts all his fears and anxieties into this moment; he urgently needs God's help against the masses of French troops, and the audience can witness a guilt-stricken king who soliloquises desperately about the original political sin he tried to atone for:

[…] Not today, O Lord,
O not today, think not upon the fault
My father made in encompassing the crown.
I Richard's body have interrèd new,
And on it have bestowed more contrite tears
Than from it issued forcèd drops of blood.
Five hundred poor have I in yearly pay
Who twice a day their withered hands hold up
Toward heaven to pardon blood. And I have built

[1139] Schruff 1999: 180.
[1140] Schruff 1999: 179, fn. 184.

Two chantries, where the sad and solemn priests
Still sing for Richard's soul. More will I do,
Though all I can do is nothing worth,
Since that my penitence comes after ill,
Imploring pardon.

(*HV*, 4.1.274-287)

Henry implicitly admits that he is not the rightful successor to the unlawfully acquired English throne.[1141] He wants to buy himself free of the inherited guilt by enumerating all the measures he took to atone for his father's sin; apparently, he wants to avoid such a troubled reign as his father's, God's punishment for his usurpation of the throne, an opinion Henry IV voices himself.[1142] This passage shows that Henry's deepest anxiety is his royal illegitimacy because of his father's usurpation and his involvement in Richard's death that is a blot on himself ("fault") that could influence the outcome of the battle negatively, a kind of looming punishment for past transgressions that are not even his own. Henry's way of talking is impressive; he does not sound penitent but rather like an accountant who enumerates his deeds to blot out Richard's murder as if the quantity of the means could amass so many spiritual benefits that they could wash off guilt. He cried more tears than drops of blood Richard lost, buried his body anew, founded two chantries, and has five hundred poor in pay so that they pray for pardon of this sin. And still he wants to add to that penitential mass—but he can see clearly that all this is worth nothing. Even though he did not cause Richard's death, he will not be able to undo it but still feels the burden of the guilt his father bequeathed him that causes fear in him. Henry V experiences a lack of hereditary legitimacy that just might strike back in a cosmos that operates on divine revenge.[1143] But the battle of Agincourt is a chance of proving his worth and his rightful claim to the throne; the final victory is a divine legitimatisation of Henry as king. Thus, he dedicates the victory to God:

[…] O God, thy arm was here,
And not to us, but to thy arm alone
Ascribe we all. […]
[…] Take it God,
For it is none but thine.

(*HV*, 4.8.100-102, 105-106).

God's involvement in the victory means that he is responsible for the outcome that eventually looks like a divine sanction of the usurpation—or as if God had accepted Henry's penitential arithmetic. The contradictions in his character are overcome: he is a Christian and a warmonger, the son of a usurper who killed God's anointed on earth and yet a successful ruler who demands obedience and loyalty.[1144] Henry's atonement and the reconciliation of his awkward legitimacy are contained by Henry's success and God's helping hand. Thus, Shakespeare suggests that legitimacy can also be conceded by the positive results of a ruler's actions that indicate metaphysical acceptance.

[1141] Sutherland and Watts 2000: 125.
[1142] Sutherland and Watts 2000: 121-122.
[1143] Schruff 1999: 191.
[1144] Sutherland and Watts 2000: 123.

Henry V not only discusses legitimate rule in England but also the legitimacy of Henry's claim to the French crown. In the first act of the play, the Archbishop of Canterbury legally justifies Henry's invasion into France; in the Salic Law speech the archbishop explains confusingly and at length that there is no bar to the French throne because the French kings—all going back to the Merovingians—claimed the throne through their *female* side (*HV*, 1.2.35-95). And indeed, Edward III's claim to the French throne was through his mother Isabella.[1145] Earlier, the archbishop had justified the English king's claim through his great-grandfather Edward III (*HV*, 1.1.87-90). Henry's great-great-grandmother Isabella is never explicitly mentioned in *Henry V* but in *The Famous Victories* and in *Edward III*. The bishop's speech trying to persuade Henry that he indeed has a claim to the French throne is so confusing that probably no one in the audience gets the point of the argument—and probably Henry does not get it either; he asks for the archbishop's reassurance: "May I with right and conscience make this claim?" (*HV*, 1.2.96). Despite the lengthy discussion, Henry wants to have a wholly moral claim—otherwise he would not invade France. The legal justifications for his claim are somewhat murky; King Pharamond, who allegedly had initiated the Salic law, was a legend only.[1146] And indeed, Henry's claim to the French throne was not as clear as the bishop tries to argue: Edward III had initially accepted the French bar to succession through the female line. He took the oath of fealty to the French king in 1331 only to declare himself the rightful heir of the French crown and invading France seven years later.[1147] The Salic Law speech renders Henry's bloody and cruel French expedition ridiculous; all the valour and heroism echoing throughout *Henry V* is not based on the defence of a decidedly male English right to the throne but on a female French claim. The whole invocation of true male English heroism going back to the glory of Edward III proves to be a mere farce without substance. Power and gender discourse eclipse the French female claim to highlight English male heroism, a faultline that surfaces again in Henry's brutal bullying of Princess Catherine in the wooing scene.

However, historical sources stress that Henry never wanted to invade France for his own ends only. Holinshed stresses that at the end of his life, Henry V

> protested vnto them, that neither the ambitious desire to inlarge his dominions, neither to purchase vaine renowme and worldlie fame, nor anie other consideration had mooued him to take the warres in hand; but onlie that in prosecuting his iust title, he might in the end atteine to a perfect peace, and come to enioie those péeces of his inheritance, which to him of right belonged: and that before the beginning of the same warres, he was fullie persuaded by men both wise and of great holinesse of life, that vpon such intent he might and ought both begin the same warres, and follow them, till he had brought them to an end iustlie and rightlie, and that without all danger of Gods displeasure or perill of soule.[1148]

[1145] See below in the discussion of Edward's claim in *Edward III*. Besides, see fn 8 on *HV*, 1.2.103-104, p. 731.
[1146] Wood 1994: 34, 37. For further information on the Salic law under the Merovingians, see Wood 1994: 108-115 and on the ban of female succession Wood 1994: 120, Schramm 1970: 164-165.
[1147] Seibt 1987: 292, 290-291. Seibt argues that one of the main reasons for Edward's invasion of France was the Gascogne area—a formally English possession that shipped wine to England, and the textile production in Flanders that was intertwined with English wool (Seibt 1987: 291).
[1148] Holinshed 1808 vol. III: 132-133.

The historical deathbed confession, like in *2 Henry IV*, may indicate that the real Henry only wanted to secure his rightful inheritance. In the play, however, his advisors do not have such "just" motivations. These "men both wise and of great holinesse of life"—the Bishop of Ely and the Archbishop of Canterbury—persuade Henry to pursue his French expedition to secure money for their church (*HV*, 1.1.1-24, 70-90). They grant Henry support so that he will not touch their church revenues.

In *Edward III*, the problems of the Salic law and the legitimacy of the English claim to the French throne find their expression as well, but the issue is somewhat less opaque. Like in *Henry V*, Edward III's parents, Edward II and Isabella, daughter of Philippe le Beau, king of France, are presented as the warrantors of their son's claim to both the realms of France and England. The French, however, do not accept Edward's claim through his mother as they inhibit the succession through the female line and declare Philippe le Beau's line to be out.[1149]

The play begins in mid-scene. Edward grants the banished Frenchman Artois the earldom of Richmond and bids him to continue with the explanation of the French side of his pedigree (*EIII*, 1-9). Artois explains that Isabel, Edward's mother, was the only child of Philippe le Beau, Edward's grandfather, who had one offspring—Edward (*EIII*, 10-19). He, therefore, has a right to the French throne; "rebellious minds," however, claimed John Valois as their king and declared le Beau's line to be "out" as only a descendant with a claim through the male side could rule over France (*EIII*, 20-30). Without explicitly naming it, the French use the Salic law to exclude Edward from the line of succession. Artois, however, states that this is only a pretext, a "forgéd ground" to "exclude your grace" that would prove "but dusty heaps of brittle sand" (*EIII*, 30-32). Artois wants to convince Edward of his more legitimate claim to the French throne because of his "love unto my country and the right" (*EIII*, 37). John of Valois is belittled as an illegitimate climber who usurped the throne and denies it to the "true shepherd" (*EIII*, 40-44), Edward of England. Artois' words inspire "hot courage" in Edward; he feels his dignity increase and wants to prove true to his female French heritage—if need be with force (*EIII*, 46-53). When a French ambassador informs Edward has to pay homage to John of Valois within forty days as the dukedom of Guyenne was conceded, Edward sees the irony in his resolve to assert his right to the French throne and the "invitation" that instantly followed (*EIII*, 56-71). He tells the messenger that he will get to France as requested—but like "a conqueror" and not like a vassal (*EIII*, 77-79). In the following speech, Edward castigates the French king's "arrogance" (*EIII*, 82) that dares to "command a fealty" (*EIII*, 83) to the one who claims the whole of France.

Edward asserts his claim with aggressive speech, threatening John of Valois to "take away these borrowed plumes of his / and send him naked to the wilderness" (*EIII*, 89-90). When Lorraine snubs Edward in the presence of his lords (*EIII*, 91-92), Edward's son, the Black Prince, steps in and returns the just uttered defiance "even to the bottom of thy master's throat" (*EIII*, 94); he attacks Valois as "lazy drone / crept up by stealth

[1149] Sams 1996: 3.

unto the eagle's nest" (*EIII*, 98-99). With his verbal attack, the Black Prince resounds Henry V's promise to return the dauphin's gift of tennis balls as cannonballs that will destroy France soon. Warwick also chimes in and warns Valois that an encounter with Edward, "the lion" in the field would "tear him piecemeal for his pride." Artois tries to appease the situation and counsels Valois to surrender to Edward to avoid violence (*EIII*, 103-108). The king draws his sword when Lorraine attacks his compatriot Artois as a "traitor" and a "viper" (*EIII*, 109) and accuses this talk as a "conspiracy" (*EIII*, 111)—a symbol for aggression as well as political potency—and warns Lorraine that his "fervent desire" is worse than his weapon. Only his rule in France will end the dispute (*EIII*, 113-119). Lorraine leaves with a riddle—"It is not that nor any English brave / afflicts me so as doth his poisoned view / that is most false should most of all be true." (*EIII*, 120-122). What bothers Lorraine is not the English claims and bravado but that the "most false" claim should be true. Edward is already so certain of his legitimacy to the French throne that he is determined to fight with all his might against the alleged usurper Valois. He wants to do so not only to get what he sees as his due—the French crown—but also to "approve fair Isabel's descent" (*EIII*, 51). With his conquest, he explicitly wants to validate his female French inheritance—an irony in English masculine warrior lore. A further ironic twist is the instant abatement of Edward's masculine fervour and determination to set off to France when he learns that the Scots invaded the North and besiege the castle of the Countess of Salisbury (*EIII*, 142-165). Instead of pursuing his French campaign, he sets off to rescue the countess; his ensuing passion for her is a foil that exposes a lot about his character that he has to overcome to be successful in France.

The French, of course, evaluate the legitimacy of Edward's claim differently. Before the French meet the invaders in combat, John Valois wants to know his youngest son's opinion on Edward's claim (*EIII*, 1141-1153). Prince Philip thinks that Edward could have even "so plain a pedigree" (*EIII*, 1155) but it is John Valois who possesses the crown, which is "the surest point of law" (*EIII*, 1157). In contrast to Artois' love of truth, Philip Valois wants to secure the status quo that is law and legitimacy enough for him. His father is pleased with the answer and orders wine and bread to fortify themselves against the enemy (*EIII*, 1161-1163). For Valois and his son, the fact that he wears the crown is legitimacy enough. Self-complacently, he is willing to secure the *status quo* against the English, despite any valid claims. That he first orders bread and wine instead of joining his soldiers in combat despite the noise of the approaching English exposes his irresponsibility and delusions of invincibility. He simply wishes that his navy will beat back the English (*EIII*, 1164-1169). Despite Valois' need for verbal assurance of his kingship, words will eventually not hold out against the English weapons; Edward, like Henry V after him, will prove successful in France. The most decisive victories, however, will be won by Edward's son, the Black Prince; this fact very strikingly undercuts his claim to the French throne; while Henry V had to use his victory at Agincourt to affirm his legitimacy on the throne, both Edward's legitimacy on the English and French thrones are much sounder. The fact that it is not he but his son who affirms the English claim destabilises his legitimacy and role as a king. His son, whose personality proves to be much more suitable for kingship, subserviently

dedicates his victories to his father who will be the official victor of the whole campaign.[1150]

Hierarchy and order entail a double bond between ruler and subject; while the subject owes his monarch obedience and his service, the king has to requite it by a special responsibility for his subjects. The obligation to be a just ruler and the responsibility towards God as the Highest is "compensated" by royal privileges. Henry V's conversation with the soldiers before the battle of Agincourt illustrates this responsibility of a king. But while the soldiers demand a total responsibility of the king, Henry is not willing to take it in full. The king feels only responsible towards God as the only authority above him; Henry has to justify the righteousness of his cause and his pursuits to no one else, not even Parliament. While the king is unwilling to take the responsibility for his soldiers' souls, they have to give everything to their sovereign, even their lives. This exposes a huge asymmetry of power between the subjects who are obliged to be loyal to their king and his cause with all their being while the king's only obligation is his responsibility towards God, propped up by a lot of royal privileges. This imbalance can easily lead to arbitrariness and power abuse, especially so if the king becomes an instrument of God's will in the course of history to castigate evildoers. Allegiance creates a strong bond between subject and king; these ties are strengthened in combat if the cause is just and honourable. These virtues are the foundation for strong ties between men and concede the strength of authority to just one man. Besides, death in combat is a further bond linking men together as brothers-in-arms that expresses loyalty and thus also honour.

In Edward II's case, this male-male bonding through obedience does not work out; he is unable to assert his superior position against the barons who try to dictate Edward's policies; from the first entrance of Edward onwards, it becomes clear that the king is no sovereign but dependent on his barons. The battle of wills between them is the arena that encompasses their arising conflict: the king becomes stubborn as he is denied his heart's wish to spend a quiet, undisturbed life with his favourite Gaveston while the barons seem to resent their king because he upsets the old established social order by elevating his minion above all. However, Edward fears to effectively oppose the peers because they are supported by the people, a strength he lacks. Rather, he is isolated by his sole focus on his minion Gaveston, whom he elevates socially above all others to show his love; this becomes a liability to his reign as it deepens the rift with the barons who embody the old values of an independent, self-determined aristocracy. Lacking all political or familial responsibility, Edward's inefficient strategies to counter the aristocratic opposition leads to a strong bond between his wife and the leader of the

[1150] Not only the text but also history undercuts Edward's success in France. The victories were paid by a high price: the wars drained the coffer to such an extent that Edward had to pawn the English crown to the Archbishop of Treves in 1339. In 1346, Edward landed again in Northern France and got nearly trapped between the Seine that he could not cross and the growing French army. The only exit was his retreat to Crécy, where the big battle with the impressive victory that often gets cited in *Henry V* took place. However, the consequences of the battle were not as positive for the English: France was not conquered, the financial situation not solved despite Edward's looting—and the only positive outcome was the capture of Calais (Seibt 1987: 293-294).

revolt—Mortimer—that finally brings him to fall. Only when his friend Gaveston is killed does he resume action, but his bravery cannot help him eventually. The king is not interested in politics and power but wants it only for his own ends to lead a private, happy life with Gaveston, a wish that is denied him by political necessity.

It is striking how irreverent the barons are towards their king and how they do not take his threats seriously; a rebellion, then, may be evaluated as cancelling the bonds between subjects and king from the subjects' perspective, but its impact depends on how threatened the king feels. While Henry IV is eaten up by his unquiet rule, Edward IV does not seem to take Falconbridge's rebellion as a personal menace. Rather, he delegates preparations to his courtiers and postpones charges to the next day; Falconbridge uses the rebellion to feed his narcissism and vanity while Edward could not care less—a sign of self-assuredness. That the rebel leader finally claims the throne for himself is evidence of his hubris—but also expresses the arbitrariness of who sits on the throne; from his point of view, it could be any gentleman. Edward IV is an unusual king in the analysed history plays; he is irresponsible on a personal and political level but does not have to pay the price for his rule personally. Rather, he wins France without serious fighting and gets away with his amorous adventures, and using subjects for his personal amusement. No one checks on his decisions, and the only opposition he faces from his mother in the first scene of the play is not taken seriously. However, the rebel and bastard Falconbridge serves as a foil for Edward; he wants to stress his nobility despite his bastardy, resumes political responsibility by leading a rebellion, and uses royal rhetoric to achieve his aims; he wants to act like a king but will never be able to do so. Despite his claims to fight for the restoration of Henry VI, he also wants to quench his own desires, just like King Edward does while abusing his position. Thus, Falconbridge lays open a faultline about rule, legitimacy, and the hunger for influence and power. His speeches prove to be mere words that mirror the perversions of Edward's reign. It is the citizens, and not the king, who save London because they have something worth fighting for—their livelihood, families, and possessions. It is ironically the citizens who embody chivalric ideals like honour and courage in defending Edward's kingship, not the nobility who hardly feature in the play. In keeping up the order and providing diligently for their own safety, they express their Englishness and valour, common features that unite them in their cause. It is the London aldermen who take up the king's role of keeping law and order that Edward fills with his notorious absence from stage. For him, problems get solved without intervention—and strangely, all his follies are not thrown back on him but reflected on other people like his wife, the Shores, or his children who will eventually die in the Tower, an incident that is *not* part of the play but is important for the evaluation of the historical development of the events. For Edward, the consequences of the actions of his body private on the body politic are not important. Nevertheless, his subjects defend his kingship and argue for his legitimacy, so they keep their part of the deal while their king does not. The king does not have to account for his deeds and does not owe explanations; that Edward tries to defend his late arrival after the rebellion has been fought back is not a duty of his, rather a sign of a bad conscience. That he never acts as a responsible ruler who cares for the well-being of his subjects shows that he dismantles

his kingship. There is no binding tie between himself and his body politic—a void expressed by his long absence from stage in the first part. The citizens meanwhile fill the king's social space on stage. Both the citizens' success in fighting back the rebels as well as Falconbridge as a counter-king criticise the kingship of Edward on an intrinsic level—while openly claiming their allegiance to their "legitimate" king, the Londoners do not need Edward to keep order and defend themselves. The rebels' demands that aim at an anarchic regime of terror in the guise of social equality and their fantasy to "be kings tonight," whoring with merchants' wives and enriching themselves (*1EIV*, 9.168-170) is a telling reference to the king who just does the same. Despite Edward's lewd conduct his presence assumedly emanates honour and glory because of his quasi-religious status as king. While the king did nothing to support the citizens, his body politic kept the Londoners going.

In the *Henry IV* plays, the situation is different; the action centres on the king, counterbalanced by the scenes with his son in Eastcheap. The rebellion initiated by Northumberland is an aristocratic movement that rips the kingdom apart and isolates the king who personally struggles to solve the problem. And while Henry works himself to the ground with his care for the kingdom as a "real" king should, he never succeeds to establish a lasting peace or steady reign. Rather, his party is divided, he experiences hardly any support, and fears traitors in his proximity. The problem is different than in *1 Edward IV*—while Falconbridge fights for Henry VI and his own aims, the rebellion in *Henry IV* is aimed at the person of the king because of disappointed hopes of the Percies. The situation is further worsened by the fact that Henry himself is a usurper who—unlike Edward IV—rues the deposition of the former king and interprets it as a sin. He feels so strongly about this that he interprets the unruly behaviour of his son Hal as a divine punishment for his misdeed. Henry feels that the continuity of the line of succession he just founded is not only threatened by the rebels but also by the unprincely company and the rude conduct of his son. Henry feels that he wants to secure his achievements regarding legitimacy and the succession—a further field where he struggles.

That the rebels are not united themselves seems to be a feature in both *Edward IV* and *Henry IV*—a sign that their cause is not just and that they lack valour and honour. And while in *Edward IV*, the rebels are commoners led by a bastard noble, the insurgents in *Henry IV* consist of high nobility and are former supporters of the king; however, both types of rebels only fight for their own gain—eventually, their common goal is not strong enough to unite them effectively.

As the king is a rebel of sorts himself who as an overreaching subject deposed his king, he begins to fear potential rebels; right in the beginning of his reign, this fear will come true and will continue to tear at the monarch's nerves. This fear is intensified by Henry's isolation and physical weakness; once, he even breaks down on stage and another time he has to be rescued by his son Hal in battle. The connection between his vulnerable body private and the struggling body politic shows how precarious the situation is for the realm. The two spheres mirror each other but it is probably the body politic that has its effects on the body private of Henry. The king tries to establish his self and his majesty to be "[m]ighty and to be feared" (*1HIV*, 1.3.6) by his adversaries,

but he does only partially succeed in establishing his usurped majesty as the rebels press hard on Henry's self and body.

The conflict between the party of the king and the noble rebels also seems to be a contrast between old aristocratic independence and a new style of court that the Percies perceive as effeminate. Hotspur's refusal to hand over the prisoners is motivated by feeling dishonoured by the body politic in the shape of the messenger. This old aristocratic independence makes it hard for the king to stand his ground as he tries to establish a centralised reign that is not dependent on the goodwill of his nobility that Henry experiences as a potential threat—and indeed, they think that he is "unthankful" (*1HIV*, 1.3.123).[1151]

Henry is anxious to appease the rebels. His willingness to pay them back even with interest and pardon their treason shows that he knows the reason for their opposition. But Hotspur's criticism is telling: Henry used people for his own gains, and now it would come in handy if he could satisfy them with mere promises again. That the king broke oath upon oath does not portray him as a trustworthy counterpart either, a fact that puts Henry's legitimacy as well as his life and honour at stake. Henry's legitimacy is further questioned by the Percies' support of Mortimer, the Earl of March, who was proclaimed Richard II's successor. When Henry is faced with their grievances, he does not defend himself against the arguments and seems to be quite insecure. Again, Henry offers peace and the opportunity of reconciliation. After the battle, Henry tries to prevent further upheavals by wanting to be calm and kind; but it is just as unsuccessful as his attempt to uproot all the other rebels to establish peace.

In *2 Henry IV*, the rebels claim that the realm is sick with Henry and is in a state of over-indulgence. Supported with public discontent, the rebellion now reached the lower classes of society, rooting deeper in society. And while the Archbishop of York gives a social and spiritual cause for his rebellion, Northumberland merely fights for his honour. The Archbishop of York likens rebellion to a purge of an overfed, sick body that is a metaphor for the kingdom, thus accusing the king of bad rule. Like the kingdom, the king's body is sick, underscoring the intrinsic connection between king and realm strikingly. When the Archbishop of York is confronted with the charge to disrupt both spiritual and temporal peace, he retorts that it is rather the "time misordered" that led him to rebel, so satisfaction of his grievances would appease him—an indication that divine order is out of joint, not because of the rebels but because of the king. He insinuates that it is the times that forced the insurgents to rebel, a kind of metaphysical *zeitgeist* that compels him to fight for the fulfilment of his grievances. Additionally, he blames the king for the disorder and establishes a direct connection between the person of the monarch and the state of the realm. That Prince John tricks the rebels into submission shows that there is indeed something rotten in the state—and that the political strategies are not coming from the king but from his henchmen. Old aristocratic values like honour, trust, and chivalry do not work out

[1151] This inability to adequately reward his supporters might hint to the unsatisfactory situation at court, where Elizabeth could not sufficiently exert her royal patronage to satisfy her courtiers, a situation that created discontentment.

anymore, so the rebels have to fall as they still trust them. That Prince John ascribes his victory over the insurgents to God is a conventionality that leaves a sour taste in this context, just as it is strange that Henry is "God's anointed" even though his reign is not based on divine right but usurpation.

The king's state of health deteriorates further as the conflicts do not cease. Plagued by insomnia, the king tries to restore peace in the country but is feeling negative about its prospects. In his sorry state, he denies that he ever wanted to become king but merely adapted to the tides of events; this self-construction is not congruent with *Richard II*, where Henry indeed develops his claims from his heritage to the throne eventually. Even though he never explicitly *wants* the throne, he acts more and more conqueror- and king-like instead of being simply a victim of time. The problem of his usurpation is focussed on in his desperate wish to atone for his sin through a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which he is unable to fulfil. This big project was envisaged to be the legitimisation of his rule in retrospective, but his inability to firmly establish his reign with a metaphysical atonement torments him on his deathbed where he further envisages the horrors of his son's reign. However, his reign settles when Hal and Henry get reconciled in the last hours of Henry's life. Henry confesses that he snatched the crown with "bypaths and indirect crook'd ways"; and while he confesses his sin and purges his self-construction of the lie of just having reacted to the courses of time, he advises his son to avoid his error. Rather, Henry advises Hal to direct the struggles within the country outwards, so that the disturbing energies would not affect England. After experiencing the submission of his son and passing on the reign from father to son, Henry can die in Jerusalem, a palace chamber named like the city. In this little incident, the struggle of his life comes to an end in the assurance that the country is not going to the dogs under his son. And indeed, one of the first things Hal does as Henry V is the rejection of Falstaff and the acceptance of the Lord Chief Justice as his main councillor, thus re-establishing order and justice in the realm by doing away with his former ways to initiate the full "reformation" he already envisaged in *1 Henry IV*.

In *Edward II*, the situation is different; the barons resent the king's inability to reign over them in the sense of the word—as he is unable to bridle his passions for Gaveston, he proves unable to lead and constrain his barons if need be. Edward constantly needs the reassurance of his friends; first Gaveston's, then Spencer Junior's who immediately takes up Gaveston's place. The barons seem to oppose the principle of a special companion next to the king instead of their influence. While Edward just wants to have his will without the barons' intervention, he rejects their part in the body politic as his council. He does not want to comply and feels that no one has the right to dictate him with whom he may spend his time. At least his private life should not be subject to the barons' scrutiny, but as public and private spheres intermingle in the life of a king, this wish is illusory. That Edward is not interested in political affairs is recurrent throughout the play; he calls problems with France "a trifle," offers his kingdom to the barons, and just wants to live a private, calm life unpestered with suits and politics. His enjoyment of refined things like masques, music, poetry, and fine clothing is a contrast to the old

plain ways of his nobility that builds up a further contrast.[1152] As his majesty is not strong enough to counter their demands, Edward is repeatedly "overruled" by his barons—a provocation for a king who has to fill his role as a ruler with life. Edward's speechlessness in these situations is not only a sign of his feelings' excess but also that the power of speech does not work anymore—he is unable to control his subjects by words, and thus his range of action is limited. That his word of honour is no sufficient guarantee for the barons to send Gaveston back to Edward for a last talk and farewell further demonstrates that the king's honour is no pawn that the barons could trust; it is Pembroke's word that makes them accept the offer, not Arundel's as the king's messenger.

Rather than acting against the barons that more often than not render him immobile and speechless, Edward retracts to grandiloquent speeches after his counterparts are gone—a sapless outlet for his feeling of inadequacy. The only time he takes action before Gaveston's death is the attack on the Bishop of Coventry to exact revenge. However, the unfair treatment just aggravates the opposition of the barons, so nothing is gained. His two main political errors are, next to his inability to act, the elevation of Gaveston that distorts the social order and his desire to fulfil his own personal wishes through his reign without interest for the commonweal of the realm. But apart from social order, Edward also disturbs the natural order of marriage. In neglecting his wife Isabella for Gaveston's sake, he acts *contra naturam*. While Edward cannot counter the barons' will, he forces the weaker Isabella to comply by depriving her of his love and respect. However, his strategy only works out partially and eventually proves disastrous; Isabella's isolation makes her draw closer to the barons' cause until she joins forces with them, an alliance that eventually will bring about Edward's downfall—proof that Edward deeply miscalculated his situation.

In the beginning, the barons are still careful not to touch the king's majesty as God's anointed; they aim rather at Gaveston. The king feels attacked by any action taken against his friend; so finally, the barons' opposition against the royal minion turns into a resistance against the king. Gaveston knows it is him they want; but when they attack in Tynemouth, the king flees, unable to face the attackers. But in the course of the play, the barons' pursuit becomes Mortimer's ascent, motivated by his hunger for power as well as his hurt pride. He mingles his initial motivation to chivalrously fight for Isabella's position with his own aspirations, tingeing the whole pursuit with an egoistic touch. The nobles cannot bear to be so humiliated by being made to stoop to a social upstart—the will of the king does not reach so far. In his desperation to save Gaveston, Edward effectively offers them his kingship, but they wish rather to be ruled better without qualifying what they mean by this. Because the king is unable to do so, the barons feel that they have to take over his responsibility of ruling political matters. When Edward is unwilling to comply, the Archbishop of Canterbury threatens to discharge the lords of their allegiance to him—a threat that amounts to a factual deposition—because, as Edward later will ask "But what are kings, when regiment is

[1152] For more on courtly masques, see Rebhorn 1978: 1-51.

gone / But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?“ (*EII*, 5.1.26-27). The play shows kingship devoid of metaphysical meaning and merely centring on actual power; as Edward does effectively not exert power, he has to fall.[1153] His kingship proves to be a void. His disinterest in political matters aggravates the situation further; and while he offers to give up rule, he paradoxically also clings to it as it is a part of his formative self.

Edward’s political naiveté is striking; that Edward could believe that the barons would be willing to welcome back Gaveston speaks to this. Beside, his attempt to impose good government by appointing Warwick as his chief councillor and surround himself with his nobles to prop up his reign are only temporary; the randomness of posts the king offers Mortimer shows that he only showers titles on his barons to appease them. In Mortimer senior’s case, the goodwill towards his king is genuine; he thinks that Edward is intrinsically good and promising but inexperienced; his whim for Gaveston will cease, so he should have his will. But Mortimer junior feels that Gaveston is just the embodiment of a threatening and shameful principle that derides English pride and honour. While there is no formal error on the king’s part who is the fountain of all honours, Mortimer rather vents his personal discontent and hurt pride. He cannot contain his irritation any longer when Gaveston returns from his banishment. But instead of being arrested for injuring Gaveston, Edward just banishes Mortimer from the court; it is striking how ineffectively the king deals with his opponents and how reluctant he is to impose severe punishments. When he finally wins the battle against the barons, he only has Warwick and Lancaster executed and again spares Mortimer, whom he has incarcerated in the Tower. That he single-mindedly focuses on Gaveston is a symptom of his irrationality and his humoral excess that make him fall. For the barons, Gaveston also becomes a representation of everything they loathe about their king; they accuse him to be behind everything that they perceive to be wrong in the country, a “disturber of the country’s peace” and a “corrupter of the king” who caused all the problems. But apparently, they just do not face that the king is unable himself and rejects their political influence.

The reciprocity of the relationship between king and subjects becomes clear when Spencer senior accuses the barons of insurrection against their king. That rebellion is an unnatural state in a commonwealth is clear even to the rebels; however, they see the cause of the troubles in the king while he accuses them of too much interference with his matters. But what began as a fight against autocracy turns into a personal pursuit of power of a single nobleman. To legitimise his actions, Mortimer needs Isabella and her son; and the queen is more than willing to aid her lover. Even though she covers up, she wants a guarantee for her son’s safety, obviously feeling that Mortimer could aim at the prince’s life. But Mortimer already acts on his own; he orders the mistreatment and finally the murder of Edward. The prince himself is not happy about his role but becomes more and more independent. He is diligent enough to gather evidence against Mortimer and his mother and gets the support of the royal council to back him up—and

[1153] For the historical background of Edward’s deposition, see Schramm 1970: 170-171, 207-211. For the opinion that the ruler who actually holds and exerts power should be called king, see Kern 1954: 51.

thus reinforced, he can establish law and order again, sending Mortimer to his death and his mother to prison. Thus, he reinstalls legitimacy through his succession and has royal dignity rise from the ashes. Edward III gathers all political forces to back up his reign and thus crush the powers of rebellion that usurped the legitimacy of the throne; by taking action with his council, the young king can reclaim the power his father lost.

Rebellion challenges the legitimacy of the king, an issue negotiated in all plays. Legitimacy as divine right that endows the king with a metaphysical, quasi-magical quality is based on an unbroken line of succession. Especially the second tetralogy discusses legitimacy and the problems arising from a broken line of succession through usurpation. The ties between men are especially important in this patriarchal society; severing these ties is an indicator of a major social dysfunction as they are the basis for rule and possession.

Henry IV experiences this problem most strikingly; having usurped the crown himself, he hands it over to his son as it is common—but it is problematic to maintain a heritage that was achieved by "indirect and crook'd ways." This problem surfaces again when Hal faces a personal crisis before the decisive battle of Agincourt where he pleads to atone for his father's sin to establish himself as a morally legitimised king. But his strategy of becoming a better king through his reformation had paid off, and no one else except he himself questions his legitimacy. It cannot be known how things would have worked out had he not won the battle, so how his reign would have been legitimised if God had not given him victory cannot be evaluated. Henry V's victory at Agincourt is more than an important step in defeating the French but a divine acknowledgement of his kingship—a divine sanction of his father's usurpation, so to speak. The victory also legitimises his invasion of France and symbolises the inferiority of Henry's female claim against his heroic *male* forefathers— a faultline that strikes critically at heroism, masculinity, and brave Englishness itself, as Henry defended a female French claim.

The question of legitimacy is best visualised in the battle scene of *1 Henry IV* when Douglas recounts to have killed many men in the king's clothing but not yet the man himself. What was a common safety measure becomes an image of the arbitrariness of a kingship not based on divine right anymore. Anyone can seem to be a king when he puts on the signs denoting kingship—the quasi-metaphysical qualities of royalty are gone. Douglas' question brings it to the point: "What art thou / That counterfeit'st the person of a king?" (*1HIV*, 5.4.26-27)—but Douglas detects a royal bearing in the possible fraud, so Henry embodies kingship and did not only usurp it. And this identification with his role as king is what lends him a certain intrinsic legitimation.

Edward III invades France to claim his right to the French throne through his French female family. While he first counters the braves of a French messenger with words, he soon prepares for actual war. He enforces his male aggressiveness by drawing his sword and threatening France with his ardent passion, already exposing his irrational rashness. Edward is not interested in a political solution but wants to assert his claim with brute force; he is absolutely sure of the validity of his claim, and believes that the French king is a usurper of his throne. However, the "fervent desire" to fight for his right abates instantly when he hears about the Scottish siege of the Countess' of Salisbury's castle.

Before he can win France for himself, he first has to go on a journey to master his passions. The French king counters Edward's claim with complacency and legitimises his crown with the actual power he has. Rather than defending his legitimacy, he wants to defend the *status quo*. However, it will be Edward the Black Prince, and not the English king, who will win the most decisive victories—so it is his *son* and not the king who wins France for the English. That the Black Prince subserviently dedicates all his victories to his father is a thin cover for the irony of the prince enforcing the English claim. And it is the newcomer on the battlefield who wins the French crown for his father: while the prince acts like a real king, he is the actual war hero of the play, not Edward. However, he will never become king but will meander through English history like an ideal of chivalric masculinity; other than Hal, who has to enact his transformation when king, the Black Prince can stay ideal as he does not live to prove his qualities as a ruler. While it is Edward III who becomes the spectre of male English heroism haunting the plays, the Black Prince will never reach his ultimate aim of realising his royal potential in becoming king.

Falconbridge attacks Edward IV's legitimacy as the Yorkists have usurped the throne; that Edward does nothing to fill his role accordingly may be a hint of his usurped and not innate majesty—but whereas this is a major problem for Henry IV, Edward does not care and succeeds in all of his pursuits. Rather, he exploits his position for his own advantage, facing kingship and rule as a game; this is counterintuitive as an unfit ruler usually falls. The claim that the play is rather a play about the population of the city of London than about the king gains momentum; the Londoners succeed in their pursuit even though the Shores become victims of the king's lust. It is only rumoured that Henry VI also fell victim to Edward but the allegations are never verified; even though the result comes in handy for Edward whose reign is unchallenged from then on.

3.2 Aggression, Dominance, and Male Self-Assertion

Male dominance and self-assertion are a crucial part of masculinity that derive from the one-sexed body; to uphold masculinity, it has to be constantly re-asserted and performed on the outside. Dominance is the social consequence of the higher value the male has due to his body make-up, and to maintain his superiority, he has to assert himself against others. The history plays set the stage for rites of passages for young men who are challenged by political circumstances and their social position. Often, they have to prove themselves and balance their social role with their character.[1154] The means to do so is martial prowess in battle that serves as an initiation into both chivalry and masculinity. In an aristocratic setting, men assert themselves against other men, and often, war is a means to a achieve masculinity for young men. In the male homosocial circles of English high nobility, war is often a substitute for love and sex. While Smith sees Shakespeare's comedies as a passage from youth to manhood, the tragedies are a

[1154] Smith 2000: 139.

transition from either youth or manhood to death.[1155] In the histories, the heroes' fates are not as determined; they not only have to assert their masculinity but must also stand in for the honour of their name and their own chivalry. Thus, they often have to overcome their fear or death in battle, so the following extracts show how differently men handle their masculinity in a theatre of war.

3.2.1 "Danger Woos Me as a Blushing Maid"—The Black Prince

For Edward the Black Prince, the invasion into France is explicitly a rite of passage that takes him from the stage of learning and study (*EIII*, 163-165) to the world of men through battle. Edward is excited by the idea that he will be able to prove himself as a man soon; in his "youthful spleen" (*EIII*, 166), he imagines the thrill of the war preparations just like the excitement for the coronation of a king. From the school of learning he wants to transition to the "school of honour" (*EIII*, 171) where he will face either death or slaughter his enemies (*EIII*, 172-173). He bursts with energy and is cheerful (*EIII*, 174)—the idea of "great affairs" (*EIII*, 175) he is involved in for the first time energises him. As a young aristocrat and heir apparent, he shall be fleshed out through battle, an initiation connoted with sexual overtones. It is not only that Edward feels that "danger woos me as a blushing maid" (*EIII*, 2049) while at war but that he expresses the threat of death in such tender words as when Audley, Prince Edward's elderly mentor, is wounded: "thou wooest death with thy careless smile […] as if thou wert enamoured on thy end" (*EIII*, 2304-6). He connects *eros* and *thanathos*; death and love intersect in ultimate ecstasy.[1156]

But before he can prove himself in his first battle at Crécy, King Edward invests his son according to the "ancient custom […] of martialists" (*EIII*, 1496) with all the insignia of a knight—the prince has to earn his knighthood if he proved worthy in battle (*EIII*, 1528-1529). Each part of the armour and weapons bears a symbolism that shall invoke a certain manly quality in the soldier-to-be. Each piece is handed over to the prince with wishes expressing ideal masculinity; they are affirmed with a refrain-like "Fight and be valiant, conquer where thou comst!" (*EIII*, 1508, 1515, 1527). The armour should protect and fortify the prince's "noble unrelenting heart" (*EIII*, 1505) against "base affections" (*EIII*, 1507); the helmet should protect the brain and thus the rationality of the prince during combat, so that his head will be "adorned with laurel victory" (*EIII*, 1514); the lance shall be a "brazen pen" (*EIII*, 1518) in his "manly hand" (*EIII*, 1517) to write this deeds into the book of honour with (1 *EIII*, 516-1520),[1157] while his target should transform his enemies to "senseless images of meagre death" (*EIII*, 1526). Now, endowed with weapons and good wishes, the prince has to prove worthy of his knighthood (*EIII*, 1528-1529). Prince Edward feels honoured, and his

[1155] Smith 2000: 92. However, the case of Henry V is complicated: the play ends with his betrothal to Catherine, but the Chorus, who has the last words, already points to his death in the near future (*HV*, Epilogue, 5-14).
[1156] The connection between love and death is an old topos that is recurrently used as a connotative meaning (see Kamm 2009: 71-72).
[1157] Audley, who endows the prince with a lance, varies the refrain-like affirmation and tells the prince to "vanquish where thou comst" (*EIII*, 1521).

courage is strengthened by the ceremony; to him, the items of chivalry are like Jacob's biblical blessing (*EIII*, 1530-1535), drawing a connection between chivalry and religious morale that he furthers by calling his weapons "hallowed gifts" (*EIII*, 1536). He is committed to a code of morality (*EIII*, 1538-1542) that he has to follow lest he would "profane / or use them not to glory of my God" (*EIII*, 1536-1537). Thus prepared, Prince Edward is given the command over the "vaward" with the experienced Audley (*EIII*, 1544-1548) to "temper it with […] gravity" (*EIII*, 1546) before the battle is opened.

While the prince is in the middle of the battle, King Edward and Audley draw back when a retreat is sounded; Edward invokes "just-dooming heaven" (*EIII*, 1574) that gives victory to the right side and lets "the wicked stumble" (*EIII*, 1570-1578). At that moment, Artois enters flutteringly and reports that the prince urgently needs rescue (*EIII*, 1580) as he is "narrowly beset / with turning Frenchmen" and has no chance to escape without aid (*EIII*, 1583-1586). The king is not inclined to send help as his son fights for a knighthood and has to fend for himself (*EIII*, 1587-1588). The king is adamant: the prince has to prove himself autonomous and independent; he will either win everlasting honour by helping himself, or he will die without help. The king claims he has "more sons / than one, to comfort our declining age" (*EIII*, 1590-1595); the prince is apparently expendable.

Audley urges Edward to let him help the prince; the French threaten to kill him despite his lion-like fight (*EIII*, 1597-1604). The king's response becomes fiercer: "I will not have a man / on pain of death sent forth to succour him" as the day of battle is "ordained by destiny" to teach his son how thoughts of death will strengthen his courage. Later, the prince will profit from the experience and "savour still of this exploit" (*EIII*, 1605-1610). Derby's interjection that the lesson will be lost on the prince if he does not survive is countered with the king's retort that "his epitaph is lasting praise" (*EIII*, 1611-1612). It is clear that not the life of his son but honour and a record in history is what counts. A person is replaceable but deeds that led to his death will survive him. Audley bids again for the prince's rescue and implicitly accuses the king for endangering his son's life with "too much wilfulness" (*EIII*, 1614); but he is silenced with the king's answer that no one knows if help will be of any avail—the prince might already be dead or captured, so the helpers would just endanger themselves. In the event of being rescued from his enemies this time, the prince might expect help again during battle. But if he proved able to defend himself, he would never expect or need external help and thereby have become completely independent because he had conquered his fears of death (*EIII*, 1615-1625). For the king, the prince's perseverance is a cathartic moment that will rid him of fear and dependence on others.

When a new retreat is sounded, Edward hopes for news of the battle and survivors among his son's brothers-in-arms (though he does not hope for his son's survival explicitly, *EIII*, 1629-1632). At this moment, Prince Edward enters with his broken lance and the dead king of Bohemia (*EIII*, SD, 1633-1635). Audley and Derby are the first to greet the prince with exclamations of joy and appraisal (*EIII*, 1636, 1637), while his father formally greets him with "Welcome Plantagenet" (*EIII*, 1638). This rather

cold welcome expresses that the prince lived up to his name and honoured it with his achievements—a royal approval.

The prince kneels in front of his king and presents his father with "the first fruit of my sword" (*EIII*, 1647)[1158], the dead king of Bohemia, whom he claims to have killed himself (*EIII*, 1649).[1159] The prince indeed experienced the battle as a rite of passage, as he calls it a "winter's toil" (*EIII*, 1641)[1160] and a "painful voyage" over the "boisterous sea" (*EIII*, 1642). In his distress, the prince gained strength through his weapons and the vow only to use them according to chivalric code; finally he could "put the multitude to speedy flight" and extricate himself. He now hopes for knighthood as a reward for his deeds (*EIII*, 1650-1663). The king deems his son indeed worthy and dubs him a knight with his sword that is still "reeking warm / with blood of those that fought to be thy bane" (*EIII*, 1665-1666; 1664-1668). So the Black Prince is initiated into manhood with a "baptism" with his enemies' blood.[1161] Even though the king calls Edward "fit heir unto a king" (*EIII*, 1669), the Black Prince will not live to become the ideal king he promises to be. The prince's valour is evaluated very positively whereas the audience gets no information about the king's martial successes during the battle. After the victory, King Edward orders his son and Audley to pursue John Valois to Poitiers, while Edward himself will go to besiege Calais (*EIII*, 1679-1685). Again, he leaves direct contact in battle to his son and retires to a secondary war theatre. The king notices that the Black Prince sports an emblem with a pelican that wounds her breast to feed her young with the inscription "*sic et vos* – 'and so should you'" (*EIII*, 1690). Perhaps this is a comment on the behaviour of the king.

In his next big battle at Poitiers, Prince Edward is closed in by the French with Audley; the prince worries that neither will survive (*EIII*, 1915-1923). Audley shares the prince's view: there is no chance to escape (*EIII*, 1924-1953). In this fatal situation, the prince begins to philosophise that Audley's description of the enemy makes the army seem worse than it actually is—just as the name of death sounds worse than dying actually is. Looking at a thing in its entirety makes it less threatening than if it is dissected into its smallest parts (*EIII*, 1954-1974). So even though the French are in a much better position than the English, "one to one is fair equality" (*EIII*, 1975-1979)—the situation does not disturb the prince who does not fear death and rationalises his mind into a state of calm. He proves to be an emotionally stable, balanced, and seasoned fighter, so his father's plan that his son should become an independent stoic apparently paid off. When a French herald approaches, the prince seems to have become a man both in comportment and thinking when he bids him to be "plain and brief" (*EIII*,

[1158] The dead king seems to be parallel to a token from the prince's first sexual exploit; however, war is sterile in contrast to sexual activity. So, the concept of masculinity that focuses on defeat and death is sterile as well.

[1159] Historically, the Bohemian king was blind and therefore an easy target; besides, historical sources claim that the dead body of the king of Bohemia was later found among his companions on the battlefield (Froissart 1978: 89-90).

[1160] Winter was analogous to old age and death (Kamm 2009: 70).

[1161] Blood is both a symbol for the first sexual encounter of a young man as well as of achieved manhood through his first fight. This juxtaposition as well as battle as an initiation rite for young noblemen is a recurrent theme in the history plays; see for example 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.

1981). He wants just plain information—and thus fulfils Bacon's ideal of masculine communication.[1162]

The herald delivers the French king's offer not to fight if the prince selects a hundred English of status and pays homage with them prostrate at his feet. Further, a ransom shall save the lives of the French prisoners of war—but if the prince does not accept, the French will not spare anyone in battle (*EIII*, 1982-1991). The prince is impressed and claims that he only kneels before God, the only source of mercy, so the English will not surrender but fight as valiantly as the French. And just to put the boot in, Prince Edward returns "my defiance in his face" (*EIII*, 1992-2001). He rejects French princes' offers of a horse for flight and a prayer book to prepare his soul for death, sending them furiously back with the message that the princes might use them themselves eventually. Edward even suggests that the French prince might pray to God later that day that Edward might hear his prayer (*EIII*, 2005-2039). After the "benevolent" French offers, the prince muses about the situation he is in. He wonders about the confidence of the enemy and bids the war-experienced Audley to teach him what to do (*EIII*, 2041-2050). Audley's experience in dealing with the danger of battle are expressed in terms of marriage and wooing; Prince Edward says that "thou art a married man in this distress / but danger woos me as a blushing maid / teach me an answer to this perilous time" (*EIII*, 2048-2050). Thus, Prince Edward likens the ability to handle the dangers of war to sexual experience; following this image, the question arises whether the danger that the prince feels "wooing" him arouses him; he had stated earlier that the expectation of battle excites him, so he probably experiences the adrenaline rush of danger like sexual arousal. It is not clear, however, if the prince already had sexual experience or if he imagines "wooing" like the excitement from battle.

Audley then instructs the prince about his take on death, a surety as soon as a person is born. For him, life is a development that is similar to a plant: from bud to flower to seed to death, a human's body faces death as the ultimate goal of existence as well; so why do humans fear it if they cannot evade it? Through fear, people advance death, which is, after all, simply fate (*EIII*, 2051-2066). Audley complies with the prince's wish for courage and instruction and tries to instil humanist indifference in his mind. Audley aims at a stoical calming of thoughts so that passions do not take over rationality in times of danger. The lesson is not lost on the prince—he feels strengthened and able to face death without fear now, regarding life as intrinsically worthless because it ends with death that is the beginning of a new life. Worries do not help, so "to live or die I hold indifferent" (*EIII*, 2067-2079). Thus, he mastered his fear of death as the next step in achieving indifference and temperance, a development in the direction of becoming a completely accomplished man and prospective king. Now, Prince Edward is not only free of fear, but his mind has reached ultimate independence. When he faces a military problem during the battle—a lack of arrows—he becomes

[1162] See Breitenberg 1996: 95.

inventive and proposes that the archers could use stones instead. Thus, he feels that the English will win the battle (*EIII*, 2220-2228), a foresight that is proven right.

The Black Prince finally captures John Valois and his sons Charles and Philip who had ridiculed him earlier with their offers of a horse, a prayer book, and mercy. Now, the ones who wanted to spare the prince and offered him flight are now at the mercy of the young warrior. The French king is aghast that he was defeated by a young, inexperienced prince; he thinks that "[t]hy fortune not thy force hath conquered us," but Prince Edward evaluates his victory differently; for him, his success is "[a]n argument that heaven aids the right" (*EIII*, 2283-2299). In his view, the English victory underlines the legitimacy of the English claim to the French throne. What might be problematic here, however, is the fact that not the English king but his young son is the one who won the battle. Additionally it is the prince, not the king, who has proved himself as a model of chivalry and temperance, a fact that undermines the legitimacy of the English throne.

Before the prince meets his father at Calais, the king thinks his son is dead; Lord Salisbury reports that the Black Prince could not have possibly escaped and therefore assumes him dead. While the queen is grief-stricken, the king tries to comfort her with the prospect of "sharp unheard-of dire revenge" (*EIII*, 2457-2459, 2462-2518). He draws a bleak metaphor of how France will have to rue the prince's death:

> The pillars of his hearse shall be their bones
> the mould that covers him, their city ashes
> his knell that groaning cries of dying men
> and in the stead of tapers on his tomb
> an hundred fifty towers shall burning blaze
> while we bewail our valiant sons's decease.
> (*EIII*, 2523-2528)

While King Edward had earlier stated that he had "more sons / than one, to comfort our declining age" (*EIII*, 1594-1595), he does not want to have mercy with anyone but to revenge his son's death that beforehand seemed so expendable. Just when King Edward is willing to express his feelings of wrath against the French, a herald proclaims the arrival of the Black Prince with his precious captives, the French king and his sons. The prince presents his father with the crown of France that he laboured for and surrenders his captives to his sovereign (*EIII*, 2548-2554).

The situation in France is resolved for now, and the prince evaluates his own role in the course of events, his relation to his father, and the meaning of the battles past for later history. It is an epilogue-like speech that founds the myth of the English conquests in France and connects the English victories to future glory:

> Now, father, this petition Edward makes
> to thee whose grace hath been his strongest shield
> that as thy pleasure chose me for the man
> to be the instrument to show thy power
> so thou wilt grant that many princes more
> bred and brought up within that little isle
> may still be famous for like victories.
> And for my part the bloody scars I bear
> the weary nights that I have watched in field
> the dangerous conflicts I have often had

the fearful menaces were proffered me
the heat and cold and what else might displease
I wish were now redoubled twentyfold
so that hereafter ages when they read
the painful traffic of my tender youth
might thereby be inflamed with such resolve
as not the territories of France alone,
but likewise Spain, Turkey and what countries else
that justly would provoke fair England's ire
might at their presence tremble and retire.
(*EIII*, 2572-2591)

Edward acknowledges that all glory he earned was received from and for his father's grace; just like his father's trust in his abilities, it served as a motivation for him. The prince sees himself merely as the instrument of King Edward's cause in France as he did not fight for himself but promoted the power and legitimacy of the English throne. Prince Edward hopes this spirit of royal grace will inspire future English princes to perform like victories. This allusion might point to the future Henry V who constructs himself as a true descendant of Edward III, invoking him recurrently like a patron saint of English kingship. To magnify his exploits in historical records, Prince Edward wishes that his deprivations during war were many more, so that he and his sufferings could serve as a motivation for later generations of warriors and princes to make England's enemies afraid of her. He explicitly names Spain (the current enemy of England during the 1590s) and Turkey (maybe a hint to the crusades) as English adversaries and leaves "what countries else" undefined; this "unnamed" adversary could be Ireland that was not allowed to be alluded to. Thus, the last scene of the play establishes the Black Prince firmly in historic records as a famous and glorious warrior and simultaneously calls the audience to military action and to the strife for fame against English foreign enemies. Prince Edward does not glorify himself but submits his achievements under the glory of the English king; thus, he is not only a valiant and successful soldier but modest and temperate as well. Nevertheless he knows that he will have his share in the nation's glory he helped to further along.

The wording and the portrayal of the prince in relation to the English king are remarkable in this passage; it seems as if it were the prince alone who brought Edward to the French throne, and the real hero is the Black Prince, "The mighty and redoubted Prince of Wales / great servitor to bloody Mars in arms / the Frenchmen's terror and his country's fame" (*EIII*, 2531-2533). The youngling who had just been introduced to chivalry is now England's hero and presents his father with the French crown—it was he, and not the English king, whom the audience witnessed during battle; he was the temperate stoic fit for kingship, whereas his father was so deeply steeped in his own, uncontrollable passions that made him forget his royal duties towards his family and state. The real hero of the play is apparently not the king whose name it bears but rather his son, the Black Prince, who will not live to be the promising king he appears to be. Thus, he haunts the history plays like a phantom of ideal masculinity and ideal kingship; the real tragedy is that he could never prove his worth on the throne and thus remains a mere spectre of unfulfilled idealism that can be used as a projection screen for wishful thinking and unmet aspirations.

3.2.2 "Now Thou Art Sealed the Son of Chivalry"—John Talbot, Jr.'s Initiation into Chivalry

The Black Prince did survive his initiation into masculinity and chivalry; the following scene from *1 Henry VI* is a striking example of how the emulation of "true" masculinity and bravery in war ends tragically in death. Before the battle near Bordeaux, Talbot, "the terror of the French," had sent for his son to "tutor thee in stratagems of war" (*1HVI*, 4.5.2) and to pass on his legacy to his son. But the situation turns out worse than imagined, and Talbot bids his son to flee so that he will not die (*1HVI*, 4.5.1-11). John does not want to have any of it; he owes it to his mother and the honour of his name that he will stay and fight. If he now fled, he would turn himself into a bastard that is not worthy of a Talbot (*1HVI*, 4.5.12-17). As his first battle is John Talbot Junior's entrée to chivalry and manhood, this scene portrays the coming of age of a young warrior.[1163] Therefore, John feels that he has to be true to his "blood" (*1HVI*, 4.5.16) that ties him to his father's valour. Blood, a signifier of close bonds between men, will surface more often in this scene. His whole identity is defined by being his father's son:[1164]

> Is my name Talbot? And am I your son?
> And shall I fly? O, if you love my mother,
> Dishonour not her honourable name
> To make a bastard and a slave of me!
> The world will say he is not Talbot's blood,
> That basely fled when noble Talbot stood.
> (*1HVI*, 4.5.12-17)

Not only does John want to be the exact duplicate of his father's name but also tries to emulate him in combat. His mother, however, does not have a part in Talbot junior's identity—she is just the vessel that legitimately conveyed his father's characteristics on their offspring, linking the two men closely through blood ties. Identity and fate are closely intertwined in the relationship of the two.[1165]

Talbot repeatedly pleads for his son to flee—otherwise they will both die, but John is eager to prove his worthiness and even offers his father to escape in his stead; the loss would be "great" if his father died (*1HVI*, 4.5.21-22). Not only is Talbot more important, but his death would be a big military success for the French; if Talbot fled, no one would think his honour stained—but many would detect fear as the motive of the young, virtually unknown John Talbot, so the young man would rather die than live in dishonour (*1HVI*, 4.5.21-33). His father is concerned that his wife's "hopes"—her husband and her son—will die, a worry his son does not share. Young Talbot would rather die than betraying his father's name and thus shame his mother (*1HVI*, 4.5.34-35). Talbot urges his son desperately to run away but John is keen to fight lest he would bear shame; and when his father refuses to flee with his son because it would be "shame," John does not want to leave, either, and betrays that the men share the same values. John Talbot wants to emulate his father, doing as he does. Then, Talbot gives in,

[1163] Leggatt 1996: 16-17.
[1164] Leggatt 1996: 14.
[1165] Leggatt 1996: 15.

foreseeing that both will die this day and enter heaven together (*1HVI*, 4.5.36-55). It is striking how prominently the concepts of name, shame, and blood feature in this scene, concepts that are the bases for aristocratic masculinity. John, who does not want to stain his father's—and his own—name with infamy, refuses steadfastly to escape. Whereas his father at least thinks of his wife, John does not care for his mother's grief; his only concern is that her honour is not compromised in the opinion of others by her son's cowardice. John thinks he owes it to both his parents that he has to stay and fight; he wants to affirm his masculinity by his constancy and defiance of death. By even overriding his father's wishes to flee, he becomes independent—even as he bonds his fate to his father's.[1166]

In the heat of battle, Talbot has rescued his son from a dangerous fight with the bastard Orléans, who "drew blood / From thee, my boy, and had the maidenhood / Of thy first fight," (*1HVI*, 4.6.16-18). In John's first fight, John lost his "maidenhood" by the sword of Orléans, who has virtually deflowered him; this had to be avenged by Talbot, who also spilled Orléans' blood to acquit for his son's "pure blood of mine / Which thou didst force from Talbot, my brave boy" (*1HVI*, 4.6.23-24). Male *virtú* in war is a constituent of masculinity, a concept that needs blood to be sealed or approved.[1167] Young John Talbot gets "fleshed" in his fight against Orléans (*1HVI*, 4.7.35-36), which works like a first sexual conquest that is sealed by the blood of defloration. John's bloody sword can be thus interpreted like his penis being bloody from his first sexual contact with a virgin. Both signs confirm his achievement of masculinity, an idea taken on by Joan of Arc who calls John a "maiden youth" (*1HVI*, 4.7.38), a man not yet experienced in battle or in sex. Talbot senior's retaliation established a quasi-sexual connection between Talbot junior and Orléans; combat between men is thus sexualised with a violent erotics that bonds men together, "seal[ing]" each other as "son[s] of chivalry" (*1HVI*, 4.6.29), initiating each other into manhood, and taking "maidenhoods." Orléans takes John's virginity, an explicit connection Talbot senior draws[1168]:

> The ireful bastard Orléans, that drew blood
> From thee, my boy, and had the maidenhood
> Of thy first fight, I soon encounterèd,
> And interchanging blows, I quickly shed
> Some of his bastard blood, and in disgrace
> Bespoke him thus: 'Contaminated, base,
> And misbegotten blood I spill of thine,
> Mean and right poor, for that pure blood of mine
> Which thou did'st force from Talbot, my brave boy.'
> (*1HVI*, 4.6.16-24)

Not only does Talbot senior stress John's legitimacy against Orléans' bastardy,[1169] but John is cast in the role of the woman during defloration. His masculinity is affirmed by assuming a rather passive, female role: it is he whose blood is drawn, and he is the

[1166] See Emig 2009: 57.
[1167] See Altman 1978: 341.
[1168] Leggatt 1996: 17.
[1169] Leggatt 1996: 18.

one losing his blood as well as his "maidenhead." As a "boy," he is in the subordinate role, anyway. Now that John is initiated into battle and chivalry, Talbot bids him to flee to be able to avenge his death. For him, risking both his own as well as his son's lives is "too much folly" as with his only son his lineage, future, and name will die (*1HVI*, 4.6.30-41). These admonitions do not work out; just as before, John claims that flight would befoul his name and dishonour his father. If he bore that shame, he would not be Talbot's son—and as such, he prefers to die with him (*1HVI*, 4.6.42-53). Talbot now sees that all his attempts to save his son's "sweet" life are in vain; rather, they will both fight side by side like comrades-in-arms and "die in pride" (*1HVI*, 4.6.54-57).

When Talbot is about to die, he asks for his "other life," John (*1HVI*, 4.7.1-2). He knows his son is dead, as he recounts his son's valiant fight:

> Triumphant Death, smeared with captivity,
> Young Talbot's valour makes me smile at thee.
> When he perceived me shrink and on my knee,
> His bloody sword he brandished over me,
> And like a hungry lion did commence
> Rough deeds of rage and stern impatience:
> But when my angry guardant stood alone,
> Tendering my ruin and assailed of none,
> Dizzy-eyed fury and great rage of heart
> Suddenly made from my side to start
> Into the clustering battle of the French;
> And in a sea of blood my boy did drench
> His over-mounting spirit and there dies,
> My Icarus, my blossom, in his pride.
> (*1HVI,* 4.7.3-16)

Finally, John was right: he proved his valour and made his father "smile" with pride. When threatened by the enemies, John rescued his father—repaying his own salvation from the hands of the bastard Orléans—and proved his worth. Drunk on blood, he had to "start / Into the clustering battle of the French," where his "over-mounting spirit" drowned in a sea of blood. In emulating his father's chivalric masculinity, John's "pride" made him die. Both the Talbots, carriers of masculine prowess, rather died than being exposed to shame. John defied his father's wishes to flee; now, he slightly reproaches his wish to show his valour posthumously. When John's dead body is brought on stage, his wounds make even death attractive—and Talbot craves for a last word from his son. The dying father cradles his son's body in his arms; the image foreshadows the last scene in *King Lear*—a dying, unhappy father grieves for his dead child. The grief is too much for Talbot to bear, and he dies with his son in his arms. John's quest for fame broke his father's heart, and the love as well as the ideal of chivalry and masculinity dies with them. John's wish to emulate his father ended in death, a risk he had anticipated:

> No more can I be severed from your side
> Than can yourself yourself in twain divide.
> Stay, go, do what you will – the like do I;
> For live I will not, if my father die.
> (*1HVI*, 4.5.48-51)

Young John Talbot dies along with the man who gave him life—John even asks his father's blessing for death by saying "Here on my knee I beg mortality" (*1HVI*, 4.5.32).

The rhyme of the words "womb" and "tomb" (*1HVI*, 4.5.34-35) further stresses that connection of life and death.[1170] While both die apart and separated from each other, they are finally united in death; Talbot senior closes the circle by dying with his son's corpse in his arms.[1171] John is determined to die instead of facing shame, even though his death will extinguish the renowned line of Talbots.[1172] In his death, John Talbot is the inheritor of "England's fame," even though he had just been initiated into chivalry by battle (*1HVI*, 4.6.38-39).

Leggatt interprets the deaths of John Talbot and his son as one of the first instances in the first tetralogy where tragedy is mixed with history; the scene had a great impact on the audience as Nashe's already cited eulogy is an apology and justification of history plays on the stage.[1173] Besides the tragedy, this scene verifies Emig's approach to masculinity as *aemulatio*, in which men try to copy each other's virtue and valour; a vicious circle that more often than not ends in death. Masculinity based on honour and the avoidance of shame proves to be a dead end that swallows both the old and the young. But the tragedy of the scene is undercut by the ridicule of the French who find the dead Talbot with his son in his arms. The Bastard of Orléans comments on the accomplishments of John Talbot that he did "flesh his puny sword in Frenchmen's blood" (*1HVI*, 4.7.36), a sexual innuendo to John's initiation into manhood. Joan of Arc interprets John Talbot's refusal to meet her in combat as a sign of pride (*1HVI*, 4.7.37-43). A woman is no adequate adversary for a man following the code of honour. The appreciation that the Talbots got by the English is undercut and devalued by the French. Thus, the tragic and seemingly heroic ending of the two is reduced to what it really is—the senseless death of father and son who would finally only "stink and putrefy the air" (*1HVI*, 4.7.90).

3.2.3 "Stiffen the Sinews, Conjure Up the Blood"—Henry V as Warrior

The play *Henry V* circles around kingship, war, and English male assertion in a foreign country; the king himself often stylises himself as a "soldier" (*HV*, 5.2.99), and he motivates his men to follow his ideal of a warrior. When besieging the French city of Harfleur during his campaign, Henry evokes the image of male soldierdom to instil courage into his men. There, he distinguishes between two ideals of masculinity that apply to peace and war times:

> In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
> As modest stillness and humility,
> But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
> Then imitate the action of a tiger.
> Stiffen the sinews, conjure up the blood,
> Disguise fair nature with hard-favoured rage.
> Then lend the eye a terrible aspect,
> Let it pry through the portage of the head

[1170] Leggatt 1996: 15-16.
[1171] Leggatt 1996: 20. Leggatt also draws the parallel to the scene in *King Lear* where Lear cradles his dead daughter in his arms (Leggatt 1996: 21).
[1172] Leggatt 1996: 19.
[1173] Leggatt 1996: 12-13; Nashe 1964: 64-65.

Like the brass cannon, let the brow o'erwhelm it
As fearfully as doth a gallèd rock
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
Swilled with the wild and wasteful ocean.
Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide,
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height. […]
(*HV*, 3.1.3-17)

While men are ideally meek and modest during peace, they transform into animals when confronted with war. The adjectives that characterise them as warriors are full of energy, hardness, and tension that prepare them for their task; they should be stiffened, and full to the brim with hard-favoured rage that inspire their looks with terror; they are likened to brass-cannons and rocks that are washed over by the force of the ocean. Their whole bodies are stiffened and hardened up—just like in sexual arousal—to embody the metamorphosis from citizen to soldier. The animal-like, untamed quality of soldiers spring from the humoral qualities of choler and blood that dominate masculinity in the body; in war, men become the epitome of their sex, true to their ideal nature, and thus threatening and aggressive. If Henry claims to woo Catherine as a soldier, this extract well explains the ferocity he does it with as a soldier king—Henry's claim to love the princess "cruelly" (*HV*, 5.2.190) is no paradox but the consequence of his self-image. Henry ennobles aristocratic and common masculinity by the shared Englishness of his soldiers; it is an innate masculine quality in their bodies that is based on their ancestry and their upbringing on English soil:

[…] On, on, you noblest English,
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof,
Fathers that like so many Alexanders
Have in these parts from morn till even fought,
And sheathed their swords for lack of argument.
Dishonour not your mothers; now attest
That those whom you calls fathers did beget you.
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
And teach them how to war. And you, good yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding – which I doubt not
For there is none of you so mean and base
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start. The game's afoot.
Follow your spirit, and upon this charge
Cry, 'God for Harry! England and Saint George!'
(*HV*, 3.1.17-34)

His soldiers inherited Englishness as a quality from their fathers who had fought the French "like many Alexanders"; to prove that they are really sired by their fathers, the soldiers shall prove their worth on the battlefield—the mothers just conveyed the father's valour onto their sons like a vessel, guaranteeing the purity of the bloodline by their chastity. Besides, the qualities of the soldiers' homeland and upbringing should show in their "mettle" that ennobles the warriors—it even shows in their eyes. Thus, the

geohumoral qualities of England become apparent in her children.[1174] Evidently, the speech of their king proved successful; his army is as eager to fight as greyhounds ready to chase game. The warrior spirit that Henry roused shall now show in their actions for their king, their homeland and their patron saint. But the common nobility Henry evoked is distorted into a fantasy of violence after the fighting before the besieged city of Harfleur started. He confronts the citizens of the town with conditions—otherwise, his army of eager soldiers will wreak havoc and spoil the city. He drafts a vast hell-like inferno of ferocity and brutal subjection:

> This is the last parle we will admit.
> Therefore to our best mercy give yourselves,
> Or like to men proud of destruction
> Defy us to our worst. For as I am a soldier,
> A name that in my thoughts becomes me best,
> If I begin the batt'ry once again
> I will not leave the half-achievèd Harfleur
> Till in her ashes she lie buried.
> The gates of mercy shall be all shut up,
> And the fleshed soldier, rough and hard of heart,
> In liberty of bloody hand shall range
> With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass
> Your fair fresh virgins and your flow'ring infants.
> What is it then to me if impious war
> Arrayed in flames like to the prince of fiends
> Do with his smirched complexion all fell feats
> Enlinked to waste and desolation?
> What is't to me, when you yourself are cause,
> If your pure maidens fall into the hand
> Of hot and forcing violation?
> What rein can hold licentious wickedness
> When down the hill he holds his fierce career?
> We may as bootless spend our vain command
> Upon th'enraged soldiers in their spoil
> As send precepts to the leviathan
> To come ashore. Therefore, you men of Harfleur,
> Take pity of your town and of your people
> Whiles yet my soldiers are in my command,
> Whiles yet the cool and temperate wind of grace
> O'erblows the filthy and contagious clouds
> Of heady murder, spoil, and villainy.
> If not – why, in a moment look to see
> The blind and bloody soldier with foul hand
> Defile the locks of your shrill-shrieking daughters;
> Your fathers taken by the silver beards,
> And their most reverend heads dashed to the walls;
> Your naked infants spitted upon pikes,
> Whiles the mad mothers with their howls confused
> Do break the clouds, as did the wives of Jewry
> At Herod's bloody-haunting slaughtermen.
> What say you? Will you yield, and this avoid?
> Or, guilty in defence, be thus destroyed?
> (*HV*, 3.3.79-120)

[1174] Henry likewise claims that he himself is affected by the pride the air of France instils in him (*HV*, 3.7.136-138).

Henry's strategy of talking the citizens of Harfleur into surrender is quite intricate; he sets conditions and offers the citizens either to give in to his "best mercy" (a thought he immediately undercuts by calling himself a "soldier"—what he means by that is made clear from his speech in 3.1) or to doom themselves to utter destruction and defiance of all humanity. Henry evokes an image of war that is like a storm sweeping along the soldiers who cannot control themselves anymore; they become hellish creatures with "conscience wide as hell" who kill, rape, and torture without discrimination. But all this is nothing to the English king—he is just the one who sets the destruction loose by his command and does not have the power to contain it again after it gained momentum. He repeatedly dismisses any responsibility for the havoc wreaked as it is dependent on the decision of the Harfleurians who are thus blamed for the outcome of his actions. It is chilling how Henry acknowledges the positive characteristics of different groups of citizens—the "fresh fair virgins," the "flow'ring infants," the "pure maidens," the "reverend fathers" (*HV*, 3.3.91, 97, 113-114)—only to show no restrictions in brutally raping, murdering, and mutilating them. Henry still has his soldiers in command and is willing to be merciful—but if he faces resistance, an apocalyptic scenario will ensue. It is an unsolved paradox that God's anointed on earth is willing to let chaos and blatant sin against heaven happen; for Henry, Harfleur has to be taken or completely destroyed. The land has to be taken by force, just like a woman taken against her will. Sexual imagery and rape metaphors are often to be found in the field of power and dominance; rape is, especially when used as a metaphor for the cruelties of war, a threat of the purity of a state and the legitimacy of patrilineal bonds.[1175] Therefore, the violation of the female body is a site of contention for male legitimacy and honour, a brutal act of subjecting the male French through the bodies of their wives and daughters. That Henry did not spare Harfleur historically makes the images invoked even more cruel—and the protestations of the English soldier king about his supposed mercy even more implausible.[1176] Finally, his oratory skills show their effects—the governor surrenders Harfleur and the citizens are spared the prospective horrors (*HV*, 3.3.121-135).

Right before the battle of Agincourt, when the king and his nobles know that they are vastly outnumbered by the French, Henry uses a different strategy to instil martial prowess and courage into his exhausted soldiers; rather than alluding to the brutal force that war inspires like a force of nature, he describes combat as a means to create comradeship among his men, a bond that endows lasting honour and a place in history independent of social rank.[1177] This *virtú* is a constituent of masculinity, especially in war, which needs blood to be sealed or approved.[1178] It is a different image of a soldier than before Harfleur when Henry was in a position to make conditions and to threaten the citizens into submission; now he is not so sure about the outcome and has to

[1175] Breitenberg 1996: 123.
[1176] Campbell 1947: 287.
[1177] See Schruff 1999: 247.
[1178] See Altman 1978: 341. This can happen as initiation process during combat, as young John Talbot gets "fleshed" in his fight against the French (see chapter 3.2.2), or via sexual conquests, the counterpart of martial fight (see the "maidenheads" in *1HIV*, 2.5.331).

mobilise all resources left to his army, promising lasting glory and honour even to the meanest soldier amongst them by fighting side by side:

> If we are marked to die, we are enough
> To do our country loss; and if to live,
> The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
> God's will, I pray thee wish not one man more.
> […]
> But if it be a sin to covet honour
> I am the most offending soul alive.
> No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England.
> God's peace, I would not lose so great an honour
> As one man more, methinks, would share from me,
> For the best hope I have. I do not wish one more.
> Rather proclaim it presently through my host
> That he which has no stomach to this fight,
> Let him depart. His passport shall be made
> And crowns for convoy put into his purse.
> We would not die in that man's company
> That fears his fellowship to die with us.
> This day is called the Feast of Crispian.
> He that outlives this day and comes safe home
> Will stand a-tiptoe when this day is named
> And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
> He that shall see this day and live t'old age
> Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours
> And say, 'Tomorrow is Saint Crispian.'
> Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars
> And say, 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
> Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
> But he'll remember, with advantages,
> What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
> Familiar in his mouth as household words –
> Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
> Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester –
> Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.
> This story shall the good man teach his son,
> And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by
> From this day to the ending of the world
> But we in it shall be rememberèd,
> We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.
> For he today that sheds his blood with me
> Shall be my brother; be he never so vile
> This day shall gentle his condition.
> And gentlemen in England now abed
> Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
> And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
> That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.
> (*HV*, 4.3.20-23, 28-67)

This speech connects many different issues; apparently, Henry had learned from his talk with the soldiers the night before and now uses arguments that appeal more to the common men—a strategy that will work out well eventually. The question about righteousness and just war is not relevant any longer; now, honour shall motivate the soldiers to band together and fight for victory as comrades in arms. A king, a person by definition not equal to his combatants, envisages a new elite, a "band of brothers" fostered through the honour gained during the battle together; the fewer men participate in the struggle victoriously, the bigger their share of honour will be, Henry argues.

Anyone not up to facing a mighty French army ought to leave their company—the potential heroes do not want to die with him who is afraid to shed his blood with them. To honour the future glory won at Agincourt, Henry imagines a ritual of commemoration for years to come; the pride of the veterans shall be nourished by the memory of their valour, which will be acknowledged by their neighbours and even unmanly gentlemen who are not now present. The prospect of future fame and brotherhood with the high nobility shall not only urge on the soldiers but become a tradition that father teaches son. By shedding blood together, the bonds between the band of brothers, the happy few, are sealed, levelling social hierarchies and dignifying commoners. This fame underlines the manhoods of the fighters and devalues the masculinity of the ones who did not have their share in the battle. The prospect of future fame and the institutionalisation of memory are, however, ironic. The epilogue explicitly says that France will be lost soon after; there would be no holiday to celebrate the victory, nor would the former patron saint of the soldiers (and now patron of shoemakers) have any celebrated meaning in a Protestant Tudor England.[1179] The legacy of the battle that Henry evokes does not endure; and there's no national holiday but only the performance of Shakespeare's play (or even an allusion to Henry's speech) to keep alive the memory of the battle of Agincourt. The called-on reverence for the veterans of this war was not to last.[1180]

Henry's conduct in the war is not spotless, however. When he hears about the love death of York and Suffolk, he commands all French prisoners to be killed (*HV*, 4.6.37), before he even knows of the attack on the camp and the killing of the boys (Gower assumes this wrongly to be the reason for the order in the following scene, *HV*, 4.7.4-8). The suggestion that the practice of killing one's prisoners was common in the fifteenth century can easily be rebuked by the argument that surrender consequently would have been suicide.[1181] Rather, it seems that the bloodshed should seal the sacrifice of the warriors. Then, when Henry heard about the carnage the French left on an attack on the English camp where they killed all the boys left there and stole the English belongings (*HV*, 4.7.1-8), he claims that

> I was not angry since I came to France
> Until this instant. […]
> Besides, we'll cut the throats of those we have,
> And not a man of them that we shall take
> Shall taste our mercy.
>
> (*HV*, 4.7.47-48, 55-57)

Again, he orders the French prisoners to be killed; while this incoherence can lead to the conclusion that the bloody order was words only, "the kind of over-the-top-thing that is said in the heart of the battle,"[1182] the double order cannot be really explained satisfactorily. Henry additionally contradicts himself in the extract as his speech before

[1179] Pfister 2009: 236-237.
[1180] Pfister 2009: 237. Pfister detects ironic undertones in the citation of *Henry V*, but as the play was often performed or filmed in times of crisis (see for example Laurence Olivier's 1944 film), this argument may be questioned.
[1181] Sutherland and Watts 2000: 108-109.
[1182] Sutherland and Watts 2000: 114-115.

Harfleur (*HV*, 3.3.78-120) was a clear instant of his anger. He evoked a scenario similar to that of burning Troy and threatens the inhabitants of the town that "the gates of mercy shall be all shut up" (*HV*, 3.3.87) while he now says that the killing of the boys is the first experience of anger on French soil. The "mirror of all Christian kings" (*HV*, 2.0.6) has now apparently lost his self-control during the carnage of the wars.[1183] While Henry understands himself as a soldier (*HV*, 3.3.82, 5.2.146, 160) whose chivalric abilities are even attested by his enemies (*1HIV*, 4.1.105-111), the Archbishop of Canterbury praised him as a "sudden scholar" who knows his ways in diverse disciplines (*HV*, 1.1.33, 39-52). However, his actions in war are not "scholarly" or humanist in any way; the Chorus is a means to disclose this play's inherent irony. Andrew Gurr explains that the Chorus is "a great painter of pictures, but they are never the pictures shown on stage."[1184]

Henry is acutely aware of the historical dimension of the impending battle at Agincourt and wants to make use of it for the records. After having installed the time recurrently as the day of Crispin Crispianus, he immediately wants to fix the place, asking how it is called after the battle is won (*HV*, 4.7.79-80, 82-83). Despite all the talk before the battle about the fame the band of brothers will earn in their exploits, Henry dedicates his victory to God alone—an interesting move that both connects his deeds to transcendence and political spin; it divinely legitimises his reign and wipes out his father's guilt of having usurped the crown:

> O God, thy arm was here,
> And not to us, but to thy arm alone
> Ascribe we all.
> […]Take it, God,
> For it is none but thine.
>
> (*HV*, 4.8.100-102, 105-106)

The stress of God's hand deciding the battle is a topos in the philosophy of war as God is highest judge in conflicts; Henry orders the *Non nobis* and a *Te Deum* to be sung (*HV*, 4.8.114-115), a fact recorded by Holinshed.[1185] By not acclaiming his army but metaphysics for the victory, Henry cancels the bonds between the band of brothers and himself he had tried to establish beforehand, proving not only to be a cunning and excellent orator but a skilled politician who is able to use the moment for his own advantage.

The peace negotiations between England and France still show Henry as soldier; he acts as if he were already king of France—as the winner of the battle of Agincourt he apparently feels entitled to do so. The French King Charles and his wife Isabella greet the victorious Englishman with all due decorum (*HV*, 5.2.9, 12-20), but they will soon be forced to resign their crowns and give their daughter to Henry in marriage. It is not Henry, however, who initiated the meeting but Burgundy; he was the force behind the peace negotiations ("That I have laboured / With all my wits, my pains, and strong

[1183] Schruff 1999: 29.
[1184] Gurr 2005: 9. Altman adds that the device of the Chorus is neo-Senecan (Altman 1978: 384). See also Gurr 2005: 1-63 for a thorough evaluation of *Henry V*.
[1185] Campbell 1947: 281.

endeavours, / To bring your most imperial majesties / Unto this bar and royal interview, / Your mightiness on both parts can witness" *HV*, 5.2.24-28). Henry reacts as an accountant to Burgundy's pleas for peace—he simply states

> If, Duke of Burgundy, you would the peace
> Whose want gives growth to th'imperfections
> Which you have cited, you must buy that peace
> With full accord to all our just demands,
> Whose tenors and particular effects
> You have enscheduled briefly in your hands.
> (*HV*, 5.2.68-73)

The French have to pay for the peace ("buy") and succumb to Henry's "just" demands to pacify their war-ridden country. Henry wants to set the conditions and force his will on the French; they, however, have not yet answered to Henry's demands, so he blames them that the peace is not yet established ("Well then, the peace, / Which you before so urged, lies in his [the French king's] answer" *HV*, 5.2.75-76). The French king apparently tries to gain more time—he wants to sit down with a council of English nobles to take a look at the articles of peace and then pass on his definite answer (*HV*, 5.2.77-82). Henry then sends Exeter, Clarence, Gloucester, Warwick, and Huntington to negotiate with the French king—and he even grants them large freedoms in the ratification of the treaty (*HV*, 5.2.83-90). This can either mean he has a huge trust in his nobles, or that he is not really interested in the outcome. It seems as if this scene were another enactment of the battle of Agincourt on a political level, culminating in the wooing scene between Henry and Princess Catherine (see chapter 3.4.1) that further exposes Henry's warlike behaviour and bullying qualities.

3.2.4 "The Kind Embracement of Thy Friends"—The French Campaign of Edward III

Right at the beginning of the play, the banished Frenchman Artois informs King Edward about the French side of his pedigree that endows him with a claim to the French throne; Artois recounts that Isabel, Edward's mother, was the only child of Philippe le Beau who had offspring—Edward. He, therefore, has a right to the French throne but "rebellious minds" (*EIII*, 20) claimed John Valois to be their king as le Beau's line was "out" (*EIII*, 1-21). He calls the Salic law a "forgéd ground" to "exclude your grace" that would prove "but dusty heaps of brittle sand" (*EIII*, 30-32). Artois claims that he is motivated by "love unto my country and the right" (*EIII*, 37) to enlighten the English king about his more valid claim to the French throne; John of Valois, the current French king, is belittled as an illegitimate climber (*EIII*, 40) who usurps the throne of France and denies it to the "true shepherd" (*EIII*, 44), Edward of England. Edward is willing to claim his right in war; but before he prepares for war, he first has to overcome his own passions towards the Countess of Salisbury who is besieged by Scottish invaders (see chapter 3.3.3).

Edward III's French campaign begins promising; he is well-equipped, and his subjects "flock as willingly to war / as if unto a triumph they were led" (*EIII*, 1052-1054). The French Prince Charles is puzzled that the English are so well-prepared, as to him the English were "malcontents / bloodthirsty and seditious Catilines / spendthrifts

and such as gape for nothing else / but changing and alteration of the state" (*EIII*, 1055-1058); that they are "now so loyal to themselves" (*EIII*, 1060) astonishes him. The Scottish reassure the French allies that they will never yield to the English (*EIII*, 1061-1063); Edward had gained many and mighty combatants in the Netherlands as well as in the German emperor (*EIII*, 1064-1074) while the French army is reinforced by the Polish, the Danish, the Bohemians, and the Sicilians who offer their services for money (*EIII*, 1075-1096). The French deride the English as a "hare-brained nation decked in pride" (*EIII*, 1097) that will not be able to compete with the strength of the French, neither at land nor at sea (*EIII*, 1097-1107), but their confident bragging is immediately interrupted by the report that the English ships are already approaching the French coast in a "majestical" order (*EIII*, 1118) with "coloured silk" as flags (*EIII*, 1115), bearing a grand aspect and supported by good winds (*EIII*, 1109-1119, 1124-1125). Rather than a "hare-brained nation decked in pride" (*EIII*, 1097), the English are a serious enemy who already sport the arms of England and France united in their coat of arms to emphasise their claim to the throne (V1120-1123). King John is shocked that Edward is already about to attack and asks if the French navy has sailed against him (*EIII*, 1126-1131). A mariner confirms that they did (*EIII*, 1132-1140), and in a little exchange between fleeing French citizens, the audience learns about the French defeat in the ensuing sea battle (*EIII*, 1247-1248).

After their victory at sea, the English army under Edward crosses the Somme with the help of a French collaborator to be united with the troops of the Black Prince (*EIII*, 1319-1334). The prince had been very "successful" in his campaign and conquered cities like Harfleur, Lie, Crotay, and Carentigne with his men, destroying others to leave behind nothing but scorched earth (*EIII*, 1338-1343); the French who surrendered were "kindly pardoned" (*EIII*, 1344), whereas all others who resisted the English invasion "endured the penalty of sharp revenge" (*EIII*, 1345-1346). The initial success of the English armies and the stress on their mercy against the prisoners of war who surrendered underlines the justness of the English king who only came to claim his due; indeed, it seems as if their campaign was under favourable auspices. The contrast between the French bragging and the English grandeur that is backed up by success in battle shows that while the French only simulate valour the English embody it through martial prowess. However, Edward cannot understand why France would resist him and "the kind embracement of thy friends" (*EIII*, 1347-1348)—in his mind, he came to "gently […] touch thy breast" (*EIII*, 1349) and "set our foot upon thy tender mould" (*EIII*, 1350). Edward puts the conquest of France in terms of wooing; but in the face of war and brutality that came to France along with the English, these thoughts are mere wishful thinking. Edward cannot understand how a country that he intends to treat with love would resist the "kind embracement" of an army equipped with cannonballs. In his self-image, he comes as a responsible king who just claims his due from a usurper; but that love and war are intricately intertwined in Edward's mind shows when he imagines to have sex with the countess in terms of battle (see chapter 3.3.3).

Meanwhile, the French retreated to Crécy where they await battle instead of immediately attacking the smaller English army; Edward is looking forward to a direct confrontation with his enemies (*EIII*, 1360-1365). But before they meet in combat, the

French taunt the English; John Valois defies the English king and accuses Edward to have slain French subjects while ravaging the country. In the French king's eyes, Edward is "a fugitive / a thievish pirate and a needy mate" who robs other countries because he lives on "barren soil" (*EIII*, 1368-1379). Further, he condemns the English king because he "broke league and solemn covenant made with me" (*EIII*, 1381) and does not want to deal with one "so inferior to myself" (*EIII*, 1384). John misjudges Edward's motivations; assuming that he just came for spoil, John offers him a treasure to make Edward stop to "persecute the weak" (*EIII*, 1385-1390). Additionally, John offers Edward to "win this pillage manfully" in combat, challenging his opponent to prove his masculinity—and thus the mettle and perseverance that legitimises power—in a direct confrontation (*EIII*, 1387-1393). But Edward takes these accusations merely as "worthless taunts" (*EIII*, 1398); Edward's honour cannot be touched because Valois' claim is weaker than Edward's (*EIII*, 1399-1405). The English king is neither "timorous" nor "coldly negligent" (*EIII*, 1408, 1409). He claims that he himself did not conquer any town or did anything harmful to the country (*EIII*, 1411-1413) even though the Black Prince had wreaked havoc in his father's place. Edward makes clear that he did not come for spoil but for the French crown—which he will kill Valois or die for (*EIII*, 1415-1418). Prince Edward not only backs up his father with his military exploits but also with words, defying Valois' reproofs (*EIII*, 1419-1430). Edward assumes that Valois knows the English claim is stronger than his and lets him decide if he wants to resign and save his country or further incite war by refusing to hand over the crown (*EIII*, 1431-1435). Valois indeed knows what claim Edward has but wants to fight it out (*EIII*, 1436-1439)—acknowledging Edward's claim, the French opponent is not willing to concede his customary right of the crown, so the Black Prince accuses Valois as a "tyrant " (*EIII*, 1440) who is "no father, king or shepherd" (*EIII*, 1441) if he wants to cling to his crown at the cost of war and hazard further damage to his country and subjects (*EIII*, 1440-1443). When the French side begins to attack Audley, an old adviser of the English king, Edward defends him as an experienced "stiff-grown oak[…]" (*EIII*, 1448-1452), underlining his abilities as a better shepherd of his realm who relies on the experience of aged councillors by following a more organic approach to his reign. Derby defends the English claim and refers to Edward's "great lineage by the mother's side" (*EIII*, 1455), whereas no one of Valois' "father's house" ever was king (*EIII*, 1453-1454; 1453-1458). The fact that Derby refers to Edward's French mother's side as a guarantor of his greatness while Valois cannot justify any real claim to the throne through his male line is interesting here. Prince Philip urges his father to begin the battle, as the English would otherwise escape by mere prating (*EIII*, 1459-1461). The French prince understands that Valois cannot manifest his claim with words—so the only chance of safeguarding the crown is a trial by combat. Edward approaches the conflict similarly; he wants the day of battle to either "clear us of that scandalous crime / or be entombed in our innocence" (*EIII*, 1492-1493). Before he rides into battle, Edward endows his son with the symbols of a knight and bids God to "grant us the day" (*EIII*, 1552). As the battle will decide the further course of the campaign, Edward feels the need to ask God for help, trying to ensure a positive outcome for his cause.

In the heat of battle, things do not go well for the French; John Valois asks why so many of his French soldiers flee despite their mightier power. The reason is ridiculous; a newly arrived allied garrison of Genoese soldiers did not want to fight immediately and so retired upon their arrival, while other soldiers followed suit, trampling each other to death in their hasty retreat (*EIII*, 1556-1566). Without any English intervention, the French harm themselves—a big advantage for the invaders. Fighting for his life and his knighthood, the Black Prince sets the foundation for his fame in this battle at Crécy and proves his valour by defeating the superior French army (see chapter 3.2.1). Thus, the son of the English king wins a major victory for the English—a victory that both backs up and undermines the English claim, as the battle was not won by Edward himself.

After the victory at Crécy, Edward sends his victorious son off to follow John Valois to Poitiers and goes off to besiege the city of Calais himself (*EIII*, 1679-1685). The citizens of Calais refused a league with the English in the frustrated hope for French help; now, Edward wants to cut them off from supplies (*EIII*, 1738-1747). When a few poor and sick inhabitants of Calais appear on stage, Edward's reaction is inhumane and sarcastic; he calls it a "charitable deed" that they were thrown out of the city to save food (*EIII*, 1749-1761); the English king who claims to have come lovingly for his own now explains to the poor creatures that he is their enemy, asking how they expect to survive. He claims that he can only put them to the sword as the town refused a truce, but one Frenchman thinks death to be just as good as life (*EIII*, 1761-1767). In a cruel turn of his humour, Edward orders Derby to get food for the "poor silly men much wronged and more distressed" (*EIII*, 1768), adding five marks for each of them (*EIII*, 1768-1771). It seems strange that he first taunted the miserable Frenchmen to finally help them, but his change of mind has an egoistic reason: like the lion, Edward does not want "to touch the yielding prey" (*EIII*, 1772) but wants to whet his sword against the stony obduracy of Calais (*EIII*, 1772-1774), not by killing helpless outcasts. What seemed to be an act of charity exposes Edward's cruel and sadistic side.

While still besieging Calais, Edward learns that his queen is on the way to France and that the French ally, King David of Scotland, was taken prisoner while taking advantage of the king's absence (*EIII*, 1777-1786). The pregnant English queen, whose death Edward had contemplated temporarily to be able to be together with the countess, had defended the realm on her own. A woman about to give new life helped to secure the kingdom by fighting off an attack successfully. Thus, a woman secured Edward's rule, just as it is a woman who grants Edward's claim to the French throne. Besides, it is the Black Prince and not Edward himself who wins the decisive battles, so Edward's claim and rule are dependent on others; he is not the warlike hero he wants to be. Besides, it was a John Copeland who took the Scottish king prisoner and now refuses to hand him over to the queen; he only wants to deliver him to the king, a fact that angers the queen (*EIII*, 1789-1793). Not to hand over prisoners to the king was a crime in both medieval as well as Elizabethan England;[1186] as the queen acts as the king's representative in his absence, Copeland's refusal is a grave offence. Edward, however,

[1186] Campbell 1947: 294.

glosses over this defiance against the queen by informing Copeland that he might hand over his hostage personally in France (*EIII*, 1794-1796). Apparently, the queen had the same idea and sailed over the Channel to Calais (*EIII*, 1797-1799). The king, who had contemplated the queen's murder a few acts before, now bids her welcome and awaits her on the shore (*EIII*, 1800-1801).

But before the queen arrives, Edward learns that Calais is willing to surrender on the condition that they are granted "benefit of life and goods" (*EIII*, 1803-1806). That the city dare set up conditions makes Edward furious as this exposes the citizens' arrogance to consider themselves able to rule and "govern as they list" (*EIII*, 1808-1809). The English king, however, is not willing to abide by other people's rules and sets cruel conditions to punish that insolence as "they did refuse / our princely clemency at first proclaimed"—if the town does not send six of the wealthiest merchants half naked and with halters about their necks to the free disposal of Edward, he will sack the town (*EIII*, 1808-1820). Clemency and mildness are apparently no original character traits of Edward's as he demands a severe sacrifice despite all protestations; rather, his rash temper got the better of him and lets him act tyrannically against those who do not welcome him with open arms. The captain who serves as a messenger from Calais is devastated by the news; as the town was abandoned by the French, they now have to sacrifice some from within their midst to prevent that everyone is "go[ing] to wrack" (*EIII*, 1821-1826). Finally, the town fulfils Edward's condition: the six citizens appear barefoot on stage with halters around their necks (*EIII*, stage directions). But Edward does not think about fulfilling his part of the deal; his recently arrived Queen Philipa discusses heatedly with Edward about the fate of Calais. While the queen had argued in favour of the city, the king loses his patience and forgets his promise not to destroy Calais. He orders his soldiers to assault and spoil the town (*EIII*, 2351-2357). The citizens try to remind him of his promise of mercy (*EIII*, 2358, 2362-2368), but Edward just states that "mine ears are stopped against your bootless cries" (*EIII*, 2359-2361). While admitting that he did promise to spare the city, he doubts that the merchants offered to him are the "chiefest citizens" he had demanded (*EIII*, 2369-2376). Edward is not willing to keep his own word but rather tyrannises a town that already fulfilled his harsh conditions of surrender—a fact that he acknowledges later himself (*EIII*, 2405). A citizen confirms the hostages' status (*EIII*, 2377-2381), so Edward has to keep his promise willy-nilly and spare the town. When he wants to mistreat and kill the citizens at his mercy (*EIII*, 2382-2388), the queen intervenes and bids him to be "more mild," reminding Edward that he should spare his future subjects who will be more willing to acknowledge him as king if he treats them well (*EIII*, 2389-2396). Edward gives in to Philipa's argument and admits that "peaceful quietness brings most delight" (*EIII*, 2398). His following comments about himself must be counterpoint to anyone who has witnessed the king's behaviour so far:

> […] it shall be known that we
> as well can master our affections
> as conquer other by the dint of sword
> Philip prevail, we yield to thy request
> these men shall live to boast of clemency
> and tyranny strike terror to thyself.
> […]

> Go get you hence, return unto the town
> and if this kindness hath deserved your love
> learn then to reverence Edward as your king.
> (*EIII*, 2400-2405, 2407-2409)

While Edward represents himself as a clement and mild ruler who can control himself, he had to be reminded to keep his own word and reasoned into the fact that clemency is a better policy than brutality if he intends to reign effectively. Edward has to learn quite a few lessons from his fellow characters: the countess shows him how to be decent and obey a law that is mightier than his secular powers; his secretary teaches him humour; Philipa, his wife, beseeches him for tolerance and real mercy; his son's martial success and chivalry secure his claim and guarantee the success of his mission in France. Edward is no stable character who can control himself but is very susceptible to influence from outside and gives in easily to his own whims and humours.[1187] He has to learn his lessons during the course of the play to become a more fully "human" character and king; having achieved this goal, he has learned strategies that he had lacked but that render him a better king and a better human being. That he has indeed learned his lesson is made clear when Copeland enters with his prisoner, the Scottish King David. Edward first reprimands the esquire because he did not hand over his captive to the queen (*EIII*, 2416-2418, 2421-2422), but Copeland defends himself and explains that he only wanted to follow "public law at arms" and get his reward by his king personally (*EIII*, 2423-2434). The queen accuses Copeland of having disobeyed the king's order in acknowledging the queen as his deputy while he was away (*EIII*, 2435-2436), an allegation Copeland dismisses with the claim that "His name I reverence but his person more" (*EIII*, 2437)—he is willing only to bend his knee to the royal presence (*EIII*, 2438-2439). And for this kind of personal—and not institutional—allegiance, Edward knights Copeland as a reward for his service and bids his queen to subdue her anger at the new knight (*EIII*, 2440-2447). Edward found a good compromise by first chiding Copeland for his behaviour to then accepting the allegiance to his body private, not his body politic. Copeland's handing over this prisoner to the king is reason enough for Edward to pacify his queen, accept the obedience of his subject, and even reward him accordingly. For Edward, the world is now in order—he won the war in France and has both the French and the Scottish kings as captives. What mars the "ideal" outcome of the play, however, is the fact that he achieved these goals only with the help of his son and wife; he is not a hero himself but rather a character who had to learn to rule himself over the course of events. Thus, the play does not resonate with the glory of the bravest English king but rather questions and undermines that reputation. The play shows a character that is neither brave nor temperate but rash and cruel. As events and other characters mirror his actions, he is able to develop into a more royal figure who listens to counsel, grants patronage, and eventually shows mercy towards a subjected town that had indeed fulfilled his conditions of surrender.

[1187] Sams 1996: 12.

3.2.5 "We'll Reserve Our Valour for Better Purpose"—Edward IV's French Expedition

Just as Edward was absent for nine scenes in the first part, there is an absence of fighting and martial action in Edward's French expedition in the second part of the play as well. At the beginning of part two, Edward finds himself forsaken by his supposed allies the Constable St. Pol and Burgundy on his campaign in France. Angry at being thus deceived, Edward threatens he will "bring them in" if they do not show up; he uses rhetoric similar to Falconbridge's in the first part, full of bombast and threats (*2EIV*, 1.1-17). Edward blames the Constable and Burgundy to "have brought me hither," so he "will make / The proudest tower that stands in France to quake" (*2EIV*, 1.14-15) as a punishment for their betrayal. However, it is strange that a king, who is responsible for his own decisions, should blame his allies to have brought him to France when he himself had wanted to fight for its throne. The influence of the Constable and Burgundy on Edward is somewhat dubious as they did not feature prominently as motivators for his French campaign. Apparently, Edward tries to find scapegoats for his lack of success so far. Finally, Edward learns that his ally Burgundy is occupied with the siege of Neuss, which hinders him to support the English king (*2EIV*, 1.20-44); likewise, the Constable St. Pol will not provide any help (*2EIV*, 1.44-61). Edward dismisses Howard's suggestion to attack the Constable whose army deride the English as he needs his powers for other enterprises. Just like Henry V, Edward thinks that the fewer the English are, the bigger their share of honour will be. To punish his defective allies, Edward plans to attack the centre of France so that they will have nowhere left to hide (*2EIV*, 1.65-74). He sends a declaration of war to Lewis, the king of France, to fight for his claim to the throne; he urges the messenger to convey his message as impressively as possible so that he can begin his total war. The messenger promises to express Edward's "high will" accordingly; Edward is resolved not to tarry until he wears the French crown (*2EIV*, 1.77-88). What is strange about the situation is the fact that, until he was informed about his allies' default, Edward was not inclined to completely destroy France, but it would not conflict with Edward's character so far that he made the decision in a fit of rage.

The English herald transmits Edward's message to the king of France with all the grandiloquence ordered by Edward, claiming that Edward's rights to France and the dukedoms of Aquitaine, Anjou, Guyenne, and Angouleme were usurped by Lewis. Edward offers Lewis to either fight the claim out in battle or to pay a yearly tribute to the English king to "content his just conceivèd wrath" (*2EIV*, 2.1-24). Lewis is impressed by the speech and is—contrary to expectation—not disposed to fight. To avoid a war, he apologises for any offense that might have caused Edward's wrath and even promises to pay the recompense of Edward's demands, turning himself into an English vassal. Rather, he accuses the traitors St. Pol and Burgundy to have lured Edward to France to use him against their common enemy Lewis (*2EIV*, 2.25-44). The herald stresses that Edward plans to "conquer France, like his progenitors" independently of the Constable and Burgundy (*2EIV*, 2.45-48); even though he thus puts himself into a line with his predecessors Henry V and Edward III, it seems that Edward does not want to fight for the French crown but for his own honour. As the

French king has already yielded to his demands and is even willing to pay a yearly tribute, there is no need to stress Edward's propensity to fight. Lewis repeats his willingness for appeasement; Edward cannot gain more by war than what Lewis will give him voluntarily. Rather, he offers Edward a league against the traitors St. Pol and Burgundy (*2EIV*, 2.49-59). Lewis has good cause to unite against them as they betrayed him as well; to prove his inclination for peace, Lewis showers the herald with precious gifts (*2EIV*, 2.60-87). The herald thinks that Edward will accept Lewis' giving in as "His temper is not of obdurate malice, / But sweet, relenting, princely clemency," a somewhat idealised characterisation (*2EIV*, 2.88-96). The French courtiers support Lewis' resolution not to enter war because France still has to recover from the wars under Henry VI; besides they think it opportune to use Edward as an ally against St. Pol and Burgundy as the situation is fragile and peace with the English unsure (*2EIV*, 2.105-114).

Finally, Edward meets Burgundy and scolds him for being "disloyal," an accusation Burgundy considers to be "unkingly" (*2EIV*, 4.1-3). Edward however learned his lesson from meeting the tanner in the first part and wants to be outspoken and honest (*2EIV*, 4.4-6). Burgundy tries to save himself and wriggles out by asking if he did not follow his promise by coming to Edward. But the king does not think so and enumerates all the conditions that were not met and will not have any of Burgundy's excuses; rather, Edward makes clear that he does not need Burgundy's help to claim the crown of France (*2EIV*, 4.7-32). Apparently, Edward did not yet get the message that Lewis of France had conceded sovereignty to him; rather, Edward expresses his displeasure that he did not even get the impersonal help of the cities under the Constable and Burgundy (*2EIV*, 4.36-44). The situation worsens further when the English army is shot at from St. Quentin, where Edward intends to meet with the Constable. Two soldiers die and Lord Scales is wounded in the attack; Edward suspects treason, which Burgundy later confirms in an aside (*2EIV*, 4.45-59). Enraged, he plans to attack St. Quentin as revenge and promises extreme scenes of violence while the Duke of Burgundy in the meantime steals away (*2EIV*, 4.62-88). Edward's speech is reminiscent of Henry V's vision of Harfleur's destruction, but unlike Henry, Edward has cause for his rage. What is problematic, however, is that Edward follows his rage uncontrollably—his irrationality is a character trait that already became apparent.

Threatened with attack, the city then bids for a truce. The Constable, the gunner responsible for the death of the soldiers, and his mate leave the city, claiming that the shots were fired accidentally. Edward wants to see the Constable immediately while the other two are kept safe (*2EIV*, 4.90-104). The Constable enters, and Edward first inquires about the well-being of Lord Scales before he talks to him, thus showing his disrespect and contempt for his former ally. Edward is not yet sure how to handle the Constable; St. Pol, of course, tries to evade Edward's accusations, explaining that the shot was fired because Edward had been taken for Lewis. He even tries to buy himself off with thirty thousand crowns from the citizens of St. Quentin to support Edward (*2EIV*, 4.105-123). Edward's answer to this is long, cruel, and contradictory; his strategy in dealing with the crisis is worth looking at in its entirety.

Constable of France, we will not sell a drop
Of English blood for all the gold in France:
But in so much two of our men are slain,
To quit their deaths, those two that came with thee
Shall both be crammed into a cannon's mouth,
And so be shot into the town again.
It is not like but that they knew our colours,
And of set purpose did this villainy.
Nor can I be persuaded thoroughly
But that our person was the mark they aimed at:
Yet we are well content to hold you excused,
Marry, our soldiers must be satisfied.
And, therefore, first shall be distributed
These crowns amongst them. Then, you shall return,
And of your best provision send to us
Thirty wain load, beside twelve tun of wine.
This, if the burghers will subscribe unto,
Their peace is made; otherwise I will proclaim
Free liberty for all to take the spoil.
(*2EIV*, 4.124-142)

To atone for the deaths of two soldiers, two simple gunners shall be killed cruelly and the money distributed among the English army. Edward's former characterisation as "not of obdurate malice, / But sweet, relenting, princely clemency" (*2EIV*, 2.92-93) does not prove true in this respect. He seeks revenge of a brutal sort; but instead of putting all the blame on the commander St. Pol, Edward wants to punish the poor gunners, reasoning that whoever fired the shot has to pay for it—even though Edward explicitly excuses the Constable (*2EIV*, 4.134). Not only is it difficult to understand his reasoning, but Edward seems to be happy to distribute the money of the burghers among his soldiers as a compensation for the deaths of their comrades. Very probably, he wants to jolly them along through his campaign and get what he can out of the situation, so Edward seizes the opportunity to obtain a large provision for his soldiers. If the town will not provide for it, the soldiers may take their spoil themselves. So, the town is faced with a trade-off.

Even though Edward stated earlier that he does not need the treacherous and tepid support of either Burgundy or the Constable, he now orders the Constable to join his forces with the English army until the following day and tells him to convey the same message to Burgundy; if they fail to fulfil that condition, the city will be sacked (*2EIV*, 4.143-149). The Constable promises to provide his forces and to tell Burgundy, who is granted safe conduct through the English lines. Despite the fact that the situation seemed to have been settled, Edward does not stick to his own orders but changes his ideas to his liking. It seems that he does not have a concise plan of how to deal with the situation except that he wants to get the best conditions for himself and his soldiers. That he tries to summon his ex-allies seems to be a strange move; maybe he wants to blame them for his revenge after having exposed their unwillingness to fight for him and their failure to keep their promises. At that moment, Mugeroun enters as the French king's ambassador and transmits Lewis' message, stressing subserviently that the French king is a friend of England who never intended to hurt Edward or would not concede his rule. Mugeroun additionally praises Edward because of his "high deserts / Of wisdom, valour and his heroic birth" (*2EIV*, 4.150-174), probably to underline

Edward's claim to the throne. Mugeroun muses that there must have been some treacherous friends that "soil[ed] the pure temper of his noble mind" (*2EIV*, 4.179) to use him for their ends; then, he offers Edward a league to their mutual advantage (*2EIV*, 4.161-202). Edward, maybe a bit surprised by the turn of events, wants to consult with his councillors Howard and Sellinger (*2EIV*, 4.203-205); thus, he shows his desire to reach a wise conclusion by hearing the advice of his courtiers. While Howard and Sellinger weigh the pros and cons, Edward wants to force Lewis to swear fealty to him unconditionally. Howard proposes to make Lewis pay the war expenses and turn him into a vassal with a yearly tribute that ties his crown to the English throne. Howard thinks that Edward should accept the offer of a league—an advice Edward takes (*2EIV*, 4.206-223). Apparently, he did not think so much of himself. While Howard designs the peace treaty, Mugeroun is called in to hear the acceptance of Lewis' offer. The French king shall meet Edward before St. Quentin to confirm the league by oath and sign the peace treaty. Mugeroun gets a big reward and exits (*2EIV*, 4.223-237).

Edward trusts neither Burgundy nor St. Pol, so he instructs Howard and Sellinger to disguise themselves to gather intelligence about the Constable's and Burgundy's intention to join their armies with the English and how they evaluate the league with Lewis. The two agree and exit (*2EIV*, 4.239-250). Lewis is already on his way to meet with the English when Edward welcomes him (*2EIV*, 4.251-256). When the two kings meet, Lewis expresses his grief that Edward ventured so far only because of the false promises of the Constable and Burgundy, but Edward thinks that Lewis would indeed condemn him of "exceeding folly" (*2EIV*, 5.8) had he gone to France only because of their vain promises, and Edward makes clear that he came to claim the French throne (*2EIV*, 5.1-17). Lewis concedes Edward "more discretion" but reminds him that the purpose of their meeting is the peace treaty; it is Lewis, not Edward, who wants affairs put into order. While Edward confirms that he wants to enter the league, he first wants Lewis to agree to some conditions, and Lewis is willing to hear them (*2EIV*, 5.18-29). Bourbon is shocked that the first article wants Lewis to pay homage to Edward which turns him into a vassal and implicitly robs him of the crown, but Edward makes clear that Lewis has the choice whether he wants to accept the articles. Lewis bids Bourbon to be quiet and patiently hears the rest of the treaty (*2EIV*, 5.31-41). While Edward might appear generous in conceding Lewis freedom of action, the French do not have much choice. The second and third articles concern the payment of the war expenses and the yearly tribute paid to Edward during his lifetime. Bourbon deems these conditions worse than war but Lewis decides to accept because he wants to save France and its inhabitants; he resigns his crown to Edward's hands, accepts the validity of Edward's, and enters vassalage (*2EIV*, 5.42-69). Thus, Lewis might seem to be a coward but really he takes on a burden to save his subjects from harm. Edward's brutality before St. Quentin thus seems even harsher. The English "victory" over the French, however, is not bravely achieved; rather, it is a political necessity to save resources and spare war-ridden France. The French show the white feather because of their military exhaustion, and the English do not have to prove their military worth, so the peace is emasculating to both sides. The only bombast and "glory" left to Edward is rhetoric, which he uses abundantly, so words—a women's weapon not suited for men

seeking glory and honour—are the fiercest weapons in this fight. After Lewis surrendered his crown to Edward, the English king hands it back, making Lewis king by Edward's grace. He accepts all conditions, and both kings swear loyalty towards one another. A feast celebrates their allegiance, and Edward even states that "English and French are one: so it is meant" (*2EIV*, 5.70-83). Of course, the result is under English rule, as both parties are not on equal terms; it is only the English who can desire such an outcome.

Meanwhile, the disguised Howard and Sellinger inform Burgundy and the Constable of the peace treaty, and both of them think that the respective other had induced Edward to that league to get advantages for himself (*2EIV*, 6.1-23). They both reward Howard and Sellinger for their service (*2EIV*, 6.24-27), but when the two are gone, Burgundy and the Constable accuse each other of having deceived the other to save their heads; they part on a dissonant note (*2EIV*, 6.30-40). Howard and Sellinger report the irritation of the two ex-allies about Edward's league with Lewis which the English king finds entertaining (*2EIV*, 7.1-22). To have some fun, Edward plays a trick on both the messengers of Burgundy and St. Pol. He bids Lewis to hide so that he can hear the messages; Edward will speak loudly enough so that Lewis can understand him (*2EIV*, 7.26-41). When Burgundy's messenger enters, Edward feigns a cold that impairs his ears, so the messenger has to repeat his message various times—to a comic effect for the audience, of course. The king counterfeits and tricks his counterparts as he already did so many times during the plays, be it with Jane, the tanner, or Nell. Burgundy laments that Edward made peace with Lewis but Edward blames the Duke himself as he did not come with his army as formerly agreed on. Burgundy's messenger does not accept that charge and accuses the Constable St. Pol, alleging that the attack before St. Quentin was on purpose (*2EIV*, 7.42-74). The messenger offers him Burgundy's support with a strong army, the deliverance of the Constable, and help to get the French crown if he dissolves the league with Lewis (*2EIV*, 7.75-91). Pretending that he still has to think about it, Edward dismisses the messenger (*2EIV*, 7.92-96). Lewis is both amused and hurt in his pride by this episode that is repeated likewise with the Constable's messenger (*2EIV*, 7.97-112). Thus, the whole business of leagues, alliances, and politics is turned into a farce that is mere entertainment for Edward. So far, his expedition met only with resistance by the attack before St. Quentin; besides that, he got all he wanted without any severe fighting.

St. Pol's messenger also accuses Burgundy of treason and having planned to kill Edward with the shot before St. Quentin; as Burgundy did before him, St. Pol promises to deliver Burgundy and to support Edward with ten thousand men to get the crown of France (*2EIV*, 7.113-144). The messenger affirms Edward's suspicion that the incident before St. Quentin dissolved the firm friendship between Burgundy and St. Pol. Edward dismisses the messenger to think about his answer but the messenger should stay close by (*2EIV*, 7.145-157). Edward wants to deal with them "in their kind" (*2EIV*, 7.162) but is surprised to learn that both Burgundy and St. Pol sent letters to Lewis with the same content, plotting Edward's death (*2EIV*, 7.166-184). To confront the messengers with the fact that the plot of their masters has been discovered, they are both brought to the tent. They are surprised to see Lewis there as well as the respective other messenger

(*2EIV*, 7.188-198). Edward confronts Burgundy's messenger with his master's handwriting in a letter to Lewis and makes sure his message to Edward was true; charged with hypocrisy and treachery, Burgundy's messenger pretends not to have known anything of the letters, but Sellinger exposes him to be lying as he himself had informed Burgundy about the league between Lewis and the English king and heard the duke rail against Edward (*2EIV*, 7.218-235). Differently from the case of the gunners before St. Quentin, Edward does not want to harm the messengers as the whole plot is not their fault. Nevertheless, they should be kept safe until both traitors are taken. To ensure the success of the enterprise, Edward leaves an army of five thousand soldiers in France and returns to England (*2EIV*, 7.236-244). Edward's goal in France is fulfilled: he got the French crown, made the French king his vassal, and had his fun castigating the two traitors. He is successful even though he did not have to fight for his goals but tricked his former allies for his own entertainment; thus, he did not have the chance to achieve glory and honour as did Henry V, Edward III, or the Black Prince.

A chorus speeds up the plot and informs the audience about Edward's return to England and the punishment of Burgundy and St. Pol at the hands of Lewis; how they are "Reward[ed] […] with trait'rous recompense" (*2EIV*, 8.4) remains unclear, however. The play then returns to the Shore story with the focus on Matthew (*2EIV*, 8.1-17) while Jane's plight with her conscience is not even mentioned. The interpolation of the chorus indicates a dichotomy of the play with the campaign in France as a mere episode. The direct juxtaposition of war and the king's love affair connects the two issues, however; it is remarkable that Edward wins on both fronts by his cunning—he wins Jane as his concubine by forcing her to comply and wins the crown of France without raising a finger because the enemy is too weak. No one can oppose Edward but somehow the taste lingers that he does not really deserve it—especially not because of his lecherous and frivolous character.

As men have to prove to be man enough, their effort has to be validated by others. This validation process follows chivalry as a codified system in aristocratic circles that provides the guiding virtues for masculinities. Honour, an integral part of chivalry, is a good usually rated worth more than life itself by men, so maintaining and promoting one's honour—even more so when a man is king—is a motivating factor to overcome fear. While common soldiers are bound by their obedience that has a cleansing effect on their deeds, the nobility relies on the virtues of honour, justice, valour, and courage to validate their actions. Proving to be courageous and brave creates bonds to other men who then become a "band of brothers." Due to the violent nature of chivalry, war is the main arena where aristocratic men assert themselves and their masculinity and where they can bond with other men; thus, nobility is embedded in conflict. Fear and doubts are not part of the official canon of sanctioned male feeling, but before the battle of Agincourt, Henry V is anxious of the outcome. However, he has to keep up appearances lest he would dishearten his army. As a king, he is torn between the *conditio humana* that subjects him to a common human physicality while he has also a metaphysical and political role to fill that burdens him with an extra responsibility. To appear cool and composed, the king has to suppress his feelings and thus deprives himself of a part of his humanity to stand his ground. Appearance and outward show are more important

than actual feelings; this tension between the human and the metaphysical part within the king that distances him from his subjects is a faultline that the plays explore differently. In *Henry V*, the king subdues his fear and suppresses his humanity; this outward show of courage and honour despite genuine feelings constitutes a part of the theatricality and outwardness of kingship that the play explores. Henry laments this very theatricality in his ceremony speech; it just burdens the king with extra responsibility without giving a gratification or recompense. Rather, the king has no real power to command the well-being of his subjects, but has to deal with flattery and hollowness while he is tormented with insomnia. The subjects, who have to surrender everything to the king as their duty of obedience instructs them to, may at least enjoy a sound sleep; but they cannot check on the righteousness and justice of their king's pursuit. Propaganda shall bridge this gap, but if subjects have a different view or are not manipulated, there is the threat of resistance or rebellion that cancels the bond between subject and king unilaterally.

The Black Prince experiences his first battle as a rite of passage where he transitions from childhood to proper manhood. He knows that battle can either bring honour or death, a prospect that he positively anticipates with an excitement that he likens to sexual arousal. Frequently, battle experiences are connoted with sexual overtones; death and eros intersect. Before he enters his first fight, the prince is endowed with the insignia and moral values of knighthood; then, he has to prove himself worthy and receive the knighthood as a confirmation of his valour and masculinity. Even when threatened with death, his father does not allow any help; thus, he hopes, his son will gain absolute independence from others. But the honour of prospective knighthood so strengthens the young man that he perseveres, conquers his fears, and is finally accepted as a knight. The sword he is knighted with is his own that still drips with the blood of the French enemies, a telling image of how bonds between men are established by blood—so the knighting becomes a baptism with blood, confirming the prince's new status as a fully-fledged man. And indeed, he becomes the embodiment of a perfect knight—he stays stoical in the face of death, does not fear the enemy, stays rational and calm, is brave and a seasoned fighter while a humble servant of his father. He is not too proud to take counsel from a man more experienced in battle, and when he overcomes his fear of death, he steps over the last barrier and achieves the main goal of becoming a man and a knight. As he can bridle his passions, the Black Prince becomes a foil for his father's inability to be an ideal king; the prince is merely an instrument of his father's wars. However, he does fight for a place in historic records and for honour and explicitly states that he wants to be an inspiration for future English warriors.

John Talbot also experiences his first battle as a rite of passage; but unlike the Black Prince, he will not survive it. He was sent for by his father to be taught the "stratagems of war" and initiate him into combat; but the war situation has turned so bad when John Talbot arrives that his father wants him to flee, a proposal the son would experience as shameful. Rather, he wants to prove true to his name and emulate his father. Shaming his father's name is worse for him than death; as a young, inexperienced man he has everything to lose and cannot build on a reservoir of honour like his father, so he defies death and wants to prove his constancy despite the danger. Young Talbot indeed proves

himself when he valiantly fights against Orléans who draws blood from him, an act that Talbot likens to sexual defloration. However, the situation is ambiguous—while Talbot got "fleshed" on Orléans, he is also put into the passive, female role of a deflowered virgin. His father retaliates upon Orléans by drawing blood from him as well. Talbot junior's bloody sword is likened to a penis stained by a virgin's blood while he himself is being deflowered—a self-referential understanding of constructing and affirming masculinity. The scene emphasises the connection between honour, blood, sex, and family name as again blood establishes bonds between men. His shedding of blood initiates young Talbot into masculinity. Now that he has become a man, Talbot senior wants his son to flee; if he dies, the family line will be extinguished and no one could avenge Talbot's death. Honour is more important than a future for John, so he is prepared to die with his father if need be. So, the ultimate affirmation of masculinity and honour includes the risk of death—emulating superior men can be a fatal business, as Emig says. Eventually, after saving his father's life and proving his valour, John falls in battle. As his dead body apparently even makes death look attractive, his ultimate sacrifice for masculinity is aestheticised; John becomes the effigy of a young man's fulfilment in death by combat. Father and son are reunited in their death when Talbot's heart breaks at the sight; cradling his son's body in his arms, the ideal of chivalry and masculinity is confirmed through death. John's death proves that masculinity and honour sometimes lead down a one-way street. However, the value of a man has to be affirmed by others; when Joan of Arc comments on the death of father and son in a deprecatory way, the affirmation of masculinity is undercut by the words of a French woman.

That blood and masculinity belong together is also underlined by Henry V's characterisation of a soldier; it paints a vivid picture of what men turn into in times of war. Men follow different ideals in different circumstances; in war, they transform into ravaging animals that cannot be controlled once set loose. The change manifests in their very bodies that become energetic, hard, and tense—qualities associated with the "male" humours, blood and choler. Thus, men turn into an excessive, pathological version of masculinity in war, threatening, aggressive, and lethal. Later, Henry connects these soldier-like qualities to the inbred nobility of his comrades that derives from their Englishness that ennobles them and shines in their eyes. It is their commonly shared Englishness that likens them to "greyhounds in the slips," all eager to begin fighting; their valour is transferred from their fathers to themselves, so now, in battle, they should prove true to their heritage and upbringing. Henry repeatedly identifies as a soldier himself which lends his personality something brutal as soldiers turn into hellish creatures, who cannot be stopped wreaking havoc once they are let loose. Men who rape, kill, and know no mercy are questionable paradigms of self-identification.

Edward III's approach to France also connects sex and war; repeatedly, he talks of his conquest in terms of love and wooing. Claiming the French throne through his female side, Edward can unite the nation behind himself—he is so sure of his pursuit that he already combines the French and English coats of arms when he invades. The French, who never took the English threats seriously, are astonished by the majesty of the English approach by ship and wonder how the English became so loyal to their

cause. But the French prove braggarts while the English sweep from success to success. Edward has the surrendering French pardoned, a mercy he does not extend to anyone who opposes him; besides, his son leaves scorched earth behind himself. Edward cannot understand why the French resist his "kind embracement" as he perceives of himself as a responsible king—a self-image the text does not validate. While he woos the Countess of Salisbury with terms of war, he clothes the war with France in terms of lovemaking: France is a woman that has to be won. The French taunts cannot touch the English in their honour as Edward feels that his claim is too superior for the French king. He makes clear that he came for the French crown; turning the tables, he makes the French king choose submission or further war on the country. Valois is not willing to concede the crown, so they will fight it out. And during the ensuing battle of Crécy, the French army weakens itself considerably, granting a decisive victory to the English—a sign that the English interpret as divine approval of the English invasion.

Edward's ugly characteristics surface before the besieged Calais; he shows no mercy towards a starving city and forces inhuman conditions on the citizens. When his conditions are eventually fulfilled, he wants to sack the city despite their compliance and his promises, so he is about to break his own royal word. Not only is Edward unable to control his impulses, but he also shows a deep hatred towards the French. He wants absolute rule; and, if that implies tyranny, then so be it—he is unwilling to abide by other people's rules. It is Queen Philipa's influence that establishes justice and bridles Edward's irrational impulses. It is she who reminds him of his later reputation as future king of the city of Calais—if he shows mercy, the citizens will love him the better for it, politically prudent thinking Edward was not capable of himself. Despite his self-image, he is not able to master his passions and is not a war hero like his son. Neither does the text depict him as great warrior nor kinglike; on the contrary, Edward is no stable character and no shining victor. He needs the sobering influence of his wife and the Countess of Salisbury as well as his son's military exploits to win over France. With their help, he can become a better person and a better king. The play does not portray a glorious and manly king but rather his journey from an uncontrolled man to a more prudent king who learned his lesson.

The quality of Edward IV's French campaign is unequalled in the other history plays; first of all, the English king holds his treacherous allies Burgundy and St. Pol responsible for having lured him into France; and when the two of them defect from him, he can forge a league with the French king that renders him an English vassal without any serious fighting. Edward did threaten France with brutal war, and as the French king knows that he lacks the resources to withstand, Lewis immediately and unconditionally surrenders to the harsh conditions Edward sets. What seems to be an act of cowardice actually is an act out of love for the war-ridden country and its inhabitants. Joining forces, both Lewis and Edward can follow their agendas in a win-win situation. Even though Edward does achieve the crown of France, he cannot take his place himself in the line of his victorious ancestors who had to prove their mettle in combat. Instead, the French king uses Edward for his own ends against Burgundy and St. Pol. Together, they play off the two traitors against each other. Edward uses politics for his own entertainment and fun by playing tricks on the messengers of Burgundy and St. Pol who

plotted against his life. The only incident of actual violence is when Edward cruelly pays back the treasonous attack before St. Quentin; he also makes his allies pay provision for his army, always aiming at the most advantageous solution for his soldiers and himself. Edward mainly fights with words, a weapon that does not lead to glory and honour, but he nevertheless achieves the unification of France and England under the aegis of the English—a partnership of unequal terms. When he eventually leaves France, he gains the authority over the country but is unable to gather honour and glory via his campaign. Rather, he fought with words and his cunning—eventually winning against his enemies and former allies while having fun in the process.

3.3 Rationality and Self-Control Versus Passions and the Body

One of the main features of early modern masculinity construction is the ability to control the body and its passions with rationality; the more moderate and the more independent a man is in his feelings and passions, the manlier he is. This is even more important for kings and the high nobility; if they fail in their ability to control themselves, this has catastrophic consequences for the whole chain of being. However, Shakespeare never lets the whole construct collapse. There are always figures or characters who keep up at least a rudimentary order.[1188] But rationality and the control of the *physis* do not only yield the desired results, they also enable men to fashion their surroundings and make their environment adapt to their wishes. Thus, the royal characters can manipulate others to achieve their own ends through the power of their minds. While some kings develop a successful strategy to fashion themselves, others abuse their superior manipulative abilities; others simply fail miserably. That the body and its humours play a significant part in all this will soon become clear; the following examples will cover these three cases and discover how different characters deal with reality and how their bodies move and influence them on their journey.

3.3.1 "Yet Herein Will I Imitate the Sun"—Hal as Scheming Prince

Henry V it one of the most controversely discussed kings in Shakespeare's oeuvre; while some see in him a "complete Christian monarch" fighting for a just cause, he is a perfect Machiavellian to others.[1189] The evaluation of Henry's royal character oscillates between Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Institutio Principis Christiani* and Machiavelli's *Il Principe* while a third party sees Henry as a kind of composite synthesis of a dialectical process that discusses good government.[1190] But why is he such an evasive but fascinating figure? Henry's strategy of action can be seen as a *quaestio* on effective—if not ideal—rule evolving over the course of the three plays that portray his youth and kingship.[1191] Hal's "schooling" with his Eastcheap friends discuss this *quaestio* at

[1188] Schruff 1999: 228.
[1189] Walter (1961): xxviii-xxx, xiv-xviii; Campbell 1947: 255. Tillyard's eulogy of the prince is very strong, but debatable (Tillyard 1944: 264-282, 294, 299 and *passim*); Sutherland and Watts 2000.
[1190] Schruff 1999: 25.
[1191] See Altman 1978: 180, 392.

length.[1192] As a prince, he robs, drinks, swears, and does not fulfil his political duties at court; however, there is a careful plan behind it all—Prince Hal wants to deceive his environment with his misconduct to emerge as a more dazzling and "reformed" king. Hal gives away his strategy in his first appearance in *1 Henry IV*, a plan that permeates his development. After jesting and merrymaking with his companions at Eastcheap, Hal compares himself to the royal sun that will arise from behind clouds that occlude his brilliance; his soliloquy is known as the "reformation speech":

> I know you all and will a while uphold
> The unyoked humour of your idleness.
> Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
> Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
> To smother up his beauty from the world,
> That when he please again to be himself,
> Being wanted he may be more wondered at
> By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
> Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
> […]
> So when this loose behaviour I throw off
> And pay the debt I never promisèd,
> By how much better than my word I am,
> By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
> And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
> My reformation glitt'ring o'er my fault,
> Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
> Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
> I'll so intend to make offence a skill,
> Redeeming time when men think least I will.
> (*1HIV*, 1.2.173-181, 186-195)

Hal acknowledges that his companions, the "base, contagious clouds," occlude his real and regal self; and to play along with their "idleness" for a while, he will feign companionship with his Eastcheap fellows until he sees it fit to become himself again and be rid of them after a miraculous catharsis and transformation. He states that he is "much better than [his] word" and not "himself" at the moment (*1HIV*, 1.2.188, 178); thus, the jesting prince the audience witnessed before in this scene is a counterfeit and a sham, untrue to his character and his social status. Hal is also untrue to his closest friends and social environment as he deceives them with his performance and manipulates them as well as himself with his feigned friendship. He wants to perfect his debauchery as a "skill," so that his carefully planned and staged "reformation" has a more lasting effect. Henry himself plays his part up to his standards, declaring that "I am now of all humours that have showed themselves humours since the old days of goodman Adam to the pupil age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight" (*1HIV*, 2.5.86-88), praising his ability to embody and live all humours; he further talks about his "intemperature" (*1HIV*, 3.2.156). The passionate prince is in all his humours: he is sanguine (during his adventures like the Gad's Hill robbery), phlegmatic (following Falstaff in his laziness and not taking up his responsibilities as the son of a king), choleric (in throwing a bottle at Falstaff), and even melancholy when pondering his

[1192] Eastcheap was a quarter in the middle of London where a lot of lower-class apprentices lived who spent their time not only in the workshop but also in taverns and theatres (Smith 2000: 85).

thoughts about the crown.[1193] But all these emotions are pure acting; by dissembling, he wants to appear even more glorious and better than he is; but to achieve this effect, he has to play along with his degrading fellows, euphemising his lifestyle as a kind of learning process of how his subjects think, live, and "function."[1194] His true motivation, however, is not the intricate knowledge of his future subjects' lives, but his own enhanced histrionic effect as a newly-reformed, good king of the future. While one might argue that Hal thus learns to speak the language of the people to be a better king, the way he calculatedly and coldly deceives and later repels his companions, is rather repulsive.

The reformation speech is a revealing key to the narrative of Henry's role-play. His dissembling to further and strengthen his future reign owes much to the concept of the manifest performativity of kingship. Interestingly, both Erasmus and Castiglione considered that deceit could be beneficial and necessary.[1195] By furthering his own advantage by this deceptive strategy, Henry nearly sounds like the arch-villains Richard III or Iago.[1196] He is consistent in his role as wild prince, able to switch between the court and Eastcheap without his deceit ever being detected; and only in the face of his father's death does he show the inclination to rule responsibly. Disappointingly, though, Henry is least convincing in his role of careful ruler in disguise when he talks with the three soldiers before the battle at Agincourt as crowned king; he is faced with the responsibility and care for his subjects and soldiers that make him question the essence of kingship later.[1197] The discussion makes him evaluate ceremony as the only thing distinguishing a king from his subjects—a hollow chimera that establishes no substantial difference. He thus dismantles kingship as a mere show—the effect of his reformation only paid off partially. The king he intends to be is just a shell that he fills as another role without substance. In the three plays that encompass his development, Hal plays many different roles from roguish prince to scholar king and hero of Agincourt; he is a schemer in the Gad's Hill robbery, a "Herculean hero" in battle against the Percies, and an ideal knight in his showdown with Hotspur. By doing this, Hal tries to sort out his masculinity by grounding his identity in various ideals.[1198] What his underlying self is, however, remains elusive.

That Hal only pretends to be the wanton young man he plays to better his reputation as a king makes him a schemer who is not always who he seems to be; he cannot be taken at face value as it is not always clear if he is just playing a role or is being himself. This renders Henry's character ambiguous and destabilises the evaluation of his

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[1193] Smith 2000: 21.
[1194] The tavern scenes in *2HIV* show how Hal analyses both his companions as well as how his ways are not necessarily royal but rather mean. In *2HIV* 2.2, he discourses with Ned Poins about small beer, the relationship with him, and the wardrobe of Poins. "Belike then my appetite was not princely got; [...] Or to bear the inventory of thy shirts—as one for superfluity, and another for use." (*2HIV*, 2.2.9-16). He has an incredible capacity to remember even the most minute details—an ability that enables him to rule over his subjects, to "objectify" them (Cahill 2008: 94-95; Smith 200: 85).
[1195] Schruff 1999: 117; Erasmus 1997: 73, 70.
[1196] Schruff 1999: 261.
[1197] Schruff 1999: 263. See also chapter 3.1.1 and 3.5.1.
[1198] Smith 2000: 65.

performance; the Bishop of Ely detects Henry's scheme after his "reformation" when he states "And so the Prince obscured his contemplation / Under the veil of wildness—which, no doubt, / Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night, / Unseen, yet crescive in his faculty" (*HV*, 1.1. 64-67). Hal proved able to use time for his advantage; only Warwick saw through Hal's scheme[1199] and thus could calm down the king about his unthrifty son, claiming that

> […] you look beyond him quite.
> The Prince but studies his companions,
> Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language,
> 'Tis needful that the most immodest word
> Be looked upon and learnt, which once attained,
> Your highness knows, comes to no further use
> But to be known and hated; so, like gross terms,
> The Prince will in the perfectness of time,
> Cast off his followers, and their memory
> Shall as a pattern or a measure live
> By which his grace must mete the lives of other,
> Turning past evils to advantages.
> (*2HIV*, 4.3.67-78)

Warwick knows that there is always a right time for certain acts and that the prince will use his experience for responsible rule, but Henry's role play with the soldiers before Agincourt shows that this is not always the case.

Signs of the impending reformation show up here and there in the two Henry IV plays as when Hal rebukes Falstaff during battle when he meets him with a bottle of alcohol: "What, is it time to jest and dally now?" (*1HIV*, 5.3.54). Yet, before Prince Hal can turn into King Henry V, he has to come a long way. The miraculous metamorphosis from a wanton prince to an allegedly "ideal" king implies that he has to get rid of his former life. His time in the tavern in Eastcheap he spends with commoners, prostitutes and thieves drinking, robbing and being idle is personified in the figure of his friend Falstaff. As a king, however, he has to be temperate and able to govern both himself as well as his kingdom, so he has to dismiss Falstaff who embodies intemperance and all the values contradictory to kingship and due governance.[1200] Schruff calls Falstaff an "anarchist of time"[1201] who has to be rejected because the different worlds—the one "out of season" at Eastcheap and the orderly world of the court—may not be mixed. After the coronation, Falstaff is in the wrong place at the wrong time, not knowing that his companionship with Hal is over.[1202] Henry's "How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!" (*2HIV*, 5.5.46) brings this home. Falstaff is the impersonation of an unmanly man—he is flaccid, a coward, lazy, and prone to bodily lusts. His body is dominated by phlegm, moist and cold like the moon;[1203] besides, he calls himself "melancholy as a gib cat or a lugged bear" (*1 HIV*, 2.1.64-65), so he has an excess of black bile, and is unable to control his body chemistry and establish a truly male character. As physical

[1199] Schruff 1999: 246.
[1200] Smith 2000: 21.
[1201] Schruff 1999: 244.
[1202] Schruff 1999: 245.
[1203] Smith 2000: 17. Even his death is connected to the cold and water—he dies at the changing of the watery tide which is governed by the cold moon, see *HV*, 2.3.12.

proximity also influenced others, the emasculating influence of Falstaff has to be banished by the newly crowned King Henry.[1204] The time for Hal's announced reformation has come after his coronation when he declares that

> […] I survive
> To mock the expectation of the world,
> To frustrate prophecies, and to raze out
> Rotten opinion, who hath writ me down
> After my seeming. The tide of blood in me
> Hath proudly flowed in vanity till now.
> Now doth it turn, and ebb back to the sea,
> Where it shall mingle with the state of floods,
> And flow henceforth in formal majesty.
> (*2HIV*, 5.2.124-132)

With his coronation, Henry perceives himself as physiologically transformed;[1205] his reformation is complete when he declares

> Presume not that I am the thing I was,
> For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,
> That I have turned away my former self;
> So will I those that kept me company.
> (*2HIV*, 5.5.54-57)

Campbell expresses the immediate change of manners and character after the coronation as "putting on his garments of virtue"[1206]—a hint that now the inner and outer comply with Hal's degree and his tasks. Hal's first act as king is the banishment of Falstaff and the rewarding of the Chief Justice—as Campbell interprets it, "justice" itself.[1207] By putting on his "garments of virtue," Hal also takes up the responsibility of kingship that also includes the dismissal of Falstaff. It is not as cold-blooded as it may seem to modern audiences as he makes sure his comrades are well provided for—but they have to keep away from the king as long as they do not reform their manners (*2HIV*, 5.2.45; 61-68) so that he is not exposed to their pernicious influence. It is in the hands of Falstaff and his crew to enter the king's grace again. Prince John comments on the proceedings:

> I like this fair proceeding of the king's:
> He hath intent his wonted followers
> Shall all be very well provided for;
> But all are banish'd till their conversations
> Appear more wise and modest to the world.
> (*2HIV*, 5.5.91-95)

As a crowned king, Henry casts off his "former self" along with his former companions; his pretended role of the passionate, humorous Hal is over now by an act of willpower. But what is the basis for his new self? Is it just another role he invented for himself? Interestingly, Henry claims to have incorporated his old role that he now turns away from. In the reformation speech, he had constructed his self as something

[1204] This proximity correlates with the Renaissance concept of *convenientia*, see Foucault 1970: 18-19.
[1205] Smith 2000: 21. The ritual anointment and the endowment with the royal insignia changed his inner and outer being, so the reformation is a logical consequence of his newly acquired status.
[1206] Campbell 1947: 241.
[1207] Campbell 1947: 242.

covered up by his wild appearance, as something that should shine through after his reformation. So now, at the point where that "real" self should become visible, Henry just claims to have "turned away my former self," not defining what he is going to be in the future. The only hint he gives is "formal majesty" (*2HIV*, 5.2.132) that serves as a mould for his blood to flow in; it is the formative element that shall guide his humours and thus his being. However, Henry does not live up to his inchoate ideals; when faced with the realities of kingship in the battles of France, he cannot come to terms with the practical responsibilities of being a monarch. Even though his problem of legitimacy is supposedly overcome by the victory at Agincourt, Henry's reasoning before the battle shows a man not content with his position; Henry dismisses the idea of formal majesty as "idol ceremony" he initially based his role model on (see chapter 3.5.1).

Even before he dismisses Falstaff, Henry's first act as king is the acceptance of the Lord Chief Justice as his new father figure and chief councillor (*2HIV*, V.2.117). When he convenes Parliament and plans to choose his councillors (*2HIV*, 5.2.133-136), he places himself firmly in the body politic of his realm with the intention to govern the country wisely and rationally. He underlines this image when he shows himself in the company of his council during his first appearance in *Henry V* (*HV*, 1.2. SD). The staging proves effective as he is later praised for being "well supplied with agèd counsellors" by his enemies (*HV*, 2.4.33); likewise, the Archbishop of Canterbury comments on Henry's sudden reformation from lewd prince to responsible king at the very beginning of *Henry V*:

> Never was such a sudden scholar made;
> Never came reformation in a flood
> With such a heady currance, scouring faults.
> For never Hydra-headed wilfulness
> So soon did lose his seat, and all at once,
> As in this king.
>
> (*HV*, 1.1.33-38.)

Henry soon has the opportunity to use his newly acquired virtues of temperance and justice when he faces treason by his former friends Scroop, Cambridge, and Grey. The plotters do not know that Henry is informed about their plans, and until the disclosure of the treason, Henry plays an ambiguous game with them.[1208] Before being faced with a more substantial threat against the state and the king, the king pardons a man who had abused Henry when being drunk, an incident Shakespeare added to underline Henry's justice and mercy.[1209] Now, confronted with an attack on a grander scale, Henry cannot use clemency anymore:[1210]

> You have conspired against our royal person,
> Joined with an enemy proclaimed and fixed,
> And from his coffers
> Received the golden earnest of our death,
> Wherein you would have sold your king to slaughter,
> His princes and his peers to servitude,

[1208] Schruff 1999: 26.
[1209] Schruff 1999: 27. In 1539, an offender charged with a similar misdeed, was hanged, disembowelled, castrated, beheaded, and quartered (Schruff 1999: 26).
[1210] Schruff 1999: 27.

His subjects to oppression and contempt,
And his whole kingdom into desolation.
Touching our person seek we no revenge,
But we our kingdom's safety must so tender,
Whose ruin you have sought, that to her laws
We do deliver you. […]

(*HV*, 2.2.162-173)

It is not the personal treason against his body private that Henry avenges, it is the attack on his body politic, the whole realm, which he has to punish. It is only the care for his peers, the commoners and the state of England that makes Henry sentence his former friends to death. The traitors even express their gratitude at his sentence (*HV*, 2.2.146-160).[1211] Thus, he reinstalls formal order; but the picture is destabilised by the fact that the scene is framed by two tavern scenes where English subjects are about to kill each other—an image of disorder and discord within Henry's realm.[1212] As the state within the commonwealth always mirrors the prince who reigns it, the juxtaposition of these scenes is quite telling.[1213] This confusion of the inner and outer may be a clue to the state Henry himself is in. Nim characterises this ambivalence in Henry's character quite accurately: "The king is a good king but be it as it may. He passes some humours and careers" (*HV*, 2.1.110-111). It seems that he is neither self-controlled nor always honest in what he says or how he appears, disqualifying the show of magnanimity paired with rational justice. Rather, he seems to be torn between different roles and the lack of a personal substance that can prop up his acting; this tension will more and more expose itself during *Henry V*.

3.3.2 "I, That Am Not Shaped for Sportive Tricks"—Richard III's Scheming to the Throne

Shakespeare establishes one of the most striking connections between the desire for power and the humoral body in the character of Richard of Gloucester in *Richard III*. The arch-villain of the first tetralogy openly confesses in the first scene of the play that the motivation for his political scheming and machinations is rooted in his deformed body. Now that the struggle for the English throne seems to be settled as Richard's brother Edward IV wears the crown, Richard feels that he has to redefine his self-image and find a new role in times of peace:

But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass,
I that am rudely stamped and want love's majesty
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph,
I that am curtailed of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
Into this breathing world scarce half made up –
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them –
Why, I in this weak piping times of peace
Have no delight to pass away the time,

[1211] Schruff 1999: 28.
[1212] Schruff 1999: 28.
[1213] Schruff 1999: 51.

Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
And descant on mine own deformity.
And therefore since I cannot prove a lover
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
I am determinèd to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
(*RIII*, 1.1.14-31)

Richard feels deprived of the joy the others derive from the pleasures of peace because of his deformed body; he feels "cheated" by nature and is utterly frustrated that he will never charm a woman with his looks or even be satisfied with his own appearance. As he is unable to partake in courtly society like other men, Gloucester decides to turn his self-hate against others; as he can neither love himself nor incite love in others, power seems to be an achievable and desirable goal for him, an *ersatz* gratification for his perceived unsuitability for courtly society and love. His self-hate induces a void within his masculine identity that becomes the motivation to make him forget family bonds and even plot the murder of his own brother (see *RIII*, 1.1.32-40). Altman thinks that Richard's "delight in his achievements" motivates "his determination to play out a role that best befits his situation"[1214]—consequently, Richard tries to overcome his physical condition by his role-play; what he cannot achieve through his physical appearance, he will attain through language and deceit.[1215]

How he employs linguistic power to manipulate others shows well in Richard's wooing of Anne that turns out as a battle of wits. The setting is more than awkward; Richard proposed to the widowed Anne over the corpse of her late father-in-law, King Henry VI. The potential bride detests him and confronts the Yorkist with the murders of both Henry VI and her husband Edward. In an elegy to the late king, Anne curses the murderer as well as any future child or wife he may have—thus, she unwittingly curses herself (*RIII*, 1.2.5-28). With threats of violence, Richard orders the coffin bearers to set down their load and demonstrates his power to translate his words into others' actions (*RIII*, 1.2.29-37, 39-42). Anne is shocked both by Richard's appearance and his actions: "What black magician conjures up this fiend / To stop devoted charitable deeds?" Anne identifies Richard as a "dreadful minister of hell," a term that indicates her own fear of him. But even though Richard could harm Henry's body, she makes clear that he does not have power over his soul and sends Richard away (*RIII*, 1.2.34-48). Now, Richard begins his wooing proper; he calls Anne "sweet saint" and asks her not to be so ill-tempered (*RIII*, 1.2.49), but she rejects the advances of the "foul devil" who had turned earth into hell by his "heinous deeds"—and just at that moment, Henry's wounds, induced by Richard, the "foul lump of deformity," begin to bleed again in the presence of his murderer (*RIII*, 1.2.50-61). When Anne wishes that his deed be revenged upon him, Richard tries to calm her down and reprimands her for her lack of charity as she curses him (*RIII*, 1.2.62-69). Anne, however, turns his argument around and accuses the

[1214] Altman 1978: 295.
[1215] Indeed, the body of the historical Richard was deformed by a heavy scoliosis and of a rather slight, even feminine built. In February 2013, the mortal remains of Richard were found beneath a parking lot in Leicester and identified by DNA tests of living descendants (see Kennedy 2013). For an analysis of *Richard III*, see also Champion 1977: 20-22, 24, 27-28.

"villain" to know even less pity than an animal, a claim Richard wittily counters with the fact that he is no beast because he knows no pity; Anne is amazed to hear him speak the truth (*RIII*, 1.2.70-73). But Richard wants to excuse himself of the supposed crimes towards this "angel" and "divine perfection of a woman" (*RIII*, 1.2.74-77). Richard builds up an opposition between himself, the devilish pitiless creature, and her, the angelic pitiful woman (*RIII*, 1.2.78-88). Richard tries to exculpate himself by accusing Margaret to have provoked him to kill the dead Lancastrians, but Anne does not believe him and wants him to admit his lie (*RIII*, 1.2.89-104). Anne leads Richard's dichotomy of heaven and hell further; Richard thinks that Henry is better off in heaven because this is the place he belongs to, Anne retorts that there is no other place Richard belongs to than hell—but he thinks the place he belongs to is her bedchamber (*RIII*, 1.2.105-111). Anne curses his resting chamber, and Richard adds that he shall have ill rest until he lies with her, to which Anne answers "I hope so" (*RIII*, 1.2.112-113)—does she already give in to his wooing or did she not understand the implications of her response? Interestingly, the balance tips now to Richard's favour with his reply "I know so," indicating their final marriage and her giving in to him. While Anne was able to keep up with his witticisms and linguistic force so far, the pace of the conversation is sped up by stichomythic dialogue, a means derived from the Senecan tragic tradition that provided tension between the protagonists.[1216] The short and quick exchanges between Richard and Anne are the machinations of wit at work where Richard keeps the upper hand by using Anne's rhetoric against herself and forcing her to comply with his scheme. Thus, the scene expresses erotic friction through linguistic wit.[1217]

Richard changes direction in this "encounter of our wits" once he finds that he does not get anywhere. When Anne only identifies Richard as sole cause for the murder of the Lancastrians, Gloucester claims that her beauty inspired him to murder Henry VI and his son because he desired her (*RIII*, 1.2.114-124). Anne is shocked and threatens to wreck her beauty if that is true but does not dare to take action; rather, she curses Richard's days to be overshadowed by night, a wish Richard turns around by asking her not to curse herself as she is his sun. Anne tries to wriggle free from the linguistic trap, claiming unconvincingly that she wants to be both his night and day to take revenge on him (*RIII*, 1.2.125-133). Richard tries to explain that he just killed her husband to help her to a better and more loving one—himself (*RIII*, 1.2.134-144). Anne, apparently at a loss for words, spits at him, insulted, humiliated, and unable to defend herself any other way. When asked why she did that, all she can manage is "Would it were mortal poison for thy sake" (*RIII*, 1.2.144-145). While Richard thinks that poison never came from a sweeter place, Anne calls him a "foul toad" that infects her eyes (*RIII*, 1.2.146-148). Gloucester turns the image around, claiming that her eyes had infected his; she, in turn, wishes that her eyes were basilisks' to strike him dead. Richard agrees because her looks made him weep, him, who never "sued to friend nor enemy," claiming her beauty to be his recompense as he could never flatter (a lie, of course). As Anne still scorns him, Richard claims that her lips were not made to scorn but to kiss. As her hate does

[1216] Altman 1978: 242-243.
[1217] Breitenberg 1996: 134; Greenblatt 1988: 89.

still not relent, he plays his trump—if she really wishes him dead and cannot forgive him, she may kill him with his sword. She indeed thrusts at his bared chest—but his encouragement to kill him makes her drop the sword. In an act of triumph, he exclaims "Take up the sword again, or take up me" (*RIII*, 1.2.149-171). Richard rightly calculated that she would not dare to kill him, so he gives Anne a choice that she will not free herself from. She refuses to kill him, even though she detests the "dissembler"; Richard then bids her to ask him to kill himself in a calm and clear state of mind, making clear that she would thus be the "accessory" to his as well as the Lancastrians' death (*RIII*, 1.2.172-179). The trick works out—Anne is unwilling to load this sin onto herself; she wishes to know Richard's mind, even though she knows that both his tongue and heart are false (*RIII*, 1.2.180-183). Anne bids him to take up his sword, and Richard asks her if he may "hope" to which she evasively answers that "All men, I hope, live so" (*RIII*, 1.2.184-185). Richard knows that she cannot put up any resistance any longer, so he forces a ring onto her finger; Anne tries to persuade herself that bearing a ring does not mean giving herself, but she and the audience know that the game is over for her. Richard bids her to wait for him at his residence, Crosby House, until he has interred Henry's body and has repented on his grave. It is most astonishing that Anne complies "With all my heart" and is happy that Richard intends to repent (*RIII*, 1.2.186-208). Anne's change of mind is hardly comprehensible but indicates that she surrendered to Richard's linguistic force and is unable to put up any resistance; her only defence left is her sarcasm when she refuses to give Richard a farewell and bids him to imagine that she already had bid him farewell (*RIII*, 1.2.210-112). Trapped in this situation, she is apparently not as naïve as she might seem; rather, she knows that she has to play along to best Richard with his own weapons.

Richard orders the coffin bearers to bring Henry's corpse to Blackfriars and wait there for him and his orders (*RIII*, 1.2.213-214). He wallows in his triumph over Anne, even more so as he is the antithesis of her dead husband whose more advantageous physiognomy makes Richard's triumph even bigger; in his dazzlement, he even presumes that he became physically attractive to Anne. This narcissistic self-delusion sarcastically expresses Richard's yearning for love and appraisal that is deeply influenced by his crippled body and his unattractive masculinity:

> Was ever woman in this humour wooed?
> Was ever woman in this humour won?
> I'll have her, but I will not keep her long.
> What, I that killed her husband and his father,
> To take her in her heart's extremest hate,
> […]
> And yet to win her, all the world to nothing? Ha!
> Hath she forgot already that brave prince,
> Edward her lord, whom I some three months since
> Stabbed in my angry mood at Tewkesbury?
> A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,
> Framed in the prodigality of nature,
> Young, valiant, wise, and no doubt right royal,
> The spacious world cannot again afford –
> And will she yet abase her eyes on me,
> That cropped the golden prime of this sweet prince
> And made her widow to a woeful bed?
> On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?

On me, that halts and am misshapen thus?
My dukedom to a beggarly *dernier*,
I do mistake my person all this while.
Upon my life she finds, although I cannot,
Myself to be a marv'lous proper man.
I'll be at charges for a looking-glass
And entertain a score or two of tailors
To study fashions to adorn my body.
Since I am crept in favour of myself,
I will maintain it with some little cost.
(*RIII*, 1.2.215-219, 225-246)

Even though Richard's wish for a wife is a mere part of his plans, he is astonished that the widow of his enemy accepted his courtship even though he "want[s] love's majesty" and "cannot prove a lover" (*RIII*, 1.1.16, 28). Anne's dead husband is the antithesis of Richard—he was perfect, regal, wise, and handsome. That Gloucester now gained Anne's hand makes him vain for a moment; it may be mockingly or as self-appreciation. That Richard prevailed in this antagonism of masculinities—there the valiant, handsome but dead Edward, there the wicked, deformed but successfully alive Richard—satisfies him and induces him with a hint of self-respect for his body, his looks, and his physicality due to his victory of wit. The creature that was barked at by dogs and who would only look at his shadow to "descant on mine own deformity" is now, having wooed a woman successfully, willing to look at himself, being "in favour with myself."

His outer deformity becomes a signifier for his inner cruelty; and interestingly, early modern people believed that physical disabilities affected the organs to which they were closest. Richard's hunchback, therefore, affects his heart, the seat of blood.[1218] Lemnius comments:

> For where there is an error about some principal part, there the mind partakes of some inconvenience, and cannot perfectly perform her offices. So they that are deformed with a bunch-back, so it be a natural Infirmity, and not accidental, nor come by any fall of blow, are commonly wicked and malitious; because the depravation is communicated to the heart, that is the fountain and beginning of life.[1219]

Richard's passion for power is rooted in his deformed body that is an outward sign of his inner wickedness and humoral makeup. This interdependence locks Richard into a vicious circle of cruelty that he enacts through his scheming plots. He gives away how he intends to work out his linguistic strategy when he declares that he intends to engage ambivalence and double entendres: "Thus like the formal Vice, Iniquity, / I moralize two meanings in one word" (*RIII*, 3.1.82-83). His wickedness will operate through the space that language opens up, for just as words can be used for his own advantage, truth is bendable and no longer absolute. As Iniquity, the personification of vice taken from the old morality plays, he does not shy away from employing religious *topoi* and uses theology proficiently for his own means.[1220] But human wit and inventiveness have their

[1218] Smith 2000: 18.
[1219] Lemnius 1658: 131.
[1220] Tillyard 1944: 195.

limitations; the developments of the play eventually show that ingenious wit becomes dangerous when it loses its moral base.[1221]

The next step in his plan to achieve the crown is the elimination of his brother Clarence; due to a prophecy according to which "G" will be the murderer of Edward's children, the frightened king has George Clarence locked up in the Tower, not calculating that the danger might emanate from Richard Gloucester who had the story circulated (*RIII*, 1.1.32-61). To sow discord, Richard tells Clarence that the queen, her family, and Jane Shore are behind the whole scheme; as Clarence shares Richard's enmity towards both women, their fraternal accordance and intimacy gives the conversation quite a sharp, sarcastic undertone (*RIII*, 1.1.62-83). Brackenbury urges Clarence on, but Richard claims that they did not talk treason but the truth, even though his comments show his inclination to double talk (*RIII*, 1.1.84-103). Before Brackenbury separates the brothers, Richard promises that he would do anything to free Clarence and declares his brotherly love and support, but when Clarence is off stage, Richard lets down the mask and shows his true intention to send his brother's soul to heaven (*RIII*, 1.1.104-121). In his conversation with the newly released Hastings, he similarly employs double meanings; while they both agree superficially on their hatred against the queen and her family, Richard claims that Hasting's enemies are also Clarence's—which means it is he himself (*RIII*, 1.1.122-132). When Hastings reports that King Edward is bedridden and sick, Gloucester feigns pity; when he is alone on stage, Richard reveals that he only hopes the king will live long enough to deepen his hate towards Clarence with "lies well steeled with weighty arguments" to have Clarence killed as soon as possible. When Edward is dead, Richard's ascent to the throne will be relatively easy. To stabilise his position, he will marry Anne and replace the dead Lancastrians. He admits that he will marry her for secret purposes he does not yet disclose; but his thoughts and plans get the better of him that he has to force himself to concentrate on the tasks ahead: killing Clarence and visiting Edward (*RIII*, 1.1.133-162). Richard establishes a compliance with the audience by theatrical irony; he reveals his real intentions in asides and soliloquies while the characters on stage do not know his true plans and mistake Richard's show for truth.

The queen and her family know that nothing good will befall them when Richard Gloucester, their proclaimed enemy, will become Lord Protector after his brother's death (*RIII*, 1.3.1-16). Queen Elizabeth does not believe in a lasting settlement and feels that their "happiness is at the height," soon to be turned into despair (*RIII*, 1.3.17-41). And right she is—when Richard enters, he poses as an honest man who feels betrayed by malicious people, accusing the queen and her family to molest the king with irrational complaints about him, but the queen repudiates the charge and explains that it was the king himself who felt that Richard acted ill against his wife and her family (*RIII*, 1.3.42-69). Only then does Richard begin to insinuate his resistance against the social climbing of the queen's family that disgraces his nobility; furthermore, he accuses her clan of having arranged Clarence's imprisonment (*RIII*, 1.3.70-82). Richard

[1221] Altman 1978: 179.

further charges the queen with abusing her position to scheme against the established nobility like himself, ignoring Lord Rivers' objections (*RIII*, 1.3.83-102). Unable to defend herself effectively, Elizabeth threatens to tell her husband about Richard's "bitter scoffs," but Richard is willing to hazard imprisonment and repeat every single word in front of the king; he feels that his efforts to install Edward on the throne are not rewarded accordingly while Elizabeth's former husband fought for the Lancastrians, alleging that Elizabeth is not a loyal Yorkist but merely interested in the advancement of her family (*RIII*, 1.3.103-117, 121-133). Richard further approves of his brother Clarence's treatment who is rewarded with imprisonment for his service (*RIII*, 1.3.135-136, 138-142). Thus, Richard tries to portray himself as a kind-hearted, merely naïve executor of his brother's cause—in crass opposition to his real intentions. When Richard exclaims that anything is further from his mind than becoming king (*RIII*, 1.3.149-150), the deceit is at a climax.

The only one who sees clearly through Richard's strategy is the old Queen Margaret; she warns all the others—even though they are her enemies—of Richard:

> Look when he fawns, he bites; and when he bites,
> His venom tooth will rankle to the death.
> Have naught to do with him; beware of him;
> Sin, death, and hell have set their marks on him,
> And all their ministers attend to him.
> (*RIII*, 1.3.288-292)

Amazingly, Richard puts up a show of repentance and thinks that Margaret's frantic curses are justified because of her grief, keeping up appearances as a pitiful, relenting person—a tactics Rivers falls for (*RIII*, 1.3.304-306, 309-315). After all the others are gone to meet the king, Richard makes clear how his show is supposed to work:

> I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.
> The secret mischiefs that I set abroach
> I lay unto the grievous charge of others.
> Clarence, whom I indeed have cast in darkness,
> I do beweep to many simple gulls –
> […]
> Now they believe it and withal whet me
> To be revenged on Rivers, Dorset, Gray;
> But then I sigh, and with a piece of scripture
> Tell them that God bids us do good for evil;
> And thus I clothe my naked villainy
> With odd old ends, stol'n forth of Holy Writ,
> And seem a saint when most I play the devil.
> (*RIII*, 1.3.322-326, 330-336)

He does the mischief he wants to blame on others, and when he has the trust of his enemies, he will abuse it. To cover up his sins, he intends to cloak them into religious terms, playing the double game of a wolf in sheep's clothing. Immediately after his confession, he instructs the murderers of his brother Clarence on how to "dispatch this thing" (*RIII*, 1.3.337-353). The murder then happens in Act one Scene four.

King Edward wants to establish a lasting peace before he dies, so he forces the members of his wife's family and the old Yorkist circle to reconcile. What seems to be the heartfelt wish of a dying man of course cannot guarantee lasting peace (*RIII*, 2.1.1-

44). Interestingly, Richard enters *after* the others have sworn peace but chimes in with the most subtle declarations of reconciliation. He claims that "'Tis death to me to be at enmity" and that there is no one against whom he feels anger (*RIII*, 2.1.47-73). When Queen Elizabeth asks Edward to include Clarence into the peacemaking, Richard surprises all bluntly stating that Clarence is dead, accusing the others of scorning his body by their talk, but their shock starkly contrasts the accusation (*RIII*, 2.1.74-87). King Edward, who had revoked the first death sentence, is aghast to hear that the repeal arrived too late, but Richard, who had ordered the murder, now blames Edward for his brother's death that he himself caused (*RIII*, 2.1.88-95). Edward leaves the stage lamenting his rashness against his brother while Richard tries to blame Clarence's death onto the queen's family despite his earlier assurance of peace (*RIII*, 2.1.103-140). His tactics of blaming others for his own machinations works out successfully. Richard's show of the innocent victim is quite effective; only the Duchess of York, Richard's mother, sees through his scheming and claims that he did not inherit his slyness from her (*RIII*, 2.2.20-30, 53-54). After King Edward has died, Richard, Buckingham, and the others prepare for the coronation of young Prince Edward and plan to bring him to London. To keep him away from the queen's family, her relatives are imprisoned at Pomfret, the castle where King Richard II was killed (*RIII*, 2.2.40, 100-124, 2.4.41-47). Queen Elizabeth, who feels that Richard plots something dangerous against her and her family, decides to seek sanctuary with her younger son to keep safe with the support of the Cardinal (*RIII*, 2.4.48-53, 65, 67-72).

When the prince finally arrives in London, Richard calls his nephew "my thoughts' sovereign" (*RIII*, 3.1.2), using double talk. Not only does the prince have sovereignty over his uncle, but he is also the centre of Richard's thoughts who wants to overcome him to ascend the throne himself. When the prince laments that he misses his incarcerated uncles, Richard slyly explains:

> Sweet Prince, the untainted virtue of your years
> Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit,
> No more can you distinguish of a man
> Than of his outward show, which God he knows
> Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart.
> Those uncles which you want were dangerous.
> Your grace attended to their sugared words,
> But looked not on the poison of their hearts.
> God keep you from them, and from such false friends.
> (*RIII*, 3.1.7-15)

Richard tries to persuade the prince that his uncles are dangerous to him but cloaking their intentions, a tactic Richard himself uses and blames others for; it is not the imprisoned uncles but Richard himself who will prove a "false friend" through his "sugared words" and "outward show." Prince Edward swallows this explanation but is disappointed that his mother and brother do not to welcome him. When Hastings explains that they have taken sanctuary, Buckingham persuades the Cardinal to at least bring the younger brother to the impatient prince (*RIII*, 3.1.20-21, 25-60). Edward then wants to know where he and his brother are supposed to stay until the coronation, and Richard suggests the Tower, a place that the prince loathes because of its ominous history (*RIII*, 3.1.61-79). Even though he has an ill foreboding, the young prince cannot

yet know that his uncle Richard wants to have them under control there and do away with him and his brother. The prince's newly arrived younger brother Richard of York is also not happy to stay in the Tower as he is afraid of the ghost of Clarence who was murdered there. Edward claims that he is not afraid of uncles dead or alive but hopes that none of them may mean them harm; when the boys leave, they do so "with a heavy heart" (*RIII*, 3.1.136-149). Richard is irritated by the boys' sharp minds, but Buckingham focuses on business and wants to know whom they can trust with the plot of the princes' murder. Catesby is supposed to find out the lay of the land with Hastings and Stanley; and to make Hastings more pliable, Richard wants him to know that his enemies, the queen's family, will be killed at Pomfret the next day (*RIII*, 3.1.150-187). Buckingham asks what Richard intends to do with Hastings if he should not comply, and gets a swift answer: "Chop off his head." As a reward for his services, Richard promises Buckingham the earldom of Hereford when he has become king—a promise that will cause a rift between the two later on (*RIII*, 3.1.188-197).

Lord Stanley had a dream about a boar (the heraldic animal of Richard) killing him and warns Hastings via a messenger about his fears of the double councils the next day, but Hastings does not worry but advises Stanley not to "fly the boar before the boar pursues" because that "[w]ere to incense the boar to follow us." Rather, Hastings wants Standley to accompany him to the council in the Tower (*RIII*, 3.2.1-30). Catesby enters and claims that the fast-moving world can only be steadied when Richard wears the crown to test the ground; Hastings dismisses this statement decidedly and asks if Richard aims at the throne. Catesby openly admits that Richard does and counts on Hastings' support, adding that the queen's relatives shall soon be killed at Pomfret. While Hastings is not unhappy about the murder of his enemies, he is not willing to support Richard's plan to bar the legitimate successor when Stanley enters (*RIII*, 3.2.32-52). He makes clear that all of them are not safe, wishing that the queen's relatives lived while others should lose their offices (*RIII*, 3.2.69-89).

When the council is opened to discuss the prince's coronation, the queen's relatives are already dead (see *RIII*, 3.3). The participants want to hear Richard's opinion on the matter, but he is still absent. Buckingham slyly suggests that Hastings might know about Richard's inclination, but while Hastings is flattered, he has to admit that he has no information but would vote in Richard's stead (*RIII*, 3.4.1-20). During the council, Richard puts on a new role; he enters late and explains that he had slept long. To get rid of the Bishop of Ely, he asks for some strawberries from his garden, appearing rather negligent in the face of the pressing duties of state ahead (*RIII*, 3.4.22-34). As Hastings is not willing to support Richard's cause, Gloucester withdraws with Buckingham to discuss their further proceedings (*RIII*, 3.4.35-41). While they are away, the others reveal that they take Richard's show at face value, a deadly error (*RIII*, 3.48-58). Richard and Buckingham meanwhile elaborate on a plan to eliminate Hastings; on their return, they accuse the queen and Jane Shore—who had become Hastings' mistress after her affair with Edward IV—to have bewitched Richard's arm. As the "protector of this damned strumpet," Richard has Hastings executed (*RIII*, 3.4.59-79). Hastings, who had thought himself safe, understands now that became a victim of Richard's because he did not support his coronation (*RIII*, 3.4.80-91). In his plot, Richard uses his deformed body

as a projection screen to dispose of an opponent; Hastings' connection to Jane Shore is enough to have him die for an offence that is merely invented and acted out on Richard's already crippled body.

Richard knows that he needs public support to get the throne, so he puts up a show of disappointed love with Hastings who, according to his version, wanted to kill Richard and Buckingham (*RIII*, 3.5.13-37). As Richard needs Buckingham's help to convince the Lord Mayor and the citizens of London, he asks him whether he is a good actor:

> Come, cousin, canst thou quake and change thy colour?
> Murder thy breath in middle of a word?
> And then again begin, and stop again,
> As if thou wert distraught and mad with terror?
> (*RIII*, 3.5.1-4)

Buckingham, of course, is up for the task:

> Tut, I can counterfeit the deep tragedian,
> Tremble and start at waging of a straw,
> Speak, and look back, and pry on every side,
> Intending deep suspicion; ghastly looks
> Are at my service, like enforcèd smiles,
> And both are ready in their offices
> At any time to grace my stratagems.
> (*RIII*, 3.5.5-11)

And indeed, the mayor swallows Richard's explanation (*RIII*, 3.5.38-49). Richard even uses the mayor in his scheme of public relations and ensures that the Lord Mayor will publicise this version of Hastings' execution to the citizens; Buckingham will pursue the mayor to the municipality to argue in Richard's behalf, demonstrating that Edward's children are illegitimate, the late king killed a citizen for a misunderstanding, and that Edward had an insatiable lust for women. To hinder the succession of Edward's progeny, Richard instructs Buckingham to tell the citizens that even King Edward himself was illegitimate (*RIII*, 3.5.50-95). With public opinion taken care of, Richard organises the murder of the princes in the Tower (*RIII*, 3.5.101-104). But despite his efforts, Richard's schemes become more and more obvious; the scrivener who wrote Hastings' bill of indictment already understands that his death was a "palpable device" (*RIII*, 3.6.1-14), and Buckingham's arguments against the succession of Edward's children are not as successful either; apart from a few followers of Buckingham's, no one cheered for Richard, even though their support sufficed as approval of the whole assembly (*RIII*, 3.7.1-43).

As if the allegations against Edward and his family were not enough, Buckingham and Richard plot a new strategy before the mayor and his entourage arrive from the town hall; Buckingham wants Richard to pose as a saint, propped up with a prayer book and the company of priests (*RIII*, 3.7.44-55). When the mayor arrives with the aldermen and citizens, Buckingham and Catesby declare that Richard is inside and does not want to be disturbed in his prayers; nevertheless, Catesby shall importune him once more (*RIII*, 3.7.56-70). Meanwhile, Buckingham portrays Richard as an earnest, religious, and virtuous person who would unlikely accept the charge to rule the kingdom in his

humility. The mayor exclaims: "Marry, God defend his grace should say us nay"—implying that the plot is about to work (*RIII*, 3.7.71-82). Richard refrains to come because he fears for his safety due to the multitude, so Buckingham sends Catesby again to bid him to come out (*RIII*, 3.7.83-94). Richard finally appears, supported politically by two bishops and simulating ignorance of what these people may want from him. When Buckingham informs him that they want to declare him king, Richard humbly declines on the grounds that Prince Edward is the next in line (*RIII*, 3.7.96-163). Buckingham claims that the late king's children are bastards, as Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Grey is "loathed bigamy" due to former betrothals. To amend the "corruption of abusing times" and to re-establish true majesty, Buckingham pleads Richard to accept kingship, echoed by the mayor and Catesby (*RIII*, 3.7.164-193). Richard asks why the others would want to burden him with the cares of kingship, a *topos* resounding through the Shakespearean tetralogies; he thinks himself unfit for rule and will therefore not take up the crown (*RIII*, 3.7.194-197). Buckingham explains to the mayor that Richard refuses the crown because he does not want to depose his own nephew due to his "tenderness of heart / And gentle, kind, effeminate remorse." If he does not want to become king, someone else has to be asked—a detriment to the Yorkist house as Prince Edward's chances of becoming king are now zero (*RIII*, 3.7.198-209). Richard finally surrenders and accepts the crown, even though he claims to do so "against my conscience and my soul," willing to "endure the load" despite his proclaimed resistance (*RIII*, 3.7.210-226). Having reached their goal with this show, Buckingham proclaims Richard king of England and proposes that he shall be crowned the following day. Richard accepts and returns to his "holy work again" with the bishops (*RIII*, 3.7.227-237). By claiming the exact opposite of his real wishes, Richard gains the throne with the help of Buckingham.

Their mother Elizabeth feels that the princes are in grave danger when she is denied access to her sons in the Tower. The Duchess of York, Marquis Dorset, and Anne Gloucester accompany her to greet Prince Edward before his coronation when Brackenbury argues that "[t]he King" has forbidden any visits. Asked who the king is, the guard corrects himself to "I mean, the Lord Protector." Elizabeth bids that heaven may prevent Richard from becoming king and cannot see her children just like the others (*RIII*, 4.1.1-27). They do not know yet that Richard is proclaimed king; Lord Stanley informs the unhappy Anne to get to Westminster to be crowned queen (*RIII*, 4.1.28-32, 36, 56). Elizabeth knows this is her children's death sentence; to spare her son Dorset, she immediately sends him away to join Richmond in exile (*RIII*, 4.1.33-35, 38-46). Anne knows that her (and Richard's) coronation is illegitimate; unlike Queen Elizabeth, she cannot forgive herself for giving in to Richard's wooing and recalls the curse she put upon Richard's future wife that kept her from sleeping ever since. She knows that Richard will dispose of her soon and leaves, full of remorse and cursing herself. Dorset sets off to join Richmond while Elizabeth seeks sanctuary; but before leaving, she turns around and hopes for her sons' safety within the Tower (*RIII*, 4.1.57-96.7).

Having achieved his ultimate goal, the crown, Richard begins to have his first doubts: "But shall we wear these glories for a day? / Or shall they last, and we rejoice in

them?" (*RIII*, 4.2.1-7). While Buckingham thinks that Richard will be king forever, he feels threatened by Prince Edward; Buckingham is unusually slow to understand, so Richard impatiently makes clear that he wants "the bastards dead." But Buckingham does not yet give his king a positive answer and leaves to get "some little breath, some pause" (*RIII*, 4.2.8-27). Richard suspects that his crony became overcritical, ambitious, and a bit too cautious. As this is no use for him, Richard hires Tyrell as murderer of the princes—and Buckingham is no longer his confidant (*RIII*, 4.2.28-46). Richard's downfall begins to unfold when Stanley informs Richard about Dorset's flight to Richmond. The king tries to focus on what to do next; he has to get rid of his wife Anne, so Richard wants Catesby to advertise that she is sick and likely to die soon. To eliminate Clarence's children, he plans to marry off the girl to some gentleman while he does not fear the boy. Then, he intends to kill both his wife and his nephews to later marry his niece Elizabeth to secure his power on the throne. After that, there will be no hindrances left (*RIII*, 4.2.47-64). Even though he feels this is an "[u]ncertain way of gain," he has gone too far to return; he is "[s]o far in blood that sin will pluck on sin" (*RIII*, 4.2.65-67). His misdeeds carried him away that more sins will not worsen his situation. So far, Richard's sins comprised murder and false promises; now, his ambitious passion makes him sin while he is simultaneously punished by a haunting fear that forces him to continue his murdering plots—a vicious circle he cannot escape.[1222] Richard is unable to steady himself while in power—having achieved what he wanted, he has to struggle to keep it up. The mere existence of the princes deeply disturbs Richard's peace of mind; they are "[f]oes to my rest and my sweet sleep's disturbers," so he is very satisfied when Tyrell promises to kill them (*RIII*, 4.2.68-85). When Buckingham enters with a resolve about the princes, he is dismissed by Richard to forget the whole thing—but Buckingham has a request himself and reminds Richard of the earldom of Hereford he had promised for his services. Fending off Buckingham's request, the king pretends to be completely occupied with Dorset's flight and Stanley's relation to Richmond who was prophesied to be king one day. Richard never answers Buckingham's repeated nagging but babbles on about the danger Richmond poses. Finally, Richard simply states that he is "not in the giving vein today" but feels molested by Buckingham who cannot believe that all his service will not be rewarded accordingly. He understands that he has fallen from grace and retires to Wales, fearing for his life (*RIII*, 4.2.86-125).

Richard is happy to hear that the princes are dead and buried somewhere in the premises of the Tower, so he offers Tyrell time to think about an appropriate reward (*RIII*, 4.3.1-35). With all but one of Richard's problems solved, he wants to fix the last one and woo his niece Elizabeth (*RIII*, 4.3.36-43). Before he can go, Ratcliffe enters with some news, a fact that makes Richard extremely anxious. He asks whether they are good or bad—and they are bad indeed: the Bishop of Ely defected to Richmond's party, and Buckingham raised a growing army against Richard. Even though Ely's defection troubles him more, Richard prepares for action against his former supporter's army (*RIII*, 4.3.44-57). Richard's growing insecurity, anxiety, and hurry increase in the

[1222] Campbell 1947: 317.

following scenes with Richard's downfall and show the more he has to secure his position.

Richard caused a lot of grief among the women who lost their male relatives; his violation of morality will eventually backfire. Queen Margaret, haunting the play like a Fury, accuses Richard bitterly of his deeds in the presence of his mother, the Duchess of York (*RIII*, 4.4.47-78). The destructive force of Richard's ravages even among his own family makes him look like an agent from hell who brings destruction and death; it seems he will find a miserable and lonely end all too soon. Margaret describes Richard as a demonic beast that is outside of human norm and even venomous but who will find the just reward for his deeds.[1223] Even though she admits that she makes Richard "fouler than he is" (*RIII*, 4.4.121), he himself used the dichotomy of the heavenly spheres and the devilish hell he himself represents in the wooing scene with Anne. With his strategies, he combined these spheres by his saintly outward show and his hellish inner wickedness (*RIII*, 1.3. 336) that leads to the destruction and chaos that unfolds in the course of the play.

The lamenting women confront Richard with their loss and grief when he is on his way to encounter Buckingham's army, trying to get past them. The Duchess of York wants to have a word with her son, but he orders her to be brief because he is in a hurry (*RIII*, 4.4.136-164). Even so, she bitterly reproaches him in a mode that resembles the cadences of Margaret's curses and lamentations:

> Thou cam'st on earth to make the earth my hell,
> A grievous burden was thy birth to me;
> Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;
> Thy schooldays frightful, desp'rate, wild, and furious;
> Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous;
> Thy age confirmed, proud, subtle, sly, and bloody;
> More mild, but yet more harmful; kind in hatred.
> (*RIII*, 4.4.167-173)

The duchess describes Richard like a pathologically "bloody" person whose excess in blood makes him act the way he does.[1224] His brutality as well as his body are mutually influenced by the unlimited humoral excess Lemnius had referred to; his hunchback close to the heart causes an overflow in blood that finds expression in his murderous determination.[1225] However, his excess in blood is about to turn into fear and anxiety that will culminate in the visitation of his victims' ghosts the night before the battle of Bosworth Field. Now, Richard's attempt to take his mother's accusation lightly seems forced, but the duchess is determined never to speak to her son again. She leaves

[1223] Tillyard 1944: 209. Queen Elizabeth denounces him as "bottled spider, that foul bunch-backed toad" (*RIII*, 4.4.81), Margaret abuses him as "dog" (*RIII*, 4.4.78), and even his mother, the Duchess of York, calls him "toad" twice in one line (*RIII*, 4.4.145). Besides, his heraldic animal, the boar, is a virile as well as a deadly symbol that is dreamt of by Stanley in 3.1. Kamm explains that in Renaissance thinking the boar was a symbol for winter as well as for masculinity in love and war (Kamm 2009: 78-79).
[1224] Smith 2000: 17.
[1225] Further examples are "Thou was provokèd by thy bloody mind, / That never dream'st on aught but butcheries" (*RIII*, 1.2.99-100); "O bloody Richard!" (*RIII*, 3.4.103); "Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end," (*RIII*, 4.4.195); "A bloody tyrant and a homicide; / One raised in blood, and one in blood established" (*RIII*, 5.5.200-201).

her son with the curse that she will always pray for the party fighting against Richard that shall be made victorious by the souls of his nephews (*RIII*, 4.4.176-196).

Richard's haste is suddenly gone when he sees Queen Elizabeth; when he tries to talk with her, she dismisses him and claims that she has no more sons for him to kill and that her daughters will be "praying nuns" and are not worth killing (*RIII*, 4.4.197-203). When she refers to her daughters, Richard bluntly begins his wooing: "You have a daughter called Elizabeth / Virtuous and fair, royal and gracious." The queen is alarmed and wants to "corrupt her manners, stain her beauty, / Slander myself as false to Edward's bed, / Throw over her the veil of infamy" (*RIII*, 4.4.204-211) to save her daughter's life. But Richard assures her that his niece's life is most sure because she is legitimate; when Elizabeth reminds him that the high birth of her brothers were their death, Richard tries to turn the fact into an act of fate (*RIII*, 4.4.212-221). In a passage that only appears in the Folio version of the text, Richard feels accused to have murdered his nephews, an allegation Elizabeth explicitly repeats with an outpouring of her grief about her sons' deaths (*RIII*, 4.4.221.1-221.14). She, who had lost her brothers and sons through Richard, cannot imagine how he could amend the harm done, so she wants to know plainly about Richard's plans for her daughter Elizabeth (*RIII*, 4.4.222-241). When he declares that "from my soul, I love thy daughter," Elizabeth twists around his meaning that Richard's love for her daughter originates *in* his soul but makes clear that his love is separated *from* his soul—just like he is from hers. Having his own linguistic tactics used against himself, his reaction is rather weak and exposes that his linguistic power is on the wane (*RIII*, 4.4.242-250). When he discloses that he wants to make his niece queen of England, the incredulous Elizabeth wants to know who her king is supposed to be. When he states it is him, Elizabeth confronts him with the impossibility of marrying her daughter because of his murders of her brothers and uncles. Richard's reply is rather dull: "You mock me, madam. This is not the way / To win your daughter" is all he can muster (*RIII*, 4.4.251-271). Elizabeth sarcastically argues that there is no other way unless he changes his shape and be someone else than himself (*RIII*, 4.4.271-273).

Richard's attempt to exculpate himself is only contained in the Folio version; unable to rid himself of the charges, he wants Elizabeth to tell her daughter that he killed for love—an argument that he already used wooing Anne but that has likewise no effect. To excuse his deeds, Richard tries to turn his carefully planned scheme to reach the throne into a random chain of events:

> Look what is done cannot be now amended.
> Men shall deal unadvisedly sometimes,
> Which after-hours gives leisure to repent.
> If I did take the kingdom from your sons,
> To make amends I'll give it to your daughter.
> If I have killed the issue of your womb,
> To quicken your increase I will beget
> Mine issue of your blood upon your daughter.
> […]
> The loss you have is but a son being king,
> And by that loss your daughter is made queen.

I cannot make you what amends I would,
Therefore accept such kindness as I can.
(*RIII*, 4.4.275.4-275.11, 275.20-275.23)

Richard unconvincingly feigns to rue the murders that he declares to be mere accidents; he tries to leave his responsibility in the dark, using vague "ifs" that nevertheless imply his involvement. That he wants to make amends for the murders is a further admission of his guilt—but his means are rather gruesome. After having wiped out a whole male generation of his family, he wants to replace them by impregnating his own niece with his children; her queenship would be the compensation for Prince Edward not having become king. What seemed to be an offer of appeasement enrages Elizabeth and makes her point out that Richard's potential bride is his own brother's daughter.[1226] Elizabeth wants to know how she shall call the wooer of her daughter as "God, the law, my honour, and her love" cannot approve of a union between them (*RIII*, 4.4.273.50-273.55). Elizabeth rebuts all Richard's reasons for a marriage like political peace, a king's plea, future glory, and love till the end of his niece's life; she not only confronts him with the murder of her boys again but charges him with the usurpation of the throne that renders his references to kingship worthless (*RIII*, 4.4.274-303). Their stichomythic exchange shows how Richard's strategy of "moraliz[ing] two meanings in one word" (*RIII*, 3.1.83) has hollowed out the relationship between words and meaning; not only has Richard's linguistic power been failing since he has become a nervous wreck anxious to cling on to power, but his self and his body are no longer usable as a projection screen. Rather, his crimes have separated him from the rest of humanity by a moral divide he cannot bridge or justify anymore. His desperate search for something he can arguably swear by that Elizabeth will accept illustrates this point strikingly (*RIII*, 4.4.297-327). After failing miserably to convince Elizabeth of his sincerity, he has to resort to moral bases like repentance and divine justice to prop up his pursuit. To do that, he even risks cursing himself:

As I intend to prosper and repent,
So thrive I in my dangerous affairs
Of hostile arms – myself myself confound,
Heaven and fortune bar me happy hours,
Day yield me not thy light nor night thy rest;
Be opposite, all plants of good luck,
To my proceeding – if, with dear heart's love,
Immaculate devotion, holy thoughts,
I tender not thy beauteous, princely daughter.
In her consists my happiness and thine.
Without her follows – to myself and thee,
Herself, the land, and many a Christian soul –
Death, desolation, ruin, and decay.
It cannot be avoided but by this;
It will not be avoided but by this.
(*RIII*, 4.4.328-342)

What is meant to prove his good intentions really envisions further death and havoc in case his suit is unsuccessful. Trying to play the trump of possible self-destruction as he did with Anne, Richard utters a threat that exposes the religiosity of his previous

[1226] See the sexual and marriage prohibitions in the biblical book of Leviticus, chapters 18 and 20.

lines as hollow. The repetition at the end of the quotation further emphasises his determination to force Elizabeth into compliance. Richard counters her question whether she shall "be tempted of the devil thus," turning around the battle of wit just like her following objections (*RIII*, 4.4.349-358). When she finally turns to go and promises to send news of her daughter, Richard bids her pass on his "true love's kiss" and kisses Elizabeth (*RIII*, 4.4.359-361). While he thinks that he persuaded the queen, calling her a "[r]elenting fool, and shallow, changing woman" (*RIII*, 4.4.362), she never promised that she will woo her daughter in Richard's favour. When it becomes clear that Elizabeth promised her daughter to Richmond as a wife, Richard is the one tricked (see *RIII*, 4.5.1-20). Richard had miscalculated Elizabeth, who had just strung him along to gain time and never seriously considered a union between him and her daughter—his keen mind is blunted, just as his power of speech has also lost its edge.

When Richard hears the news that a fleet under Richmond's command waits on England's shore for the support of Buckingham's army, his confusion and over-anxiety shows again; he orders his servants to some charges without specifying what they have to do, changes his mind at an instant, and becomes aggressive by his own jumpiness (*RIII*, 4.4.364-387). In his state of mind, he cannot stomach that Richmond came to England to ascend the throne (*RIII*, 4.4.387-399). Now that he had thought he had eliminated all potential dangers to his kingship, he exclaims:

> Is the chair empty? Is the sword unswayed?
> Is the King dead? The empire unpossessed?
> What heir of York is there alive but we?
> And who is England's king but great York's heir?
> Then tell me, what makes he upon the seas?
> (*RIII*, 4.4.400-404)

This sums up all of Richard's anxieties: he, who had laboured so hard to get rid of his male relatives, thought that his sovereignty could not be questioned anymore. It is unthinkable for him that anyone not a Yorkist could claim the throne, so he fears that Richmond's pursuit implies the possibility of his destruction. Richard reproaches Stanley for not yet having raised an army against Buckingham and Richmond, a fact that makes him fear that he will defect to the enemy despite Stanley's assurances of his loyalty. When Stanley promises to raise an army, Richard wants to have his son George as a hostage to ensure his father's loyalty—and Stanley yields (*RIII*, 4.4.405-428).[1227] The situation is further aggravated when Richard's nerves get the better of him and he strikes a messenger before he can deliver his news. On hearing that the rebel army is dispersed and that Buckingham is wandering around on his own, he asks the messenger's pardon for his rashness, but Richard grows more and more tense (*RIII*, 4.4.429-445). The situation is further confused as contrary news come in; when Catesby reports that Buckingham is taken while Richmond landed in Wales, Richard orders his

[1227] That Richard's doubts concerning Stanley were right is revealed when he instructs a priest to inform Richmond that Stanley's support for his party is endangered; he cannot send aid without risking his son's life who is held hostage by Richard. Further, the priest shall tell Richmond that Queen Elizabeth consented to a marriage with her daughter (*RIII*, 4.5.1-20).

men to Salisbury to fight and wants Buckingham to be brought there (*RIII*, 4.4.449-469).

Richmond declares that he returned to rid England from "[t]he wretched, bloody, and usurping boar;" to achieve "perpetual peace," he is willing to fight "one bloody trial of sharp war" (*RIII*, 5.2.1-16) that is going to be the decisive battle of Bosworth Field. The fight is inescapable, so Richard has his tent put up for the night before the battle, trying to appear jolly, relaxed, and confident, but actually he tries to dismiss his worries about the outcome of the battle (*RIII*, 5.3.5-8). Calming down his nerves, he persuades himself that the next day will be successful for him:

> Why, our battalia trebles that account.
> Besides, the King's name is a tower of strength,
> Which they upon the adverse faction want.
> Up with the tent! Come, noble gentlemen,
> Let us survey the vantage of the ground.
> Call for some men of sound direction.
> Let's lack no discipline, make no delay –
> For, lords, tomorrow is a busy day.
> (*RIII*, 5.3.11-18)

He thinks of his kingship as an asset against his enemies; however, he eroded the moral basis of majesty by usurpation through political murders, so it is no feature to build hope on. Rather, the opposite party has the advantage of morality. Richard drowns his thoughts in the hasty activism of battle preparations, but his cunning and powerful linguistics made way for nervousness, insecurity, and anxiety that hint at his immediate fall. Richmond, in contrast, orders his army calmly and thoughtfully (see *RIII*, 5.4.).

The dichotomy between the warring parties becomes visible when both Richmond's and Richard's tents are on stage and show the different experiences of the warlords during the night. Like Richmond, Richard makes sure everything is prepared for battle; he sits down with ink and paper but sends his followers nervously about. Probably due to his nervousness, he will not have supper but asks for a bowl of wine to compensate for the mental deficit he experiences when he exclaims "I have not that alacrity of spirit, / Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have" (*RIII*, 5.5.1-31). While Richmond receives advice from Stanley and his councillors, Richard wants to be on his own. And while Richmond lays down to sleep and prays for success and protection in battle despite "troubled thoughts" (*RIII*, 5.5.32-70), the machinations of divine vengeance are about to unfold for Richard. The fulfilment of the curses uttered throughout the play, and the allusions to the morality plays make *Richard III* a metaphysical if not religious play.[1228] The presence of the supernatural becomes tangible throughout: Henry VI's wounds begin to bleed when Richard, his murderer, approaches; a prophecy causes Clarence's imprisonment, and a dream warns him of his violent end; Hasting's horse stumbles three times on its way to the council meeting that will be his end. But the most striking of metaphysical interventions is the appearance of the ghosts before the Battle of Bosworth Field. In the most haunting and supernatural scene of the play, the spectres

[1228] Tillyard thinks it is a "very religious play" (Tillyard 1944: 204), but the appearance of the ghosts, the forebodings, and the cursings do not render it especially Christian; however, it is deeply metaphysical.

of Richard's victims visit the two warlords in their sleep, cursing Richard and blessing Richmond in a ritualised, refrain-like manner. The ghosts torture Richard with his misdeeds and leave him with the formula "[d]espair and die" (*RIII*, 5.5.74, 80, 81, 89, 94, 97, 103, 110, 117; 71-130).[1229] Richard awakes terrified from his dream and exclaims:

> Have mercy, Jesu! – Soft, I did but dream.
> O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me?
> The lights turn blue. It is now dead midnight.
> Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
> What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by.
> Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I.
> Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am.
> Then fly! What, from myself? Great reason. Why?
> Lest I revenge. Myself upon myself?
> Alack, I love myself. Wherefore? For any good
> That I myself have done unto myself?
> O no, alas, I rather hate myself
> For hateful deeds committed by myself.
> I am a villain. Yet I lie: I am not.
> Fool, of thyself speak well. – Fool, do not flatter.
> My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
> And every tongue brings in a several tale,
> And every tale condemns me for a villain.
> Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree!
> Murder, stern murder, in the dir'st degree!
> All several sins, all used in each degree,
> Throng to the bar, crying all, 'guilty, guilty!'
> I shall despair. There is no creature loves me,
> And if I die no soul will pity me.
> Nay, wherefore should they? – Since that I myself
> Find in myself no pity to myself.
> *(RIII, 5.5.132-157)*

He, who never showed mercy himself and who always cloaked his real motivations in a carefully staged role, is absolutely hysterical with fear. The immediate confrontation with his victims made his conscience stir, something he had never experienced before. His fear expresses itself in physical reactions that he cannot control willingly; his inside shows unfiltered on the outside, which cannot be coaxed into the old role of Richard the Schemer anymore. The dream makes Richard experience a deep ontological crisis as it confronts him with his personal wickedness and abomination. Even though he tries to persuade himself that he is himself and loves himself, his conscience exposes the rift between his self-image and his self that he actually hates. His self-love is nothing but a construction to cover up the moral void within—an epiphanial awakening of understanding his self and seeing himself unadulterated of his wishful thinking or ambition. In this moment of personal crisis, he cannot deceive himself any longer and understands that the essence of his being is villainy. The "tongues" of his "conscience" confront him with an external truth that is not self-

[1229] Campbell parallels the last night of Richard with the death of Charles IX of France. As the one technically responsible for the massacre of St. Bartholomew's eve, he died horribly, revisited by his sins. "His pores exuded blood. He dreamt of the massacred corpses, which filled the streets of Paris. He had a hot fever, and the images of his victims passed before him." She indicates that Charles might have served as a model for Richard's death as portrayed in *Richard III* (Campbell 1947: 333, 313).

constructed—and this truth condemns him, cutting him off from the love and compassion of his fellow human beings. Confronted with his abominable self, he feels that he cannot even muster any compassion for himself. Looking at the shards left of his bare, naked being, he understands in the depth of his soul that he does not deserve pity and is therefore not human any more.

When it is time to wake up, Richard confronts Ratcliffe with his dream and the fear it invoked, but Richard does not believe any assurances that all will be well. Rather, he wants to eavesdrop on his soldiers to find out if anyone will defect to the enemy (*RIII*, 5.5.161-176). Richard is anxious to hear what his nobles think of him after Ratcliffe spied on them (*RIII*, 5.6.1-5). Even though he is satisfied, he is still nervous; he takes it as a bad omen that no one has seen the sun so far even though he tries to convince himself that the sun does not shine for Richmond, either (*RIII*, 5.6.6-17). Norfolk urges Richard to arm as the enemy already approaches. Richard orders his battle array while arming himself, organising his army around himself—probably a physical measure against his fear (*RIII*, 5.6.18-31). But instead of showing sovereignty and determination, Richard wants to have Norfolk's approval. While Norfolk indeed approves, he shows him a paper that says Richard is going to lose the battle—an issue Richard claims to be initiated by the enemy (*RIII*, 5.6.31-36). Still, he tries to dissuade himself of his own doubts and declaims:

> Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls.
> Conscience is but a word that cowards use,
> Devised at first to keep the strong in awe.
> Our strong arms be our conscience; swords, our law.
> March on, join bravely! Let us to't, pell mell –
> If not to heaven, then hand in hand to hell.
> (*RIII*, 5.6.37-43)

Talking mainly to and about himself, Richard tries to re-establish himself as a confident fighter again who operates according to the right of the fittest. Subduing his fear, he claims to be willing to go to hell for his cause—the place where Margaret and Elizabeth think he belongs anyway. Addressing his soldiers, Richard merely tries to make clear that Richmond's army consists of "vagabonds, rascals, and runaways, / A scum of Bretons and base lackey peasants" who want to cover England with destruction and unrest. He portrays his opponent as a spoilt "milksop" who invades England with "bastard Britons" (read: French foreigners) who were beaten by the English in the French wars (*RIII*, 5.6.45-65). Declaring the enemies as French foreigners is mere propaganda as Richmond's army consists mainly of exiled and fled Englishmen who now return to chastise Richard for his tyranny. Richard's use of the *topos* that the rebels merely want to ravish the land as well as the wives and daughters of the English (see (*RIII*, 5.6.51-52, 66-67) is a weak, unrealistic, and ironic argument. After again urging on his soldiers to fight valiantly, Richard learns that Stanley denies him his support. Of course, he wants to have the hostage, Stanley's son, George, beheaded, but the time does not allow for this, so the boy is left untouched (*RIII*, 5.6.67-81). By contrast, in his address to his soldiers, Richmond stresses the moral superiority they have over Richard whom he calls a "bloody tyrant and a homicide; / One raised in blood, and one in blood established." He is sure that God will back them up in their attempt to rid England of

her throne's usurper and free her from tyranny. Richmond wants to risk his life for the cause and promises everyone a share in the glory of victory (*RIII*, 5.5.191-224).

Having everything to lose, Richard fights with all his might and valiantly opposes all his enemies on foot in search of Richmond. Even though his horse is slain, he had encountered and killed five people looking like Richmond (*RIII*, 5.7.1-13).[1230] The text does not describe or recount the fight when the two finally meet but merely states in the stage directions that "Richard is slain" (*RIII*, 5.8.SD). It is striking that the text disposes so easily of Richard without any challenging, accusations, or other confrontations. In his death, Richard got his just punishment for his sins while he himself exacted divine justice on others during the play. He killed his brother Clarence, a man who had forsworn himself against his family and changed sides during the Wars of the Roses. The fake peace in the second act between the family of Edward's queen and his brothers is also doomed because people are not serious about it, so Richard revenges their perjury on them.[1231] Thus, Richard is caught up in a circle he cannot escape; as it is his task to punish others, he has to be punished for his deeds in return. Throughout the play, he is tortured by insomnia and bad dreams, feeling that he cannot trust his friends and supporters; his end is similarly dismal when he is killed disreputably on foot after a haunted night—and the text only grants him a ridiculous though memorable last line: "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!" (*RIII*, 5.7.13).[1232]

The text immediately focuses on the successful Richmond who praises God and declares that "[t]he bloody dog is dead" (*RIII*, 5.8.2). Stanley crowns him with the "long usurpèd royalty" and thus re-establishes the moral basis of English kingship. After assuring that the hostage George Stanley is alive, Richmond—now Henry VII—orders that all of the noble dead shall be buried according to their rank, no matter on which side they fought. By pardoning fled soldiers who want to return to his party, he exerts royal mercy to establish a common ground for a new start, the union between "the white rose and the red" (*RIII*, 5.8.3-19). In his last lines, Richmond envisions his marriage with Elizabeth as the end to the Wars of the Roses, "[t]he true succeeders of each royal house." Their offspring, the syntheses of the houses of York and Lancaster, will guarantee lasting peace that will heal the scars of civil war (*RIII*, 5.8.20-41)—and Richard's reign.[1233]

[1230] Richard's famous cry for a horse is probably close to historical reality as Richard's mortal remains suggest that he was killed unhorsed (see Kennedy 2013). That he would exchange his kingdom for a horse is not only a proof that his outlook on the battle is desperate, showing that he realised to already have lost everything.
[1231] Campbell 1947: 313-315.
[1232] Campbell 1947: 317.
[1233] Howard recounts that Henry in real life apparently loathed Elizabeth because of her Yorkist descent (see Howard 1988b: 265).

3.3.3 "Shall I Not Master This Little Mansion of Myself?"—The Uncontrolled Passions of Edward III

Edward III's legacy meanders through most of the history plays that deal with the time after his reign as the founding father of English glory on the battlefields of France. In the play *Edward III*, however, this supposedly ideal, glorious king exposes evident weaknesses in controlling his passions that render him rather unfit for rule. The most apparent incident is his illicit and unrequited love for the Countess of Salisbury, a theme that is closely intertwined with his martial prowess in France.[1234] Edward's "hot courage" (*EIII*, 48) to defend his claim to the French throne abates in an instant when he learns that the Scots invaded the north and besiege the castle of Roxborough where the Countess of Salisbury is threatened with death (*EIII*, 130-137). It is not the attack on his kingdom but that the Countess of Salisbury is alone and besieged in her castle that moves Edward's attention instantly from the war preparations he delegates to his peers and son (*EIII*, 149-158). Edward does not care for the throne of France anymore to hasten to aid the countess—but his motivations are not selfless.[1235]

Edward can chase away the besiegers with his mere advancement; Montague, the countess' nephew, arrives first at her castle and asks his aunt why she closed up her castle against her friends.[1236] The countess welcomes her nephew as her rescuer, but when she hears that the king is about to arrive, she worries how she might entertain and honour the guest accordingly and leaves the stage (*EIII*, 264-270). When Edward catches the first glimpse of the countess after her re-entrance, he asks Warwick, her father, whether it is his daughter; Warwick affirms but thinks her not as fair anymore as she once was (*EIII*, 277-280, 282-284). Nevertheless, Edward falls for her beauty at first glance; looking at her, his vision turns into "subject eyes" (*EIII*, 288). The beauty of a female subject subdues the king, a threat to both his majesty as well as his masculinity. If Edward cannot control himself, he would become slave to a woman, effeminising him physically and thus metaphysically threatening his whole realm. The countess cannot guess what the king has to struggle with and greets her king in due subservience, thanking him dearly for the release from the Scots. She thinks that it was Edward's metaphysical "royal presence" (*EIII*, 294) that drove away the enemies. But Edward is completely physical at this moment; he is aware of the danger and precariousness of his situation, claiming he would "pine in shameful love" if he yielded (*EIII*, 300); Edward weakly attempts to flee the countess' effeminising influence and wants to pursue his martial tasks by chasing after the Scots. Either the countess does not get his point about the "shameful love" or she wants to tease him when she invites him to her castle to "honour our roof" (*EIII*, 304). However, her wording indicates that she does not refer Edward's "shameful love" to herself as her first thought is about her absent husband's pride on hearing that the king had been his wife's guest. She urges the king not to demean his state by standing outside and bids him in kindly as an obedient subject and

[1234] Sams 1996: 3.
[1235] Sams 1996: 4.
[1236] The closed-up castle could also be understood as a bulwark of the countess' chastity that the king tries to enter with his amorous advances (see chapter 2.2.1 and its subchapters).

careful hostess (*EIII*, 304-307). Edward tries to evade the invitation, claiming that he dreamt "of treason and I fear" (*EIII*, 309)—but the treason he fears does not come from the countess but lurks within himself; his very own passions and beginning infatuation for a woman subject might overthrow him. He fears his emerging desire for the countess and wants to "come no near" (*EIII*, 308) lest her physical influence wreak havoc on his male balance of humours.

The countess takes his fear of treason literally and assures him that no one in the castle wants to harm him, but Edward admits that he rather fears the countess' influence, using the conventional image of a heart infected by love through the eye: "her conspiring eye / which shoots infected poison in my heart / beyond repulse of wit or cure of art" (*EIII*, 310-313). He feels unable to control the effects the countess exerts on him and knows that desire may only be mastered by contemplation—rational self-control over his endangered humoral state—that he feels too weak for, so he wants to flee (*EIII*, 318-320). As a good hostess, the countess wants her sovereign to stay and asks him what she may do to be successful; Edward replies that her eye speaks more than rhetoric could achieve, an open compliment and a first advance (*EIII*, 321-323). Nevertheless, the countess rhetorically aligns herself and the estate with the *topos* of the English as plain but honest (*EIII*, 328-331). Her claim that "these ragged walls no testimony are / what is within but like a cloak doth hide / from weather's waste the under-garnished pride" (*EIII*, 340-342) are ambiguous; as castles (or walled-in cities) were often paralleled with a woman to be conquered, the description of what might await the king when he is inside might be a coquettish invitation to enter either the house or the countess herself. Now, she does not talk of "our roof" anymore but entreats the king to "stay a while with me" (*EIII*, 344). Edward is won over by the countess' impressive oratory skills and decides—against his fears—to stay and "attend on thee" (*EIII*, 345-348). The motivations on the countess' part are somewhat ambiguous. Is she, as Sams argues, "emotionally naive as well as personally modest"? She lets her sovereign enter the castle while her husband is far away, even though Edward has previously voiced his desires plainly.[1237] But does the countess really think that her king, who saved her from the Scottish threat and thus protected her modesty, would be able to assault it himself? It is probable that she cannot imagine that her king could forget himself, his own marriage vow, and attack her most valued treasure, her chastity.

Lodowick, the king's servant, dissects Edward's precarious state of mind. He comments on the king's changed behaviour and can see how desperately his master is attracted to the countess; he correctly analyses that the cause for this attraction are "changing passions like inconstant clouds" that torment the king (*EIII*, 350-354). It is important that these passions are "changing" like the weather and as "inconstant," words that do not imply that the feelings for the countess are true and lasting. As a king should be constant and true, Edward might be in the process of losing his self (and himself) in a sea of passion. The relationship between the countess and Edward is an intricate one; Edward mimes her complexion automatically and blushes when she

[1237] Sams 1996: 6.

does—but the reasons are different. The countess blushes because of "tender modest shame / being in the sacred presence of a king" while Edward feels "red immodest shame / to vail his eyes amiss, being a king" (*EIII*, 355-366). Edward has already lost his own independence as his body mirrors another person's complexion; besides, he feels shame to acknowledge that he failed to shield himself against the attractions of a female subject. As a king, he should possess more self-control. Even though Edward is emotionally connected to the countess, he also opposes her: her modesty and naiveté are a contrast to Edward's lust that Lodowick calls "immodest," a clear hint that the king physically desires his hostess and a reason for the king's "guilty fear" (*EIII*, 369). While Edward's desires are led astray, the countess is ashamed in the presence of the king (*EIII*, 377-378). Lodowick already fears for the outcome of the Scottish wars because the king's attention is so focussed on his "English siege of peevish love" (*EIII*, 372)—the king is about to forget not only himself but also his political duties, a fear that will come true later on.

Edward enters and extols the countess' beauty, her voice, her wit, and her courage (*EIII*, 375-377, 390-397). What might at first appear as a conventional Petrarchan praise of female beauty turns into admiration for her linguistic skills and the power of her speech (*EIII*, 377-390), usually a male device of self-representation denied to the ideally silent Renaissance woman. Instead, the countess apparently talks about political issues like peace and war (*EIII*, 386, 387, 389) and even dares to call her male enemies cowards (*EIII*, 396). Edward feels that her speech of war can even rouse "Caesar from his Roman grave" (*EIII*, 388) and "command war to prison" (*EIII*, 387). It is interesting that the English king praises masculine traits in a woman that he himself lacks. While he admires the countess' power of speech and her looks, Edward, in contrast, has lost his masculine self-control and royal autonomy; by giving in to his passions, he has become effeminate, unable to display masculine strength or determination to control himself.

Edward plans to let Lodowick in on his passionate state so that he can compose some love lyric to inform the countess of "my infirmity" (*EIII*, 408). The king's love feels like a disease, a clear indication of the humoral imbalance and excess within. Language, the domain of the countess and a means of male rational agency, shall reveal his passion to her, but as he feels unable to do so himself, Lodowick shall write the poem with all the skill he can muster. Edward instructs him to employ conventional Petrarchan measures for this task (*EIII*, 416-430). Neither is Edward linguistically en par with the countess, nor does he have his wits about himself to inform her himself about his feelings, a further indication of his current effeminacy. Lodowick, who already knows about his master's emotional distress, shrewdly asks to whom the poem should be directed (*EIII*, 431) but instead of answering, Edward gets caught up in hyperbolic praise, heaping one superlative on to another (*EIII*, 432-442). The excess of his verbal expression mirrors the excess of his inner humoral state that overflows with passion just like his excessive language. Edward instructs Lodowick not to forget to include the heart-sickness, the languishment, and the passion he suffers from "her beauty" (*EIII*, 444-446) before wanting to retire to "contemplate the while" (*EIII*, 443) to compose himself. When his go-between asks whether he writes to a woman, Edward

makes clear: "What beauty else could triumph on me / or who but women do our love-lays greet? / What, thinkest thou I did bid thee praise a horse?" (*EIII*, 447-450). Edward is at least what modern times would call a straight man who still has a bit of humour left—even though not his wits about him.

Lodowick tries to get more information about the status of the lady (*EIII*, 451-452); Edward's answer is evasive and telling at the same time: it is a lady "of such estate that hers is as a throne / and my estate the footstool where she treads" (*EIII*, 453-454). The English king enslaves and belittles himself by subjecting himself under the countess; not only does he overturn social hierarchy completely but he has also lost his royalty and rationality due to his amorous feelings. He tries to "peruse her in my thoughts," to dissect her just like a Petrarchan poet, trying to find comparisons that do her justice (*EIII*, 457-472). Interestingly, his first analogy concerns her voice, even though an ideal, chaste wife was supposed to be silent (*EIII*, 458-465). Her eyes are—next to her hair—next in line; the imagery is very interesting, as he compares her eyes conventionally to a "glass"—but they catch the sun (a common metaphor for the king) and rebound the reflection (the king who is about to break his marriage vow)—a thought that "burns my heart within" (*EIII*, 469-472). The purity of the countess' soul works like a mirror whose reflection burns Edward's heart. He feels that he is caught up in his own desire but he cannot help it; "What a descant makes my soul / upon this voluntary ground of love!" Edward sighs (*EIII*, 473-474). Circling around the countess in his thoughts reminds him of his intended adultery and the sin he plans to commit, evoking objections in the king.

Edward apparently feels uneasy and wants to hear what Lodowick wrote so far, but the servant is not yet finished. His master rants on about the infinity and violent extremes of his love that "distain an ending period" (*EIII*, 475-483, 481-490), unable to stop either the thoughts in his head or the words pouring out of him. Finally reading the poem, Lodowick compares the lady's beauty and chastity to the "queen of shades" (*EIII*, 492)—and Edward detects two faults in the line. First, the "pale queen of night" does not suit the lady's beauty that could "brave the eye of heaven at noon" (*EIII*, 498). Besides, Edward does not want the lady to be "chaste" (*EIII*, 503-505); he wants to have sex with her: "I had rather have her chased than chaste" (*EIII*, 505). It is not unproblematic that he likens the object of his lust to the sun—a metaphor for the king (*EIII*, 506-518); elevating the countess above himself, Edward leaves his place in the chain of being, threatening his realm with chaos as the king is unable to control the disorder of his humours and the excess of his desires. Edward also interrupts Lodowick in the second line where he compared the lady to Judith, an image of the anti-female in Protestant tradition (*EIII*, 522).[1238] Edward fears that she could cut his head off (*EIII*, 523-524)—which she already did when she deprived the king of his senses and thus figuratively "cut off" his rationality. Effectively, Edward dismisses the whole existing poem as unsuitable and finally wants to write it himself (*EIII*, 526-536).

[1238] See chapter 2.2.1.2.

When the countess, the "treasurer of my spirit" (*EIII*, 538), enters, the king is distracted and tries to gloss over his previous amorous entanglement he found himself in by feigning to talk about war strategy with Lodowick (*EIII*, 539-542). When the countess inquires deferently about the king's well-being, Edward takes the chance to dismiss Lodowick. The countess, now alone with her sovereign, thinks that the king looks sad; she seems to be worried and wants to cheer Edward up from his "melancholy"; interestingly, she addresses him intimately with "thee" three times (*EIII*, 543-550). To cure Edward's "discontent," she asks about its cause, and Edward seizes this moment and successfully urges the countess to swear that she will remedy the cause of his ill humour (*EIII*, 556-565).

Now the king has trapped the countess; he confides to her that "a king doth dote on thee" (*EIII*, 567) and asks her to "make him happy" (*EIII*, 569). He does not forget to remind her that "thou hast sworn / to give him all the joy within thine power / do this and tell me when I shall be happy" (*EIII*, 569-571). The countess understands now what he wants and defends her marital chastity; she presents herself as an obedient subject who is willing to give her sovereign what is his due: "That power of love that I have power to give / thou hast with all devout obedience / employ me how thou wilt in proof thereof" (*EIII*, 573-575). While she stresses her obedience, she also qualifies her power to please her monarch to the "love that I have power to give"—which does not include the physical love Edward wants.

Unimpairedly, Edward voices his desire again: "Thou hearst me say that I do dote on thee" (*EIII*, 576). Again, the countess makes clear that he may "inherit" (*EIII*, 582) her beauty, her virtue or whatever she may give but only "if thou canst," an objection she repeats twice (*EIII*, 577, 579). She sets conditions to Edward's boundless desire and thus effectively restrains absolute power. While Edward insists that "It is thy beauty that I would enjoy" (*EIII*, 583), the countess claims that she cannot give him her beauty without her life (*EIII*, 584-588) as her honour and her life as a married noblewoman depend on her marital chastity. Like a spoilt child, Edward repeats: "But thou mayst leave it me to sport withal" (*EIII*, 589).

The king does not care about the social and emotional well-being of the countess, he just wants to have fun and quench his desires; his lust is purely physical and wants to be satisfied. The countess echoes St. Augustine when she refers to the inseparability of her soul and her body; one cannot be separated from the other without killing its counterpart (*EIII*, 590-597), but that is no argument for Edward: "Didst thou not swear to give me what I would?" (*EIII*, 598). Despite her allusion to her moral and physical death if she gave in to Edward's wishes, his insistence indicates that he simply does not care about the countess as a person whom he degrades to a mere object of desire. She clarifies that she promised to give what she could ("I did my liege, so what you would I could," *EIII*, 599)—but nothing exceeding her ability. Edward still does not accept her objections; physical love is unproblematic for him, while her honour is essential for the countess' social and physical survival (*EIII*, 600-603). He proposes a deal: for her love, she will get his "in rich exchange" (*EIII*, 603).

Now, the countess uses her praised rhetorical skills to turn the tables against Edward: he himself is unable to give the love he demands due to his own marriage vow, (*EIII*, 606-607). She can only offer the love of a loyal subject, and nothing more; besides, begetting illegitimate children would be a further sin against God (*EIII*, 608, 610-616). The countess claims that marriage is an older institution than kingship, so while it is bad to break a king's laws, it is even worse to break a law of God, so her husband alone has the right to access her body (*EIII*, 617-631). With these words, she turns away and exits; by pointing to a higher metaphysical law above the king that she is loyal to, the countess tried to restrain Edward but her words have the adverse effect: instead of acknowledging that she is not willing to yield, Edward is fascinated by her rhetoric skills (*EIII*, 626-636).

He would love to "bear the comb of virtue from his flower" (*EIII*, 637) but instead he sees that his desires turned him into a "poison-sucking envious spider / to turn the juice I take to deadly venom" (*EIII*, 639-640). Despite this moment of self-awareness, he feels religion to be "austere" (*EIII*, 641) and "too strict a guardian" (*EIII*, 642). Instead, he wants the countess to be "as is the air to me" (*EIII*, 643)—a wish that is already true; when he wants to embrace her, he catches nothing but air (*EIII*, 644-645). Like the air, the countess is life-sustaining but when he tries to get hold of her, he is thrown back onto himself. Grasping the air does not lead anywhere, but Edward's reasoning does not get so far yet; his attempts to beat back his desires by "reason and reproof" fail and he still wants to have her (*EIII*, 646-647). These last lines before his exit are a confession of failure for a king who is not able to control himself while he wants to reign over others even as he forces them to his will, which he is so obviously unable to control.

On his French expedition, Edward is still in love with the countess. While Derby and Audley talk about the positive developments in the war for the English—the soldiers are mustered and brought to France, and England is promised aid from the German emperor (*EIII*, 822-823, 826-830)—Edward sits gloomily in his closet and does not allow anyone in, so Warwick, the countess, Audley, and Artois are all preoccupied (*EIII*, 832-838). The mind of the king is solely focussed on the countess; when Derby wants to inform the king about the positive developments regarding the German emperor, Edward would wish for the countess' greetings instead of the emperor's (*EIII*, 836-846). The countess has become a fixed idea for Edward that takes precedence over politics; Edward tells Derby that his wish was not granted—meaning the countess, not the emperor Derby is talking about (*EIII*, 847). The king's state renders the French campaign precarious—if Edward proves unable to control his desires, he will not be able to conquer the French throne or even be able to concentrate on his political duties. Indeed, Edward is not interested in actual warfare; rather, he betrays his real thoughts in a slip of the tongue: "Derby, I'll look unto the countess' mind anon" (*EIII*, 848-854). Derby has to help Edward's mind back on track until the latter declares that he wants to be left alone and get back to the emperor issue later (*EIII*, 855-856). Derby realised that the king is really immersed in his humoral chaos when he comments "Let's leave him to his humour" (*EIII*, 858).

Edward admits that he is not concentrating on his political tasks; the countess is his emperor and he her vassal (*EIII*, 859-863). This dependence on her indeed binds his political capacities in a situation that is important to his country's fate; when Lodowick enters, Edward has to ask anxiously what message he brings from "more than Cleopatra's match" (*EIII*, 865-866). The countess will let him know about her resolution about his request before nightfall, so Edward's heart begins to beat harder (*EIII*, 867-870). He wants to channel his excitation into love lyric and wooing but begins to fantasise about a sexual encounter with the countess when he is on his own again. He imagines sex in terms of war, featuring "a deep march of penetrable groans" (*EIII*, 885) between foes (*EIII*, 884), imagines his body turned into arms and his eyes into arrows, and his sighs will "swirl away my sweetest artillery" like the wind—apparently he alludes to seminal discharge (*EIII*, 871-888). Thus, Edward turns sex with the woman he desires into a battle but fears that the countess might "win[…] the sun of me" (*EIII*, 889) and could thus undo his royalty, which she effectively already did. The connection between war and love are intertwined by the expression of each issue in the terms of the other—Edward besieges the countess and wants to woo France like a bride.[1239]

When Edward learns that his son Prince Edward has arrived, his first thought is how much the prince resembles his mother—a feature that marked a child's father and his semen less strong (*EIII*, 896-904). The meeting with his son is a cathartic moment that brings Edward's raging desire to a momentary halt, as he understands (and literally sees) the error in his "strayed desire" that is "basest theft" because he does not lack a wife (*EIII*, 899-904). To gloss over his musings, Edward casually greets his son with "now boy, what news" and tries to return to his duties of war. The prince reports that he mustered men and now waits for further orders from his father (*EIII*, 905-909). Edward is still not fully in a working mode; watching his son bring back thoughts about his desire, but the boy's eyes that resemble his mother's bring them to a halt (*EIII*, 910-913). He tries to excuse his feelings to himself by declaring that "Lust is a fire and men like lanthorns show / light lust within themselves, even through themselves" (*EIII*, 914-915). What is inside shows on the outside, so his lust for the countess made him gloomy and distempered. At this point, Edward realises the main problem about his situation: "Shall the large limit of fair Brittany / by me be overthrown, and shall I not / master this little mansion of myself?" (*EIII*, 917-919). He has come to his senses by looking at his son, the mirror of himself; Edward immediately asks for his armour and knows again why he actually is in France—to "conquer kings" (*EIII*, 921).

Now that Edward is miraculously reinstalled as a target-oriented warlord, Lodowick informs Edward that the countess approaches the king "with a smiling cheer"—and promptly, Edward's resolve is gone. Her smile postpones his war activities, and the prince—the cause for Edward's initial change of mind—is dismissed (*EIII*, 926-931). Again, Edward's humoral passion enmeshes his mind again and makes both the prince and the queen seem "black" and "foul" (*EIII*, 932-933). Lodowick has to fetch the

[1239] Sams 1996: 5.

countess who shall "chase away these winter clouds" (*EIII*, 935). Just a few moments before, the king had seemed to be his royal self again after the sight of his son, cheerful about his French campaign. But the "winter clouds" of his unrequited love could return again, he had not overcome his passions for good yet. Now, it seems a worse sin for him to kill French soldiers than to commit adultery (*EIII*, 936-940); Edward's moods swing back and forth, and he is still not the master of his own passions.

When the countess enters, Lodowick is dismissed with some money to "play, spend, give, riot, waste," so that Edward can be alone with his beloved (*EIII*, 941-943). Full of expectation that she will consent to having sex with him, he addresses the countess as "my soul's playfellow," but she is still only willing to yield to the king's "due." The passionate Edward expects that his due is "love for love," but the countess reprimands him that he neither respects her refusal, her husband's love, nor the high social position he as the king is in and wants him to "remove those lets / that stand between your highness' love and mine" (*EIII*, 945, 946-961). Both the countess' husband as well as the queen are the hindrance to a sexual union between the countess and the king that only the deaths of their spouses would free them of (*EIII*, 964-965, 968-970). The king is shocked as he understands her to propose to kill their spouses: Edward protests that this is illegal, "beyond our law" (*EIII*, 971). And now the countess has reached the point she wanted to make: she wanted to show Edward that his desire is just as illegal as killing his wife, but Edward instead sees the solution to his dilemma: "No more, thy husband and the queen shall die" (*EIII*, 972-977). The king imagines himself as a Leander who overcame the Hellespont to be with his Hero (*EIII*, 978-982). The countess meets his suggestion with contempt; she makes clear that the murders of their spouses would separate Edward and her even more, but Edward is set on his plan, entitling himself to be "their judge" (*EIII*, 983-988). The countess reminds him of a higher law even he has to abide by, "the great Star-Chamber o'er our heads" (*EIII*, 989-992), an anticipation of Kant. Edward asks if the countess was resolute in her refusal of his suit (*EIII*, 993)—her answer is very enigmatic. She says she is "resolute to be dissolved" and wants Edward to keep his word, so that she will be his (*EIII*, 994-995). But instead of feeling released from her marriage, she wants him to stay where he is, kill the queen with one of her wedding knives and she will take the other to "dispatch my love / which now lies fast asleep within my heart" (*EIII*, 994-1002). That line could mean her husband—or the love she bore in her heart for Edward that would be destroyed if he laid hands on the queen. "When they are gone then I'll consent to love," she promises (*EIII*, 1003). So when her love is dispatched of, she can consent to love; that says that she is willing to kill herself rather than consent to adultery. Edward shall not stir to rescue her as she will be quicker than him (*EIII*, 1004-1008). She gives Edward a choice: either he will never importune her again, or she will instantly kill herself (*EIII*, 1009-1014). Confronted with this ultimate threat, Edward surrenders and swears that he will never molest her again, feeling ashamed of himself (*EIII*, 1015-1018). Instead, he calls her a "true English lady" and considers her modesty better than Lucrece's (*EIII*, 1019-1022). This is now the real point of catharsis for Edward ("I am awaked from this idle dream," *EIII*, 1025), who now declares that "my fault" is "thy honour's fame" (*EIII*, 1023).

Instantly, he calls in his followers as he does not want to be alone with the countess (*EIII*, 1026-1027). He is ashamed by the confrontation with the ultimate resistance a subject could face her sovereign with; threatened with the countess' suicide, the king is purged of his desire—the night will not be enough to understand completely how foolish his suit of the countess was but the next day will begin with "martial harmony" (*EIII*, 1034-1037). To distract himself from his shame and folly, the king wants to get straight to war and fighting, appointing tasks and honours to Warwick, Audley, his son the prince, and all the others (*EIII*, 1029-1033). By her resistance and her rhetoric, the countess constituted herself as an independent subject that is not defined by the female ideals of the time and who confronted her king with the limits of his power, who is usually the master over life and death on earth. Thus, she reminded him of his duties and the seriousness of the situation. The king had become a subject—not to the countess, as Sams claims[1240]—but to his own passions. Just when he was so deeply steeped in his passions that he was about to forget himself, his position, his sovereignty, and his duty to control himself, the countess awakened him with her resistance. His self, the correlation between inner humoral turmoil and his outer role as king who should keep his subjects safe with his temperance and self-containment, was completely distorted. The countess, who resisted his advances throughout, had not caused the state Edward is in but his own lack of self-control brought him to the point where only her threat of suicide could help him to his senses again (*EIII*, 1025).

Prince Hal uses his cunning to stage his future ascent to the throne as a miracle to be wondered at; by playing the roguish, corrupted prince, he can appear as a perfect king after a catharsis. However, Hal hazards the love and trust of his father, the king, with his deception to receive more attention and admiration after his enthronement. Hal consciously constructs his self and plays a role to be "more wondered at" later—but when he is eventually king, he experiences kingship to be an empty shell, propped up only by ceremony—he has to fill it with life himself. After his coronation, Henry claims to become more himself, a process that necessitates the rejection of Falstaff and his Eastcheap friends to reform his former life. When he is invested with his regalia after the coronation, he claims he is not "the thing I was" but takes on his new role like a piece of clothing; what this "self" is supposed to be except taking on the new role is not clear In Falstaff, Hal also rejects unmanliness and debauchery—now, as a king, he knows that he has to be temperate and able to control himself and others. Taking on the role of an ideal king, Hal also accepts organic kingship in making the Lord Chief Justice his main advisor. However, he struggles to develop his role and his self; and while he often strives for the best of the kingdom, his actions expose that his self is shifting and elusive. His inner essence always remains hidden; the audience knows that Hal merely plays a role in the Eastcheap scenes as he claimed to have hid his royal self under the cloak of debauchery, turning his performance into metatheatre. It is hard to detect a core within his self as he so carefully stages his appearance. Now, as king, Hal has "turned away my former self" that validates his former role as a "self" without clarifying what the new one is supposed to be. Hal had planned to use "formal majesty" as the new

[1240] Sams 1996: 7.

mould for his self—a new case to put his fluid self-construction in, but when he faces a personal crisis before Agincourt, Henry even dismisses this formal majesty as "idol ceremony" that is not worth anything but a burden of care and responsibility. Only in this time of danger and uncertainty does Henry reveal a bit of what is going on within before he can take on the role of victorious conqueror.

Richard III explicitly grounds the motivation for his villainies in his body; he feels he is excluded from the joys of love and courtship others partake in because of his deformed body. As he cannot find satisfaction through his crippled self, he plans to scheme his way up to compensate for his physical deficiency to make up for the experience of lack with the strength of his mind that is not as vulnerable as his body. He understands that he is the antithesis of a positive masculinity, and it becomes clear that Richard's envy and hate of other men is a surrogate for his own yearning for love and appreciation. Seen from a Renaissance perspective, Richard's cruelty is also inscribed into his physiognomy. Not only does he display an excess of blood and choler, but his hunchback further indicates his ingrained vice; Richard even uses his body as a projection screen for malice to get rid of Hastings, so his body becomes a part of his plots.

Richard uses the space that double meanings and ambiguities open up in language, a device that loses its acuteness and ferocity in the course of the play. While his strategy worked out with Anne, Elizabeth already uses his strategy against him. However, he can also effectively adapt his strategies to hit his targets at their weakest spot. In this respect, he more often than not calculates reactions rightly; if not, he creates facts through action. Knowing about his moral depravity, he uses religious sentiments for his aims and carefully stages his appearances and creates a PR machinery with Buckingham. Distorting the truth to his advantage, Richard influences public opinion by stating the exact opposite of what he really means—eventually, he is literally forced onto the throne as a result. Richard knows how society works and what props he has to use to build up a successful image, but with time, his schemes become more and more obvious even to simple people, so his publicity stratagems begin to fail. Richard uses his rhetoric, logic, and wit against his enemies as well as his family; blood ties are no restraint for him. That he dissects truth from language and defies family ties as well as morality to play with them for his own advantage discredits him for his environment—and having cancelled all boundaries imposed by morality and human pity, Richard understands after his cathartic visitation of his victims' ghosts that he himself cannot find any pity at the hands of others any more. Richard's downfall begins when he has reached his goal, the throne—murdering his nephews in the Tower and killing his wife to marry his own niece are deeds that sever him from the rest of humanity because he oversteps a moral border. He is so caught up in his net of schemes and depravity that he cannot turn back; he is unable to keep himself steady and struggles to secure his power against the growing resistance.

After his ascent to the throne, Richard's main weapon, his keen mind becomes blunt and unfocussed, his language and composedness lose their edge, and he turns into an anxious, nervous wreck who feels threatened from all sides. Thus, he isolates himself by not granting Buckingham the earldom of Hereford he had promised and eventually loses

Buckingham as his closest confidant. His last project of securing his reign, wooing his niece Elizabeth, fails; even though he thinks that he persuaded Elizabeth to woo her daughter, he miscalculated her badly—even his threats of violence do not come to fruition. Rather, Elizabeth already promised her daughter to Richard's enemy Richmond. His moral depravity now backfires, his scheming stratagems do not work anymore. In the exchange with Elizabeth, his questionable legitimacy surfaces; desperately clinging to his power, his sharpness and acuteness of mind ceases to work against a world turning against him. He miscalculated that one can act outside of social norms and has to experience that wit also has its limits. While Richard becomes more and more confused, Richmond ascends like a redeemer to rid England of Richard's tyranny and bloodthirstiness. On the eve of the decisive battle with Richmond, Richard cannot keep up appearances anymore, despite his attempts to be relaxed and confident. Now, even the metaphysical forces strike back—Richard is visited by the ghosts of his victims who curse him with the refrain-like wish that he may despair and die. This visitation is a cathartic moment. Awaking terrified with fear, Richard's conscience torments him. Thrown back on himself, Richard understands what a foul and terrifying creature he is, an insight that cuts him off from the rest of humanity. He sees that he is not loved, cannot expect love from others, and cannot even love himself because he is unable to feel pity. While others like Margaret have already positioned Richard outside of the human norm, Richard's body and soul indeed are outside of social and moral bounds. As his brutality is grounded in his physical makeup, his deformed body reflects his black soul and renders Richard essentially bad—a reciprocity that resonates throughout the play. Even though Richard tries to coax himself back into his former role of fearless warrior before the battle, there is no turning back. As he has everything to lose, he fights desperately; it is telling, however, that the play has Richard die in the stage directions undignified on foot, leaving him with the remarkable line of his call for a horse he would exchange for his kingdom.

However, the use of asides and the means of theatrical irony make Richard's character attractive to the audience; witnessing how his plots and his ascent to power unfold is fascinating. He lays open his step by step plan to overcome anyone standing between himself and the throne, so that the audience can see how his schemes unfold. Richard's volitional role-play and the audience's inclusion into his duplicity successfully fascinate the audience while he manipulates others, accuses them of his own misdeeds, and deepens conflicts between people. Through his role-play, he creates trust that he will later abuse; only few characters like the Duchess of York and Margaret do not take Richard's words at face value. Using existing enmities and other people's weaknesses for his own advantage, Richard effectively advances not only through his own cunning but the frailties of others as well.

One of the most passionate and uncontrolled royal characters is Edward III. His inability to bridle his desires renders him unfit for rule, a shortcoming he has to overcome in the course of the play to be able to successfully fight his campaign in France. His passions intertwine love and war, discourses already closely related in Renaissance thinking. Determined to instantly go to war, his fervour abates when he hears about the dire straits the Countess of Salisbury is in—one passion changes with

the next. He instantly falls for the countess' beauty when he catches a glimpse of her, even though he tries to evade her as he senses the problems ahead. However, he is unable to bridle his desire or keep his sovereignty over his feelings. As the king submits to a subject, he effeminises himself both on a personal as well as a metaphysical level; he cedes his superior, royal masculinity to a woman whose masculine qualities like her rhetoric, rationality, and war speech he admires. Not only does he belittle his self but thus also subverts the social order by his amorous elevation of the countess. Fearing the countess' influence, he knows that rationality and temperate composedness can prevent him from betraying his royal self, but he is unable to resist her. Indeed, the king's behaviour changes like his self; he becomes inconstant, a term usually associated with women at the time and a threat to his autonomy and sovereignty. Ashamed of his explicitly physical lust for the countess, Edward is about to forget his political duties because of a female subject who embodies the abilities the king himself lacks. The text explicitly expresses Edward's passion in terms of humoral excess that amounts to an illness; Edward's linguistic excess mirrors the overflowing humoral fluids he cannot contain. This inability to contain the excess of love threatens chaos in the realm—if the king is not able to govern himself, he is also unable to govern others. Trying to get his will, he traps the countess with the promise to do everything to cure his melancholy, but the countess resists his advances and is only willing to grant the happiness she can give to her sovereign. If she gave in to his wishes, the countess' social honour would be incurably damaged, but the king does not care. Edward tries to bargain with her but to no avail—other than Jane Shore, the countess does not give in but restricts the absolute power of the king by her reference to divine law that he also must abide by—like her, he cannot violate his wedding vows. Due to her line of argument, Edward feels restricted but also realises that the adulterous nature of his desires turns his love sour, though he lacks the mental strength to fight his desire.

In France, the king is still immersed in his humoral chaos and absentmindedly neglects his political duties. Anticipating the countess giving in to his wishes, he imagines sex with her in terms of war, a battle that the countess has already won—but when Edward meets his son, the Black Prince, he temporarily awakens from his amorous pursuit and understands that he wrongs both his son and his wife with his adulterous thoughts. He understands that he cannot conquer France without being able to reign over his own feelings, but this moment of clarity is soon gone when the countess enters. She still refuses the king on the grounds that she is dedicated to her husband and not willing to comply, so Edward suggests to kill both his wife and the Count of Salisbury to remove these stumbling blocks. Then, the countess threatens the king with the ultimate resistance a subject can face her monarch with—her suicide. Thus challenging him, she delineates the restrictions of his power and brings him back to his senses. Ultimately, the ashamed Edward has overcome his lust for her, swearing he will never molest her again and instantly calling in his train to resume his duties as a warlord. It is the countess and not the king who constitutes herself as an independent, reasonable subject against a king who is unable to control his mind and feelings effectively. He needs a serious threat from the countess to regain his wits and be responsible in times of war.

3.4 Friendship, Love, and Sexuality

Even though the personal relationships of a king are usually not the main focus in the history plays, they do play a part. As the dynastic lineage has to be secured, both the marriages of a king as well as the relations of fathers and their first-born sons are important. The "equity" at stake here is the realm, so the princes have to deal with reason of state when confronted with personal decisions that are always influenced by external needs. The first-born princes have a special place within the family hierarchy as they will succeed their fathers because of primogeniture in the line of succession, so the fathers take special interest in them. The marriages and sexual relations of a king are of dynastic and political interest; nothing is private in a king's or prince's life, and some characters struggle immensely with this constraint while others use their relationships politically. Legitimate and illegitimate unions appear in the plays, and miscegenation and nationality also surge here and there. How the private relationships of a king feature in the plays will be looked at in the following chapters.

3.4.1 "I Love Thee Cruelly"—Henry V Wooing Catherine of France

The wooing scene between Henry V and his bride Catherine of France is a detailed dissection of the relations between prospective spouses. Even though the scene has political relevance and implications, it serves well as a condensed portrait of wooing, marriage, and the power asymmetries between men and women. Henry V's marriage with Catherine of France is meant to end the bloodshed of the wars and Catherine is called Henry's "capital demand" (*HV*, 5.2.96-97) in his articles of peace—the Chorus of the third act, however, had already declared her to be on offer with "some petty and unprofitable dukedoms" (*HV*, 3.0.29-31) directly before Henry's rape speech at Harfleur. Just after Henry entered the besieged city he threatened with terror, Catherine takes English lessons, learning how to translate her body into the foreign language and to make it available to the English.[1241] The juxtaposition makes clear that Catherine is Henry's last booty with the throne of France, the reward of Henry's manliness and a symbol for enforced French submission. Thus, Catherine becomes an allegory for France that Henry courted with brutality and war.[1242] His wooing also does not disguise that the princess does not have a choice: due to her insufficient command of English, Catherine is unable to voice her position, overpowered by Henry's linguistic force. He

[1241] The linguistic dissection of Catherine's body shows the active objectification that she herself enacts—Sawday claims that medical physical dissection in the Renaissance was a "male prerogative" that empowered males by scientific and professional discoveries (Sawday 1995: 230). He explicitly genders the modern active male experience of dissection in contrast to female old-fashioned knowledge about the body (Sawday 1995: 231; 230-270; Cahill 2008: 195). In this scene, Catherine herself translates her body into an object via language, an object that cannot respond anything to what Henry tells her in the wooing scene, because she does not have the power of language that would give her the power of self-representation. Traub draws the connection between the bawdy and the body prevalent in this scene and calls Henry's later courtship of Catherine "militaristic" (Traub 1992: 16, 53, 55-56, 61-64).
[1242] See also Howard 1988b: 263.

even belittles her by calling her "Kate" twenty-eight times during the interview,[1243] a name that was associated with promiscuous women.[1244]

It seems somewhat strange that a bride who could have been his long ago, is now Henry's chiefest aim; it rather indicates that Henry wanted to perfect his conquest with the subjection of Catherine as an allegory of France. And indeed, Henry V plays the rough soldier who cannot please women the effeminate way and rather bullies them like a conqueror.[1245] He begins his wooing clumsily by addressing her with "Fair Catherine, and most fair" (*HV*, 5.2.98), indicating that his repertoire of Petrarchan praise is limited to attributing beauty and angelic qualities (*HV*, 5.2.108-109; 104; 117) to women.[1246] He repeatedly acknowledges his deficits in refinement (*HV*, 5.2.122-126; 131-143), calling himself a "soldier" (*HV*, 5.2.99), a "plain king" (*HV*, 5.2.124) from a "farm" (*HV*, 5.2.125) whose abilities to woo are limited to asking if his beloved could love him in return (*HV*, 5.2.126). Having "neither words nor measure" (*HV*, 5.2.133), Catherine shall teach him how to please a lady (*HV*, 5.2.99-101). Catherine's answer is rather evasive, she claims that she cannot compete with Henry's linguistic skills in English (*HV*, 5.2.102-103), but he says he does not care about her broken English if she would only love him truly with her French heart, so he asks "Kate" whether she likes him. Apart from this bold and direct question, he colloquially addresses her as "Kate" (*HV*, 5.2.106)—an approximation that is already very intimate and belittles her. As she does not understand his question (*HV*, 5.2.107), Catherine cannot answer, so Henry turns the meaning of "like me" into "being similar to something," perverting his original meaning into a Petrarchan simile that likens Catherine to an angel and angels to her. Interestingly, Catherine understands this and checks with her maid Alice if she understood the correct meaning (*HV*, 5.2.108-112). Henry affirms the correctness and tries not to blush (*HV*, 5.2.113-114), a strange and effeminate reaction in a man who constructs himself as a rough soldier without cultural and social refinement. Catherine exclaims that the tongues of men are full of deceit—a statement that Alice repeats in broken English so that Henry (and the audience) gets the point (*HV*, 5.2.115-120); she knows that she cannot win this battle of wits verbally—she does not speak the sufficient amount of English but equally sees through Henry's false attempt to woo her. Henry, however, can use this drawback to his advantage; he calls her "the better Englishwoman" (*HV*, 5.2.121)—plain, undecorated, simple. The king deems his wooing skills fit for Catherine, otherwise she would detect what a "plain king" he was (*HV*, 5.2.121-129), demeaning and undervaluing her by this statement. He explicitly calls the marriage a "bargain" that can be sealed with a handshake (*HV*, 5.2.128), so he does not even conceal his motivation behind the match. Catherine got the message and affirms that she understood him well (*HV*, 5.2.130).

[1243] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 137.
[1244] Taylor 1982: 270.
[1245] Keller 1993: 97.
[1246] The language of his wooing is Petrarchan—an idealisation of the desired object. The male gaze anatomises the object and thus makes it available. Henry praises Catherine's beauty and looks repeatedly (*HV*, 5.2.98; 105) and the princess is compared to an angel (*HV*, 5.2.108-109)—an unreachable, ethereal being.

Henry wordily describes himself as a "plain soldier" (*HV*, 5.2.146) who excels at martial tasks but who has no skill for courtly sophistication; instead, he is a simple man who stands for his word, uses oaths only if necessary and never breaks them. He does not even think himself handsome or worth vanity, but if Catherine wants to have a plain and honest man, she shall take him (*HV*, 5.2.131-146). Henry's anticipation of her potential refusal is awkward; he claims that he would die, but not for her love—even though he protests to love her (*HV*, 5.2.146-148)—either way, she does not even have a choice in the match. Henry makes clear that he would prove a constant husband as he lacks the abilities to woo in other places (*HV*, 5.2.148-151). What he effectively says is that he would not get another wife than her—not really charming. In a long monologue, Henry explains that he is no one of "infinite tongue" who reasons himself in and out of women's favour (*HV*, 5.2.151-154)—but effectively that is exactly what he does. He entangles himself in his own words when he tries to reason that physical attractiveness will wither with time, as "a good heart" is "the sun and the moon" (*HV*, 5.2.157). While he talks, he finds that the moon is no good metaphor for constancy as it is the emblem of female changeability (*HV*, 5.2.157-159). He then asks Catherine if she wants to have such a plain soldier and a king as he is, but Catherine can only sum up her dilemma: "Is it possible dat I sould love de *ennemi* of France?" (*HV*, 5.2.159-163). Her reluctance to yield to the conqueror of her homeland is the only form of resistance left to her in this unequal battle of words, but Henry tries to persuade her that he is indeed a friend of France as he loves it "so well that I will not part with a village of it, I will have it all mine" (*HV*, 5.2.164-167)—but by incorporating France into his body politic, he absorbs and annihilates it. His further claim that "when France is mine, and I am yours, then yours is France and you are mine" (*HV*, 5.2.167-168) dazzles Catherine so much that she simply replies "I cannot tell vat is dat" (*HV*, 5.2.169). France is already hers as she is its princess; so she does not need Henry for France becoming hers.

Henry feels that he has to change his linguistic strategy and switches to French which "will hang upon my tongue like a new-married wife about her husband's neck, hardly to be shook off" (*HV*, 5.2.170-172) to approach Catherine in her own language that he speaks fairly well. Laughing at himself and alluding to a more positive attitude between the prospective spouses (*HV*, 5.2.170-177), Catherine is astonished how good Henry's French is, which he denies; their communication in each other's tongue is "truly-falsely" and has thus become one (*HV*, 5.2.178-182). Henry thinks he can ask her directly if she can love him after this emotional preparation, but Catherine cannot answer (*HV*, 5.2.182-184). While some critics have called Catherine submissive, she simply declines to pretend that her personal feelings do matter and rejects to join in that masculine power game. Henry, male chauvinist that he is, takes her reluctance to answer as a "yes" when stating "Come, I know thou lovest me" (*HV*, 5.2.186), but apart from his assumptions, there is no indication that Catherine is coy or teasing.[1247] Considering his assertive manliness, it is very probable that Henry cannot accept the fact to be rejected by a female who has no choice anyway. Rather, he assumes that she loves him, claiming "I know, Kate, you will to her dispraise those parts in me that you

[1247] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 138.

love with your heart" (*HV*, 5.2.188-189). He thus reinterprets her reluctance as coyness and show. Then, he shows his real face as a soldier. Like before Harfleur, his language becomes threatening.

> But good Kate, mock me mercifully – the rather, gentle princess, because I love thee cruelly. If ever thou be'st mine, Kate – as I have a saving faith within me thou shalt – I get thee with scrambling, and thou must therefore needs prove a good soldier-breeder. Shall not thou and I, between Saint Denis and Saint George, compound a boy, half-French and half-English, that shall go to Constantinople and take the Turk by the beard?
>
> (*HV*, 5.2.189-196)

He loves Catherine "cruelly," promising to get her "with scrambling" and telling her that he wants to have a soldier-son. Charging the union between the two with force and brutality, Catherine does not have an option to escape her fate. And, as he makes plain, he sees the charge for the breeding of their son completely as her responsibility.[1248] Thus, he wants to continue his own success in war and envisions a crucial role for his son in a crusade for the sake of Christendom, fulfilling the promise Henry's own father Henry IV did not live up to. His plans, however, will not work out as the epilogue foreshadows: all of the English territories in France will be lost by his son Henry VI (*HV*, Epilogue, 9-12)—and the hero king will die of dysentery in his prime at thirty-five.[1249] Catherine evades Henry's vision of their future together when she claims "I do not know dat" (*HV*, 5.2.198). What might be a statement about her linguistic skills in English underlines her knowledge that she does not have a choice whatsoever, and her husband-to-be already announced that he will get her even if she puts up resistance—so why should she voice an opinion on a soldier-son who would fight in crusades? Henry now becomes clear—while the future will show if she is a good soldier-breeder, for now she shall promise that she will try her best just as he guarantees for his English half (*HV*, 5.2.199-202). His ultimate goal is not the princess herself, but the continuity of his dynasty. So far, everything worked out well for Henry, but the aim of producing a warrior son with Catherine will not be fulfilled.

Henry found out that speaking French may be a way to get through to her, flattering her and asking what she thinks of the bargain (*HV*, 5.2.202-203); Catherine answers that Henry's false French is enough to "deceive" any woman in France (*HV*, 5.2.204-205); rather than answering his question, she again refers to his deceptive and linguistic skills. Henry sees that he will not get a straight answer from his prospective bride and tells her in "true English" that he loves her, only to begin a long monologue about himself. Does he get impatient because he does not get a "yes" from Catherine? He thinks that she loves him even though he does not deem his face worth looking at that might even frighten the ladies.[1250] He promises that he will look better when he gets older (a promise that will not come true as he will die relatively young), so he promises Catherine that she will get a great king. She, "queen of all," shall now decide again if she wants to

[1248] The problem of miscegenation is treated in detail in chapter 3.4.5.
[1249] Smith 2000: 89-90.
[1250] Indeed, Falstaff had described Hal's body in a most derogatory form in *1HIV* as a "starveling," an "elf-skin," a "died neat's tongue," a "bull's pizzle," a "stock-fish," a "tailor's yard," a "sheath," a "bow-case," and "a vile standing tuck" (*1HIV*, 2.5.226-229; see also Cahill 2008: 99).

become Henry's wife (*HV*, 5.2.206-228). Despite his linguistic force and effort, Catherine only refers to her father's wishes (*HV*, 5.2.229), but Henry assures her that a match between the two will please him (and he has no choice to reject Henry as a son-in-law, either)—and only then, after the promised approval of her father, Catherine gives in to the wooing (*HV*, 5.2.230-232). Henry wants to seal her acceptance with a kiss on Catherine's hand, but she resists, bidding Henry not to debase himself by kissing the hand of his humble servant, but the praise shall only disguise her resistance to his approaches (*HV*, 5.2.233-238). Then, he suggests to kiss her lips, but Catherine tells him that kissing is not a custom in France before marriage, an objection Henry nullifies by claiming that they both cannot be "confined within the weak list of a country's fashion"; they are the makers of fashion (and it is interesting that he includes the resisting Catherine here), so he overrides her by forcefully kissing her lips (*HV*, 5.2.255-256).

Henry thinks there is witchcraft in her lips that have more eloquence than all French politicians; thus, he relates the match between the two to its political dimension (*HV*, 5.2.250-260; 233-260).[1251] Then, the king of France enters with his train, and Burgundy and Henry talk about the outcome of the wooing. Apparently, Henry is not a hundred per cent happy about the result as he was unable to "conjure up the spirit of love in her" (*HV*, 5.2.261-269). Burgundy insinuates that Henry should woo her with love and embraces as a maid will always blush and be coy (*HV*, 5.2.270-276). Henry thinks that maids do "wink and yield, as love is blind and enforces" (*HV*, 5.2.277-278); the women have no opportunity other than just letting "love" happen to them, especially when love is enforced. As Burgundy thinks that women are then excused as they do not see what they do, he asks Burgundy to teach Catherine to consent by closing her eyes (*HV*, 5.2.279-282). It is striking that this male banter is conducted in Catherine's presence, charged with sexual undertones that stress female submission. And as Catherine knows she cannot put up any resistance, she keeps silent for the rest of the scene (*HV*, 5.2.283-294). Henry bluntly asks the French king if "Kate" shall be his wife, a demand that Charles as defeated party cannot deny (*HV*, 5.2.298-299). Catherine, then, shall show Henry the way to his "will" (*HV*, 5.2.300-302)—not only his political will to power in France, but also to his sexual will. As the French have yielded to all articles in the peace treaty, Charles is forced to accept Henry as his heir to the crown (*HV*, 5.2.303-319). He hands over his daughter to Henry with the hope that from "her blood" issue shall be born to him, the king of France, to bridge the hatred between England and France (*HV*, 5.2.320-327). Thus, *French* issue shall be born to his dynasty; implicitly, he does not wish his grandchild to be English, but born from his daughter's French blood. Henry then takes his "Kate" as "sovereign Queen" and seals his marriage with a kiss (*HV*, 5.2.329-330). The French queen prays for a good and peaceful outcome of this marriage that shall bring French and English together as brothers (*HV*, 5.2.331-340)—a pious wish that will not be true for long. Henry begins to plan for the wedding day, hoping that the marriage will prove "prosp'rous" (*HV*, 5.2.342-346), but the Epilogue ends on a discord as it foreshadows the bleak future under Henry VI.

[1251] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 138.

Established criticism comments on Henry's awkwardness with women and his overpowering masculine brutishness but also sees the marriage between Catherine and Henry as a happy ending; however, it is rather a linguistic prolongation of the chauvinist battle Henry fought against the French. Henry tries to romanticise his suit without even questioning his male dominance that he exerts with words; he is not bent to effeminise himself with courtly wooing and stresses that the marriage proposal is an already fixed bargain that cannot be refused. Even though he tries to flatter Catherine and wants her approval for the match, he expresses his personal attraction to her only once after he kissed her against her will, attributing the demonising image of witchcraft to her (*HV*, 5.2.256).[1252] His understatement about his looks and inabilities in civilised refinements does only emphasise his warrior mentality that aims at subduing his adversary that he does by sheer force of speech in the interview. Catherine's inability to keep up is not only due to her English skills but also her understanding that she cannot play an active role in the power game. Her only way out is resistance that does not work in her favour; she is only a barter in the political arena that shall secure the English dynasty. Rather, she detects Henry's deceit repeatedly, but her opposition does simply not have any impact in the face of Henry's power (*HV*, 5.2.115-116; 204-205). The match is not based on mutual attraction but on the political will of Henry V, who takes Catherine as his last booty in the wars against France. Thus, Catherine becomes an allegory of the conquered France that is taken by force because of power not love.

3.4.2 "He Loves Me More Than All the World"—Edward II's Homoeroticism

Edward II is the most open depiction of male-male eroticism in the history plays. It ascribes all the antisocial stigmata to it that the time associated with the love between men: it is anti-social, seditious, and, finally, disastrous. However, the social deviance is not restricted to the relationship between Edward and Gaveston (and later Spencer junior); the behaviour of the nobles as well as the adulterous relationship of the queen with Mortimer further destabilise the power balance.[1253] However, it is not his relationship with Gaveston that brings about the king's fall but the disturbance of the social order he causes with Gaveston's advancement.[1254] In Renaissance historiography, Edward II was deemed a weak king because he surrounded himself with flatterers and bad councillors, a charge the barons repeat when they call Gaveston a flatterer.[1255] The barons are infuriated by Edward's double, intertwined sin: the abuse of his power by promoting Gaveston above "natural," hierarchical order, and the fact that he is overruled by his passions.[1256]

[1252] Sinfield and Dollimore 1992: 138.
[1253] Orgel 1996: 46.
[1254] Interestingly, the historical Gaveston was not the social upstart Marlowe makes him but rather a gentleman that was raised at court together with the future King Edward II—to be his favourite. Elizabethan chroniclers charge Gaveston with all sorts of extravagancies—but the charge of sodomy is exclusively Marlowe's (Orgel 1996: 46-47).
[1255] Tillyard 1944: 33.
[1256] See Breitenberg 1996: 65 on James I.

The first scene of the drama already sets a decidedly homoerotic tone; Gaveston, banished by the late king, is called back to England by the "amorous lines" of the new King Edward II and is overjoyed to "live and be the favourite of a king," looking forward to a privileged relationship with his friend (*EII*, 1.1.5-6). Gaveston thinks of returning to his friend Edward as of Leander crossing Hellespont to be with his lover Hero (*EII*, 1.1.7-9), charging the friendship between the two men with physical love and desire.[1257] Besides, Gaveston's anticipation of Edward's embrace sounds quite sexual as well (*EII*, 1.1.9). His longing for the king is so intense that he wishes to "die" on Edward's bosom (*EII*, 1.1.14), alluding to the little death of orgasm. While Gaveston is happy about the reunion with the king, he states that he will be "still at enmity" with "the world" (*EII*, 1.1.15), putting the two friends (or rather, lovers) into opposition with the others at court from the beginning on. Gaveston's antipathy to the others is underlined by his declaration that he will not stoop to peers anymore (*EII*, 1.1.18) nor respect the commoners (*EII*, 1.1.20-21); rather, "My knee shall bow to none but to the King" (*EII*, 1.1.19). What is often interpreted as a sign of Gaveston's arrogance and lack of subservience to his superiors could also hint at fellatio, a further allusion to physical love between the two. Gaveston plans to get back to England as soon as he can (*EII*, 1.1.22-23) and has quite concrete plans for his future with the king:

> I must have wanton poets, pleasant wits,
> Musicians, that with touching of a string
> May draw the pliant King which way I please.
> Music and poetry is his delight;
> Therefore I'll have Italian masques by night,
> Sweet speeches, comedies, and pleasing shows;
> And in the day when we shall walk abroad,
> Like Sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad,
> My men like satyrs grazing on the lawns
> Shall with their goat-feet dance an antic hay;
> Sometime a lovely boy in Dian's shape,
> With hair that gilds the water as it glides,
> Crownets of pearl about his naked arms,
> And in his sportful hands an olive tree
> To hide those parts which men delight to see,
> Shall bathe him in a spring; and there hard by,
> One like Actaeon peeping through the grove,
> Shall by the angry goddess be transformed,
> And running in the likeness of an hart,
> By yelping hounds pulled down, and seem to die.
> (*EII*, 1.1.50-70)

Gaveston evokes images that appealed to an early modern audience: an Ovidian metamorphosis story, a beautiful hermaphrodite, voyeurism, and violence. He wants to manipulate the king with a dreamlike world of a rustic, Mediterranean Arcadia full of

[1257] Marlowe treated this theme in a poem a year after *Edward II* (see footnote on p. 118 referring to *EII*, 1.1.8). Bray argues that Edward and Gaveston just use the established codes of friendship between men but acknowledges that there are hints pointing towards sodomy. The tension between sodomy and friendship is never resolved in the play (Bray 1994: 48-49). See also Smith 1991: 204-223 for a thorough analysis of the homoeroticism in the play.

music, poetry, and mythical creatures.[1258] Edward's sense of music and poetry characterises him as refined and learned but also drawn towards the soft and effeminate. Gaveston guesses that the king would be pleased by the aspect of a "lovely boy in Dian's shape," a hermaphrodite who would arouse the spectators with his beauty. The lascivious, highly-charged erotic spectacle turns darker and more brutal when a spectator, "One like Actaeon" (*EII*, 1.1.67) and thus a representative of the audience erotically gazing, is punished by the "lovely boy" who turned into "the angry goddess" by the transformation into a deer that is hunted down by his own dogs. That his death is only figurative (*EII*, 1.1.70) adds a further dreamlike quality to the mythological setting that centres on the ambiguous gender of the goddess-boy, a reminder of classical concepts of male-male love. The erotically charged classical myth with the hidden and forbidden spying on the bathing boy adds to the sexual tension between Gaveston and Edward. That the Actaeon figure finally has to "die" points to the Renaissance slang expression for having an orgasm—a notion that modern French has kept in the expression "la petite mort."[1259] By only seemingly dying, the desiring subject "dissolves" at the height of desire, so the loss of control is made palpable by Actaeon's death. The sadistic and brutal act is an arousing feature of the show as "Such things as these best please his majesty" (*EII*, 1.1.71). The masque with all its eroticised gazing and sexual innuendo strongly backs up the conclusion that the love between Edward and Gaveston was already sexually consummated.

Catherine Belsey interprets the masque's emphasis on pleasure as Gaveston's return for the granted patronage and suggests that he wants to enter the centre of power to "draw the pliant king which way I please" (*EII*, 1.1.53).[1260] But how can Gaveston be thankful for patronage that he has not yet received? The only thing he has received is the letter from the king telling him to return from exile. But Gaveston's strategy is indeed ambiguous; on the one hand, he wants to seduce the king and plans to do so according to Edward's liking while he explicitly wants to "draw the pliant King which way I please," so he plans to have influence at court. For Cartelli, the masque is deeply unsettling; Gaveston, an "eloquent champion of desires and pleasures," wants to normalise the unusual rather than subverting conventional preference by his masque. The mechanism works through its imagination—if the audience feel satisfaction at the thought of the masque's realisation, they themselves invert the normative heterosexual order. If Gaveston succeeds in reconstructing the moral and sexual priorities of a seduced audience, he creates stimulation as well as resistance. This is a big difference

[1258] Italy in the Renaissance was seen as a very deceitful and corruptive place. Therefore, the masque underscores this manipulative moment by this connotation. Further, Burton connects Romance people with sexual deviance when he states that the people of France and Italy "go down headlong to their own perdition, they will commit folly with beasts, men 'leaving the natural use of women,' as Paul saith, 'burned in lust one towards another, and man with man wrought filthiness,'" (Burton 1850: 449). Breitenberg adds that sodomy was often connected with Italians; the boy in Dian's shape seems thus to be an effusion of this context and indicates even more the sexual consummation of the relationship between Gaveston and Edward (Breitenberg 1996: 60).
[1259] Belsey 1992: 94, 100; Fletcher 1995: 11.
[1260] Belsey 1992: 88.

between Shakespeare's and Marlowe's styles of theatrical representation—Shakespeare recuperates subversions whereas Marlowe openly enforces them.[1261]

When Edward enters the stage with his entourage in the middle of a discussion, Gaveston withdraws and comments on the ensuing scene in asides from his hiding space. Edward and the barons have a dispute about Gaveston's return to England,[1262] so Gaveston waits until the barons are gone before he steps forward to greet Edward. The king's hearty welcome is telling about the relationship between the two as well as Edward's self-perception in regard to Gaveston:

> What, Gaveston! Welcome! Kiss not my hand;
> Embrace me, Gaveston, as I do thee!
> Why shouldst thou kneel; knowest thou not who I am?
> Thy friend, thy self, another Gaveston!
> Not Hylas was more mourned of Hercules
> Than thou hast been of me since thy exile.
> (*EII*, 1.1.140-145)

Edward elevates Gaveston, who was initially kneeling and kissing his sovereign's hand; instead, the king bids him to embrace him and acknowledge him as his equal. Edward so closely identifies with his friend that he even calls himself "thy self, another Gaveston." The friends mirror each other and are closely connected, turning the relationship into a symbiosis. Each one is a part of the other, building an impermeable unity. Whereas the king stresses that the two become one through their close relationship, Gaveston had earlier constructed this unity as an antagonism to the world surrounding them, so that Gaveston also felt tormented by their separation (*EII*, 1.1.146-147). When Edward bids his brother to welcome his returned friend, Kent is apparently not as overjoyed at the sight of Gaveston and remains silent despite his brother's enthusiasm. Edward's desire is now fulfilled—Gaveston is back, and he will do everything to keep him in England despite the barons. Probably out of joy and happiness, Edward lavishes titles on Gaveston, creating him Lord High Chamberlain, Chief Secretary to the realm and the king, Earl of Cornwall, and Lord of Man (*EII*, 1.1.149-156). That last title both denotes the ruler of the Isle of Man and also backs up Gaveston's homoerotic power over the king. Gaveston thanks coyly, and Kent reproaches his brother that any of these titles would have sufficed for a man of higher birth than Gaveston (*EII*, 1.1.157-159). But Edward shuts his brother up and goes on to fawn over his newly arrived friend:

> Thy worth, sweet friend, is far above my gifts,
> Therefore to equal it, receive my heart.
> If for these dignities thou be envied,
> I'll give thee more, for but to honour thee
> Is Edward pleased with kingly regiment.
> Fear'st thou thy person? Thou halt have a guard.
> Wanst thou gold? Go to my treasury.
> Wouldst thou be loved and feared? Receive my seal,
> Save or condemn, and in our name command
> What so thy mind affects or fancy likes.
> (*EII*, 1.1.161-170)

[1261] Cartelli 1999: 179-180; 188.
[1262] See chapter 3.1.3 and 3.5.4.

The speech is a total surrender of Edward's rule to Gaveston; as the king's dedication cannot be shown in the bestowal of titles, he gives away his heart—the centre of feeling—to his friend. If Gaveston needs anything, he should just help himself, and even Edward's "kingly regiment" shall be a means to please Gaveston. Adapting the kingdom's reign to only one person's needs, Edward opens the door to potential tyranny; the king shows that he does not care about politics or his royal responsibilities by handing the power over the whole realm and Edward's resources over to Gaveston. Rather, Edward wants to please his friend and estimates this friendship as his highest good. Gaveston's response is both modest and grandiose:

> It shall suffice me to enjoy your love,
> Which whiles I have, I think myself as great
> As Caesar riding in the Roman street,
> With captive kings at his triumphant car.
> (*EII*, 1.1.171-174)

Even though he was virtually offered the rule over the kingdom, Gaveston contents himself with the love of his friend that makes him as powerful as an emperor who leads defeated kings in a triumphal procession. The image he uses brings to mind Marlowe's powerful stage image of Tamburlaine who brutally uses the defeated kings as his draught horses (see *Tamburlaine II*, 4.3). Through his indirect influence, however, Gaveston might prove to have even more power.

After Gaveston's return to court, Edward's attention centres completely on his friend; he neglects his wife and his political duties, a fact that enrages the barons who plan a new banishment for their enemy. Eventually, they force Edward to exile Gaveston for a second time.[1263] When Gaveston wants to know if he is truly banished (*EII*, 1.4.106-107), the ensuing lines contain a moving farewell between the lovers. Edward promises to revenge Gaveston with his reign and to provide him with everything he needs. Edward hopes they will not be parted for a long time and assures Gaveston that his "love shall ne'er decline" (*EII*, 1.4.108-115). Gaveston grieves but Edward claims that Gaveston is only banished from the land whereas he is banished from himself (*EII*, 1.4.116-118). Gaveston declares that he is only unhappy about the separation from Edward:

> To go from hence grieves not poor Gaveston,
> But to forsake you, in whose gracious looks
> The blessedness of Gaveston remains,
> For nowhere else seeks he felicity.
> (*EII*, 1.4.119-122)

It is not quite clear what the blessedness of Gaveston consists of—is it the patronage that the king grants? Or is it rather the companionship and physical proximity to his lover-friend? The tone set in this passage suggests the latter, so Gaveston is apparently also emotionally attached to Edward and no mere bootlicker. Before they part, Edward makes Gaveston Governor of Ireland, and they exchange portraits. He even suggests to hide Gaveston to keep him, but his friend is more realistic and knows he has to leave.

[1263] See chapter 3.1.3 and 3.5.4.

As they both cannot part from each other, Edward resolves to accompany Gaveston to his ship (*EII*, 1.4.123-143). On their way, they meet Kent and Isabella, and the queen inquires where Edward wants to go, but he insults her as a "French strumpet" (*EII*, 1.4.145). For the first time, Gaveston insinuates that she might be interested in or even already engaging in an affair with Mortimer, an allegation that Isabella is taken aback by; rather, she feels doubly wronged by Gaveston who led astray her husband and now doubts her marital chastity (*EII*, 1.4.144-152). Her wording ("bawd to his affections," *EII*, 1.4.151; "thou corrupts [*sic*] my lord," 1.4.150) indicates a sexual relationship between Gaveston and Edward. While Gaveston asks the queen's pardon, Edward accuses her to have furthered Gaveston's banishment. He gives her a choice: either she reconciles the lords with him, or she will never be reconciled to him again. When Isabella claims that she is unable to do so, Edward forbids her to touch him and wants to leave with Gaveston whom the desperate Isabella accuses to rob her of her lord; Gaveston in return accuses her to rob *him* of his lord (*EII*, 1.4.153-161)—either a sexual charge or the allegation that it was Isabella who caused Gaveston's exile.

Edward does not want Gaveston to speak to Isabella; while she does not know how she deserves to be rejected by her husband, Edward adds insult to injury and warns her not to come into his sight till Gaveston's banishment is revoked (*EII*, 1.4.162-169). On her own again, Isabella likens herself to Juno being deserted by Jupiter for Ganymede, explicitly linking Edward and Gaveston to male-male sex; however, she understands that if she wants to be reunited with Edward, she has to work for Gaveston's return (*EII*, 1.4.170-186). When Gaveston is gone, Edward mourns his friend and would give anything—even his crown—to buy him back; he is "frantic for my Gaveston" (*EII*, 1.4.316) and rues giving in to signing the banishment (*EII*, 1.4.206-311; 313-319). Isabella and Lancaster are astonished with what passion (and thus excess) the king mourns the loss of his friend (*EII*, 1.4.312; 320).

When Isabella wants to inform him that Gaveston's banishment was repealed, Edward scorns her for having talked with Mortimer, but Edward is overjoyed to hear the news. Isabella, however, wants to make Edward's love for her a condition for the repeal: "But will you love me if you find it so?" (*EII*, 1.4.321-325). Edward's keen agreement is countered by her cold and rather disappointed comment: "For Gaveston, but not for Isabel" (*EII*, 1.4.327). Edward assures her of the contrary—and wants to reward her with jewellery. She, however, just wants her husband's arms around her, and his kiss revives the sexually famished queen (*EII*, 1.4.328-334). When Edward offers his hand for a second time in marriage, Isabella accepts and hopes the second marriage will "prove more happy than the first" (*EII*, 1.4.335-337).

Yet, the reconciliation between the spouses will not last as Edward's thoughts single-mindedly centre on Gaveston; when he gets the news that his friend will return, he promises him the hand of his niece, Lady Margaret de Clare (*EII*, 1.4.378-380), who serves as a token of love that creates a bond between the two men and furthers Gaveston's social position at court. So, the marriage with a woman becomes a gift of

friendship to connect the men more closely.[1264] Interestingly, Gaveston's "love" circulates at court like a spectre, and it is not quite clear if Gaveston is a token for the king's niece or vice versa. However, it invisibly meanders within the proximity of the king, touching Edward, Kent, Margaret, and even Spencer, bonding the faction of the king together. However, Edward cannot shield his friend from further harm after his return; eventually, Gaveston is killed by the barons. While his death is the event that finally makes Edward stand up against the peers and fight them, he adopts Spencer junior as a surrogate friend for Gaveston. It is astonishing how fast his friend is replaced, but the structure of the relationship stays the same—just as the barons' opposition against him.

3.4.3 "Can No Man Tell Me of My Unthrifty Son?"—Relationships between Fathers and Sons

One of the most detailed descriptions of a relationship between a father and a son in the history plays is contained in *1 Henry IV* and *2 Henry IV* between Henry IV and his son Hal, the future King Henry V. Their relationship does not seem to be very good, even less so as they are also linked politically and dynastically by the question of succession, a deep worry for the father who does not trust his son. Already in *Richard II*, the newly crowned Henry IV complains about his son and his behaviour in a way that does not imply a warm and close relationship:

> Can no man tell me of my unthrifty son?
> 'Tis full three months since I saw him last.
> If any plague hang over us, 'tis he.
> I would to God, my lords, he might be found.
> Enquire at London 'mongst the taverns there,
> For there, they say, he daily doth frequent
> With unrestrainèd loose companions –
> Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes
> And beat our watch and rob our passengers –
> Which he, young wanton and effeminate boy,
> Takes on the point of honour to support
> So dissolute a crew.
>
> (*RII*, 5.3.1-12)

Father and son did not have contact for three months, and the king calls his son Hal a "plague" that is basically useless; the heir apparent spends his time with thieves and scapegraces instead of attending to his duties at court. While Hal roves about with lower-class people in Eastcheap, his father is worried that the prince will not make a good king; his father is deeply troubled by Hal's intemperate youth and inconsiderateness concerning his rank.[1265] He bemoans:

> Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds,
> And he, the noble image of my youth,
> Is overspread with them; therefore my grief
> Stretches itself beyond the hour of death.
> The blood weeps from my heart when I do shape
> In forms imaginary th'unguided days

[1264] Orgel 1996: 77; Bray 1994: 49.
[1265] See Smith 2000: 21.

And rotten times that you shall look upon
When I am sleeping with my ancestors;
For when his headstrong riot hath no curb,
When rage and hot blood are his counsellors,
When means and lavish manners meet together,
O, with what wings shall his affections fly
Towards fronting peril and opposed decay?
(*2HIV*, 4.3.54-66)

Henry fears the day when his boisterous son will become king, as he anticipates that his son will eventually fall because he is so headstrong and unwilling to control himself that no one will succeed to curb his passions from the outside. While Henry places himself firmly in the line of his ancestors, he is uneasy about the succession of his own flesh and blood, indicating a possible disruption in the yet unbroken family line. Henry's grief is so strong that his heart—the seat of his feeling—overflows with blood, a humoral and psychological excessive disorder. Here, not only a deeply worried father speaks about the personal disappointment of his son's development but also a ruler who fears and cares for his realm; but aside from political concerns, the personal relationship between father and son seems to be so cold that even Hotspur comments on the lack of love and personal attachment between father and son:

[…] this Bolingbroke.
And that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales –
But that I think his father loves him not
And would be glad he met with some mischance –
I would have him poisoned with a pot of ale.
(*1HIV*, 1.3.227-231)

Hotspur imagines that Henry IV would even approve of the death of his own son whom he experiences as a punishment for his own sins falling back on him in the unruly behaviour of his progeny.[1266] The following passage supports this interpretation:

I know not whether God will have it so
For some displeasing service I have done,
That in his secret doom out of my blood
He'll breed revengement and a scourge for me,
But thou dost in thy passages of life
Make me believe that thou art only marked
For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven
To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,
Could such inordinate and low desires,
Such poor, such bare, such lewd, such mean attempts,
Such barren pleasures, rude society,
As thou art matched withal and grafted to,
Accompany the greatness of thy blood,
And hold their level with thy princely heart?
(*1HIV*, 3.2.4-17)

Interestingly, Henry's grievances parallel his own former misdeeds: Henry the rebel is plagued by rebellion; Henry the regicide tries to atone for his sins and placate his "king of kings" with the promise to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land; and Henry the usurper fears the disobedience and subversion of his son Hal.[1267] The anatomy of divine

[1266] Campbell 1947:229.
[1267] Campbell 1947: 229.

vengeance is thus beautifully laid out. Henry defines his son's worth by his outer behaviour, conduct, and company that do not comply with that of a prince; Hal's status ought to obligate him to a more responsible comportment. As Hal does not fulfil his father's expectations, there is no expression of love or personal attachment apart from the paternal care about his conduct; it might be questioned, however, whether Henry's worries are founded on dynastical worries related to the future of the realm or whether he is personally disappointed by his son. Another passage clarifies this point, where Henry indeed wishes for a different kind of son—a son like the hot and rash Hotspur. The king moans:

> Yea, 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 dishonour 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.
> (*1HIV*, 1.1.77-89)

Henry envies Northumberland for his son who embodies the virtues of chivalry—even though to an extreme—and wishes that Hotspur were his progeny; thus, he rejects his own son Hal on the grounds that he does not embody hegemonic masculinity in the way Hotspur does. He cannot express any personal love for a son who does not live up to the father's expectations and does not promise to be a good replacement for his father once he is dead. Many different speeches testify Henry's disappointment with his son; one of the political charges raised against Prince Hal is—apart from not behaving like a true prince—that he neglects his political duties at court as a counsellor of the king.[1268] The most striking complaint is right before Henry's death after Hal had snatched the crown from his father's side to meditate on his future role as king (see *2HIV*, 4.3.150-177).[1269] Now, after a deed that Henry can only interpret as a usurpation, his accusations against his son pour out with all his frustration and worries about the political future of the country. Henry imagines how desolate England will be under the unruly rule of Prince Hal:

> Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought:
> I stay to long by thee, I weary thee.
> Dost thou so hunger for mine empty chair
> That thou wilt needs invest thee with my honours

[1268] Schruff 1999: 89; see also *1HIV*, 3.2.32: "Thy place in Council thou hast rudely lost – ".

[1269] Interestingly, the crown-snatching scene mirrors actual Renaissance politics; James of Scotland, among other "would-be heirs," was trying to secure the crown prematurely. He did everything in his power to secure the crown of England for himself, and as early as 1598 he waged a "war of propaganda" for his political interests. A soon as the Earl of Leicester was dead, he began to correspond with Essex to have close access to the queen. When Essex levied his rebellion, James' troops were standing at the border, so the allusion of crown-snatching would probably be understood by contemporary audiences (Campbell 1947: 240-241).

Before thy hour be ripe? O foolish youth,
Thou seek'st the greatness that will overwhelm thee!
[…]
Thou has stolen that which after some few hours
Were thine without offence, and at my death
Thou hast sealed up my expectation.
Thy life did manifest thou loved'st me not,
And thou wilt have me die assured of it.
Thou hid'st a thousand daggers in my thoughts,
Whom thou hast whetted on thy stony heart
To stab at half an hour of my life.
[…]
Only compound me with forgotten dust.
Give that which gave thee life unto the worms.
Pluck down my officers, break my decrees;
For now a time is come to mock at form –
Harry the Fifth is crowned. Up, vanity!
Down, royal state! All you sage counsellors, hence!
And to the English court assemble now
From every region, apes of idleness!
[…]
For the fifth Harry from curbed licence plucks
The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog
Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent.
O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows!
When that my care could not withhold thy riots,
What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?
O, thou wilt be a wilderness again,
Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants.
(*2HIV*, 4.3.220-225, 229-236, 243-250, 258-265)

While the long monologue expresses Henry's distrust in Hal's ability to govern the country, it is striking that he himself implicitly constructs himself as a good king despite his own usurpation that he now accuses Hal of. What apparently appears in Henry's fear of Hal's accession to the throne is chaos and rebellion—a feature he had to endure in his own weak reign—which endangers the line of succession; and political usurpation—a deed Henry himself had committed against Richard II. Henry apparently wants his son to behave in a prudent, temperate, and rational way to ensure a smooth reign; that Hal does not do so yet makes Henry fear for the legitimacy of the line of succession. It is interesting that the usurper who has a problem of legitimacy himself chides his son for snatching the crown, something he himself did. Besides, the crown-snatching occurred in the bounds of legitimate succession, so Henry's reaction shows his deep anxieties after a reign full of unrest, rebellion, and attacks on his kingship. He fears that the lack of restraint he sees in his son will induce violent energies just like the ones Henry V is indeed to conjure up before the besieged city of Harfleur where he evokes havoc and destruction—but to secure his own reign and to strengthen his claim to the French throne. Henry V's reign will never be as insecure and questioned as his father's; only in a moment of personal insecurity does Henry V refer to his father's (and therefore also his own) questionable legitimacy but the scenario Henry IV paints will never be realised.

Hal's feelings towards his father are not so very clear, but one scene is telling—in *1HIV* 2.5, Falstaff and Hal alternately play king and son. The dialogue between the two is ambiguous as it treats both the relationship between Henry IV and Hal as well as

between Hal and Falstaff, the personification of Hal's riotous life. After the Gad's Hill robbery, Hal, Falstaff, and the rest of the Eastcheap companions are together at Mistress Quickly's tavern when the hostess reports that a messenger from the court is at the door to speak with Hal; the prince, however, wants him to be sent away, so Falstaff goes to the door to dismiss him (*1HIV*, 2.5.261-273).

Falstaff returns and tells the prince that he has to be at the court the next morning as the political situation concerning the Percy rebellion and the war with Glyndwr worsened; while the king's beard "turned white with the news" (*1HIV*, 2.5.328-329), Hal takes the order rather lightly and gets lost in jests, claiming that he is not afraid (*1HIV*, 2.5.305-339). Falstaff anticipates the prince's chastisement because of his negligent behaviour, so he bids Hal to answer to the charges, and the role-play begins (*1HIV*, 2.5.340-352). Falstaff, as king, mockingly chides Hal for his wanton lifestyle and warns him not to waste his youth; it is not seemly for a prince to pick purses, thereby demeaning his state. Falstaff goes on to reproach Hal for the company he keeps, only to praise himself as a virtuous man worth keeping (*1HIV*, 2.5.363-393).

When Falstaff asks about Hal's whereabouts over the past month, Hal does not answer but changes roles; he does not think that Falstaff bears himself like a king, so he plays the role himself—an act that Falstaff mockingly calls a "deposition" (*1HIV*, 2.5.394-400). Having rehearsed what it means to be king, Hal seems completely changed.[1270] While the role-play beforehand seemed to imply that the role of the king is arbitrary, exchangeable, and can be performed deliberately, the following lines show that impersonating the role of the king changes the individual. Whereas Falstaff jests, Hal is serious and sharply attacks Falstaff–as–Hal's evasive answers about his company and whereabouts. Hal reverses Falstaff's previous claims of virtue and presents him as the cause for all the offences Hal has committed; Hal-as-king attacks Falstaff-as-Hal for his behaviour (*1HIV*, 2.5.401-424). Falstaff defends himself, asking Hal-as-king not to banish Falstaff—"Banish not him thy Harry's company, / Banish not him thy Harry's company. / Banish plump Jack, and banish all the world" (*1HIV*, 2.5.425-438). Hal-as-king's answer foreshadows his rejection of Falstaff when he is eventually crowned: "I do; I will" (*1HIV*, 2.5.439).

Just when Hal has admitted willy-nilly that his boisterous life in Eastcheap will be an episode that ends when he is king, the sheriff and watch appear to search the tavern for Falstaff (*1HIV*, 2.5.440-466). Right after Hal and Falstaff have finished their subversive role-play, official power arrives to establish order again. As Hal's time at Eastcheap is not yet over, he lies to the sheriff and denies Falstaff's presence, covering up for any charges against his friend (*1HIV*, 2.5.267-477). The scene not only foreshadows Falstaff's banishment but also Henry's more responsible and conformist conduct that he will display when king. He apparently knows his responsibilities but still follows his strategy laid out in the reformation speech[1271]—he plans to rise from the

[1270] Howard 1994: 142.
[1271] See chapter 3.3.1.

nether regions of his former, riotous life as a shining, newly reformed king. To achieve this effect, he even hazards the personal disappointment of his father as a consequence.

The meeting between the king and Hal that Falstaff and the prince had rehearsed in *1HIV*, 2.5 takes place in *1HIV*, 3.2. As expected, the king chides Hal for his irresponsibility and lewd conduct but adds his bitter, personal feelings to his accusations (*1HIV*, 3.2.4-17, 29-91, 93-128). Hal tries to excuse himself, asks for a pardon, and claims that he is willing to reform to be "more myself" (*1HIV*, 3.2.18-28, 92-93). He even promises solemnly "in the name of God" that he will prove Henry's true son in a showdown with Hotspur that will redeem him of all previous charges (*1HIV*, 3.2.129-159). Henry tries to pass on his way of dealing with the public as a king; his strategy comprises a careful staging of his appearance and retraction from the common people.[1272] He fears the common company of his son will imperil his future throne:

> Had I so lavish of my presence been,
> So common-hackneyed in the eyes of men,
> So stale and cheap to vulgar company,
> Opinion, that did help me to the crown
> Had still kept loyal to possession […].
> By being seldom seen, I could not stir
> But, like a comet, being wondered at,
> That men would tell their children 'This is he.'
> […]
> Thus did I keep my person fresh and new,
> My presence like a robe pontifical –
> Ne'er seen but wondered at – and so my state,
> Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a feast,
> And won by rareness such solemnity.
> (*1HIV*, 3.2.39-43, 46-48, 55-59)

Indirectly, Hal already follows his father's advice by manipulating his own appearance to seem more brilliant than he is; but while Henry IV imagines a king as a figure who can raise his worth by rarely being looked at, Hal follows a different track. Knowing that kingship is an ongoing performance, he lives a wild and irresponsible life to make his kingly reformation look all the more miraculous. And where Henry IV has to defend his throne by force despite the politics of appearance, his son has a much smoother and less troubled reign.[1273] The scene ends on a conciliatory note as Henry entrusts his son with military responsibility to prove himself (*1HIV*, 3.2.160-161). That Henry IV has a better opinion of his heir-apparent despite his tirades against Hal shows in his advice to his younger sons of how to deal with their older brother when he is going to be king. On his deathbed, Henry instructs his younger son Thomas of Clarence how he should approach Hal:[1274]

> How chance thou art not with the Prince thy brother?
> He loves thee, and thou dost neglect him, Thomas.
> Thou hast a better place in his affection
> Than all thy brothers. Cherish it, my boy,
> […].
> Therefore omit him not, blunt not his love,

[1272] Schruff 1999: 260-261.
[1273] Howard 1994: 143-144.
[1274] Tillyard 1944: 270.

Nor lose the good advantage of his grace
By seeming cold or careless of his will;
For he is gracious, if he be observed;
He hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity.
Yet notwithstanding, being incensed, he's flint,
As humorous as winter and as sudden
As flaws congealed in the spring of day.
His temper therefore must be well observed.
Chide him for faults and do it reverently,
When you perceive his blood inclined to mirth;
But, being moody, give him line and scope
Till that his passions, like a whale on ground,
Confound themselves with working […].
(*2HIV*, 4.2.20-23, 27-41)

Before he dies, the king wants to pass on advice to his son to be a good and loving counsellor to his brother when he is a king. But besides that, Henry's speech shows that he loves his problem child Hal despite his former accusations against him. Rather, he describes Hal as graceful, pitiful, and charitable—if he is obeyed and respected. If not, he can be moody, passionate, and obdurate but needs guidance by loving advice that takes his humours into account to encourage his more positive traits better. This evaluation of his son's character is insightful and—despite the somewhat negative characteristics that also surface—loving. In the same scene (after some disruptions about the crown-snatching), Henry and Hal finally reconcile after Hal assures his father of his willingness to continue Henry's royal legacy against all odds (*2HIV*, 4.3.348-352)—a pledge that apparently lessens his father's worries.

Another (but not nearly as elaborate) father-son relationship is portrayed between Edward III and the Black Prince in *Edward III*. The Black Prince is a more obedient and courtly young man than Hal, and props up his father's reign like an obedient son. Nevertheless, the relationship seems to be rather cold from the father's perspective; when Prince Edward arrives in France, he disturbs his father's love passion. His mere presence and his resemblance to his mother remind the king of his familial and political duties (*EIII*, 896-904). To conceal what is going on inside of him, his father greets him colloquially with "now boy, what news." The prince had fulfilled the duties assigned to him and now waits for further orders (*EIII*, 905-909), indicating obedience and subservience—ideal characteristics that a son and heir apparent should have. The king, however, is still caught up in his desires that were halted by the boy's eyes that look much like his mother's (*EIII*, 910-913). While his father struggles with his illicit lust for the countess, it is the son who fulfils his duties without question and who—despite his father's failings—serves him obediently. While his father tries to reason his passions into something normal (*EIII*, 914-915), the Black Prince incorporates the royal qualities of temperance and selfless service much better than the actual king—an issue that will recur throughout the play. The prince seems to work like a mirror reflecting what his father should be but is not.

The quality of the relationship between king and son shows well when the prince is in the middle of the battle, threatened by death. When Artois reports that the prince needs rescue, King Edward merely asks whether he was captured or fell off his horse,

but Artois answers in the negative. Even worse, the Black Prince is "narrowly beset / with turning Frenchmen" with no chance of escape lest his father send aid (*EIII*, 1580-1586). The king does not think of sending for rescue as his son is fighting for a knighthood, for he must fend for himself to prove himself worthy (*EIII*, 1587-1588). When Derby objects and asks the king to help his son, Edward's answer is quite harsh. Either the prince will win everlasting honour by helping himself, or he will die. The possibility of the prince's death is apparently no problem to the king who has "more sons / than one, to comfort our declining age" (*EIII*, 1590-1595). A prince has a function that can also be fulfilled by his brothers, so the king feels that his son is replaceable; this does not indicate a warm or close relationship between Edward and the Black Prince. As with Hal above, the love a father has for his son is tied to the condition that he proves worthy and fulfils the father's expectations.

Audley, the prince's mentor who has a close relationship with him, urges Edward to let him help the prince who fights like a lion but cannot free himself from the French who threaten him (*EIII*, 1597-1604). Edward's response becomes fiercer: "I will not have a man / on pain of death sent forth to succour him" (*EIII*, 1605-1606). For him, the day of battle is "ordained by destiny" to teach his son how thoughts of death will strengthen his courage so that he will later be able to "savour still of this exploit" (*EIII*, 1607-1610). Derby interjects that the lesson will be lost on him if the prince does not survive, but Edward thinks that "his epitaph is lasting praise" (*EIII*, 1611-1612). For Edward, honour and a record in history are goals that are apparently more important than saving one's own child. While the Black Prince is expendable, his valorous deeds will survive him; this paradox of masculinity construction also shows in the first fight of John Talbot, Jr.—a man has to prove himself even at the risk of one's life. Through dying, a young man proves his valour and masculinity. Achieving masculinity can therefore be a dangerous business; Rainer Emig's theory of the fatality of male emulation comes to mind. Audley pleads again for the prince's rescue, claiming that his impending death is not destiny but "too much wilfulness" (*EIII*, 1614) on Edward's part, but the father thinks that no one knows whether help will be of any avail. The prince may already be dead or captured, so the rescuers would just expose themselves to unnecessary danger; or, if he was relieved of his enemies, he would expect that to happen again during other battles. However, by conquering his fear of death, the prince will never be dependent on anyone if he succeeds to free himself on his own (*EIII*, 1615-1625). The prince's perseverance will prove cathartic, for it will rid him of fear and dependence on others. Audley can only respond with "Oh cruel father, farewell Edward then" (*EIII*, 1626, 1627, 1628). However, what indeed seems cruel might indeed be care for the prince's future; as the battle is the finishing touch to the prince's chivalry and masculinity, his perseverance will help him to face anything in life without fear.

When Prince Edward enters with his broken lance and the dead king of Bohemia, Audley and Derby are the first to greet him with exclamations of joy and appraisal (*EIII*, SD, 1633-1637), whereas his father greets him with a formal "Welcome Plantagenet" (*EIII*, 1638). The contrast between the joyous reception of his friends and the rather cold welcome of his father is stark; nevertheless, the king probably approves

of his son's deed who lived up to his name. The prince kneels in front of his father and pays him due respect (*EIII*, SD). He thinks he fulfilled his duty and thanks all the others (*EIII*, 1639-1640). The Black Prince experienced the battle as a journey, a "winter's toil[1275] and a "painful voyage" over the "boisterous sea" (*EIII*, 1641-1642). As an obedient son, he dedicates "the first fruit of my sword"—the dead king of Bohemia—to his father, claiming that he killed him himself (*EIII*, 1647-1649).[1276] He further reports that in the distress of battle, his weapons and his vow only to use them according to chivalric code gave him strength so that finally he could "put the multitude to speedy flight;" now, he hopes for knighthood as the reward for his deeds (*EIII*, 1650-1663). Edward approves of his son's worthiness and dubs him a knight with his own sword that is still "reeking warm / with blood of those that fought to be thy bane" (*EIII*, 1665-1666; 1664-1668). So, the Black Prince is baptised with his enemies' blood as an initiation into manhood due to his worth that is acknowledged by all the others.[1277] Interestingly, the king calls Prince Edward "fit heir unto a king" (*EIII*, 1669), even though the king himself had not proven so. Unlike his son, he succumbed to his passions, was about to break his marriage vow, and sexually harassed a subject. So far he has not performed a single deed that shows him worthy of a king, even though he praises God for victory (*EIII*, 1675) and is satisfied that John of Valois now does not consider him wanton or "love-sick" anymore (*EIII*, 1675-1678). Even though it was the countess' threat of suicide that cured the king from his love-sickness, the prince sobered Edward from his passion and reminded him of his duties. And by his deeds and valour, the prince exposes his father's deficits as a person as well as a ruler, even though he proves a better son than Hal—but unlike Hal, he will not live to prove himself as a king eventually.

3.4.4 "Love Makes No Respect Where E'er It Be"—The Affair of Edward IV and Jane Shore

The adulterous relationship between King Edward IV and Jane Shore was widely known in late Renaissance literature; source material for the Jane Shore plot in *Edward IV* can be found in the *History of King Richard the Third* by Thomas More and was even published in the *Mirror for Magistrates* as a poem by Thomas Churchyard, so it must have been well established in popular culture.[1278]

From the first scene of the first part of the play onwards, King Edward is unable to control his desire for women and quick to act politically imprudently. Chided by his mother to have married a widow with children, a woman that does not "befit a king" in a hurry (*1EIV*, 1.4-7), Edward does not see a lack of decorum or any mistake in his marriage. Rather, he tries to assuage his mother's wrath with the prospect of a grandson

[1275] Winter was analogous to old age and death (see Kamm 2009: 70).
[1276] Historical sources report that the dead body of the king was found already dead on the battlefield. Besides, the Bohemian king was blind and therefore an easy target (Froissart 1978: 89-90).
[1277] Battle as an initiation rite for young noblemen is a recurrent theme in the history plays, just as it is recurrently linked to sexuality; see for example *Edward III*, *1 Henry VI*, and *Henry V*. See also chapter 3.2.1 and 3.2.2.
[1278] Rowland 2005: 41-44; see Campbell 1960: 373-386.

(*1EIV*, 1.8-10; 12-15). Edward is at a loss to explain why he married Elizabeth Gray instead of the French bride Warwick wooed for him; offhandedly, he claims that he happened to marry his wife "by chance," because she was "nearer at hand" and "coming in the way"—he "cannot tell how" they ended up being married (*1EIV*, 1.17-20). The main goal of this marriage is for Edward to beget a prince to continue his bloodline, an endeavour any woman could fulfil in the king's eyes (*1EIV*, 1.20). Edward does not share his mother's concerns who thinks that the marriage to a mere subject is a "rash, unlawful act" that will cause political problems; Warwick, one of the most important peers in the country, was shamed by his failed suit to acquire the French bride for his king (*1EIV*, 1.21-36). The duchess predicts that Edward's still unborn children will rue his imprudent marriage (*1EIV*, 1.37-38)—a prophecy that will become true by the murder of the princes in the tower. But Edward only thinks of sleeping with his wife and producing an heir; he points out that his subjects will be happy that the next king will be "born of a true Englishwoman;" he opposes miscegenation as he thinks that "it was never well since we matched with strangers" (*1EIV*, 1.40-42). Thus, he tries to turn his politically imprudent marriage into an asset; besides, he outmanoeuvred his brothers by his marriage, who would have "stood gaping after the crown" (*1EIV*, 1.45-47).

Not only are his brothers competitors for the crown; he also made sure that his wife has "made proof of her valour" (*1EIV*, 1.48) because she has already demonstrated herself as wife and mother. As Edward is "as like to do the deed as John Gray, her husband, was" (*1EIV*, 1.49-50), he claims that he is sexually potent and likely to father children. Unable to understand his mother's concerns, he thus shuts her up and asks for the support of his courtiers if ever they heard "such a coil about a wife" (*1EIV*, 1.51-54). But the duchess is hardly impressed; the courtiers' advice is mere flattery that only confirms what Edward wants to hear (*1EIV*, 1.73-74). For her, things matter differently: Edward did not behave according to his social standing and debased his kingship by marrying a subject—and a widowed subject with children of her own moreover. Edward's "princely state" (*1EIV*, 1.76) got "stained" by the "base leavings of a subject's bed" (*1EIV*, 1.76-77). The queen defends herself and her honour by claiming that she married Edward in as chaste a state as when she married her first husband—the duchess had insinuated that Elizabeth had not been chaste (*1EIV*, 1.78, 81-91). Edward feels that his mother spoilt the whole fun for them as everyone was happy with their partners before his mother came—"I with the mistress, and these with the maids" (*1EIV*, 1.92-95). He does not want to hear that talk about honour and chastity; rather, his wording suggests quite lewd fun they might have had and emphasises the king's propensity for amusement, feasting, and thus irresponsibility. He tries to deflect the duchess from her accusations by welcoming her quite late in the scene and bids them all to supper; nevertheless, he wishes for his mother's blessing "ere we go to bed" (*1EIV*, 1.95-99). Apparently, he wants to have his mother's approval before performing the deed—apparently all he wishes to do without further ado—but he will not be granted his wish. Rather, the duchess wants Edward to flee the palace as she fears he was bewitched by Elizabeth's mother (*1EIV*, 1.100-103). By marrying a commoner, Edward levelled the social status that guaranteed his own position as well as that of the royal hierarchy within the realm; the duchess thinks of this as a dishonour to all the princes in his

realm—a fault the duchess cannot excuse (*1EIV*, 1.104-110). By his inconsiderate marriage, Edward proves a "poor, silly king" (*1EIV*, 1.101) in her eyes. Interestingly, it is only the women who try to keep up status and social order; the queen defends her status as a daughter of a duchess with relations to the royal line of the Burgundians but does not pride herself on these titles and accepts the charge that she is too lowborn to be the wife of a king (*1EIV*, 1.111-119). Sellinger defends the queen's meekness and calls her a "saint" deeply wronged by the duchess (*1EIV*, 1.120-124). The duchess then attacks Sellinger as a "minion and a flatterer," an offense that Sellinger cannot counter as she is the mother of his king (*1EIV*, 1.125-127). Edward is relieved by Howard's attempt to befriend the two ladies but cannot understand why his wife begins to weep (*1EIV*, 1.128-135). He himself did not intervene in the conflict he could not stand; only the entrance of a messenger distracts his attention and breaks off the conflict (*1EIV*, 1.136).

Edward's lechery pervades many parts of the play but becomes most tangible in his courtship of his mistress Jane Shore. Her beauty seems to be generally known as the rebel Falconbridge calls her the "flower of London" that he demands as his booty from her husband Matthew: "Thy wife is mine, that's flat. / This night, in thine own house, she sleeps with me," (*1EIV*, 4.40-47).[1279] Edward falls for Jane when they meet at the mayor's banquet—and it will be the English king, not the rebel Falconbridge, who carries out the threat of cuckolding Matthew.[1280] After the defence of London, Edward wants to confer a knighthood on Matthew Shore for his service, but Matthew declines, so the king intends to acquit him otherwise.[1281] Ironically, he will reward him by breaking into Matthew's well-structured household, which works well on an economically symbolic as well as a marital level. Heywood repeatedly draws a parallel between the king's sexual greed and his monetary demands; the king predates on two very substantial issues that affect his subjects' lives, thus endangering the inner and outer well-being of his realm. Apart from demanding hidden taxes from the commoners, the wooing scene in the shop is a wonderful stage metaphor for the king's preying on his subjects.[1282] Thus, he represents a perverted image of both kingship and masculinity; while he strives for fun and the satisfaction of his lust, it is striking that Edward IV never immediately feels the effects of his actions.

At first it seems as if the Shores' marriage was inviolable; their first appearance shows them in marital harmony and deep emotional devotion to each other. Matthew consoles his still-trembling Jane who is relieved that "My joy, my hope, my comfort, and my love, / My dear, dear husband, kindest Matthew Shore" is back from fighting the rebels (*1EIV*, 8.1-11). Jane asks her husband why he fought so desperately, and he answers:

[1279] The conquest of a wife meant the complete defeat and humiliation of a man, especially so if it happened within the premises of his own property.
[1280] Rowland 2005: 24.
[1281] Rowland 2005: 24-25.
[1282] Rowland 2005: 46-47.

First, to maintain King Edward's royalty.
Next, to defend the city's liberty.
But chiefly, Jane, to keep thee from the foil
Of him that to my face did vow thy spoil.
Had he prevailed, where then had been our lives?
Dishonoured our daughters; ravished our fair wives;
Possessed our goods, and set our servants free:
Yet all this is nothing to the loss of thee.
(*1EIV*, 8.15-22)

Not only fighting loyally for his king, Matthew wanted to protect his wife from the rape Falconbridge had threatened. If the rebels had prevailed, the citizens would have lost the basis of their existence, their possessions, and honour. It is interesting that Matthew juxtaposes daughters and wives with possessions and servants—belongings to the household. If Jane had been raped by another man, Matthew would have been dispossessed of her, and she would have been lost to him. However, Jane claims that Matthew would never lose her as she would be constant and chaste under any circumstance:

Of me, sweetheart? Why, how should I be lost?
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 ever see
Shall never make me prove untrue to thee.
(*1EIV*, 8.23-28)

As honestly as she means it, her answer proves ironic; it will not take the "greatest prince" as her own sovereign will lead her astray. While Jane exhorts that she was willing to endure a wretched life to maintain her marital chastity, she will ultimately become miserable through her own adultery—but at this point, she is yet unable to imagine going astray. Matthew is more realistic; he interjects that she would not be able to fight "a rebel's force" (*1EIV*, 8.29) and thinks that her loyalty and constancy might be vulnerable. But Jane is still certain of her Lucrece-like chastity: "These hands shall make this body a dead corse / Ere force or flattery shall mine honour stain" (*1EIV*, 8.30-31)—the audience will witness that it will take less to make her untrue to herself. When Matthew is summoned to the new fight against the rebels, Jane begs him not to go, but he is willing to defend King Edward even alone (*1EIV*, 8.33-42; 46; 48-54). Jane worries about her future if her husband dies in battle, but Matthew assures her that many others would marry her and that he will leave a good amount of money. When she begins to weep and wants to join him, he chides her for her "idle talk" and sends her to the mayoress for companionship. Jane complies, despite her hurt, and so they leave (*1EIV*, 8.55-65).

Jane's honesty was but a hollow protestation of fidelity that already foreshadowed the problems that the spouses would have to confront; Jane and Edward meet for the first time at the mayor's banquet where the mayor asked his niece Jane to help him with the preparations as hostess because his wife died recently (*1EIV*, 16.35-45). The king arrives with his court with everything in perfect order and thanks the citizens for their service against Falconbridge. The mayor is happy that the king is "bless[ing] my poor roof with your royal presence" and thinks of the city's defence as a "duty" caused by

"true subjects' zeal" (*1EIV*, 16.61-76). Edward does not even offer his condolences or any remarks of compassion when the mayor tells him that his wife has died but only wants to know if the Jane Shore present is indeed the wife of the citizen who refused the knighthood from his hand (*1EIV*, 16.77-85). The king remembers his promise to reward Shore in another way; but before he gets an idea of how to recompense Shore, Edward begins to flirt with Jane. He thinks that Shore did do Jane wrong because he condemned her to a humble life whereas she "had been a lady but for him"—her real destiny would have been much greater than merely a citizen's wife (*1EIV*, 16.87-94). Jane does not share Edward's evaluation and modestly thanks both God and her husband for her present state. Fulfilling her duty, she bids the king welcome on behalf of the Lord Mayor, and Edward claims to feel even more welcome having been greeted by such a beautiful woman (*1EIV*, 16.95-108). He is dumbstruck by Jane's beauty and has his courtiers Howard and Sellinger praise her as well (*1EIV*, 16.109-118). When Sellinger states that Jane could be queen, the idea strikes Edward like lightning. In an aside, he admits how Jane's beauty stirs a passion within him that make his body conspire against him. He has a hard time controlling his desire but is yet successful:

> What change is this? Proud, saucy, roving eye,
> What whisperst in my brain? That she is fair?
> I know it, I see it. Fairer than my queen?
> Wilt thou maintain it? What, and thou, traitor heart,
> Wouldst thou shake hands in this conspiracy?
> Down, rebel! Back, base treacherous conceit,
> I will not credit thee. My Bess is fair,
> And Shore's wife but a blowze compared to her.
> (*1EIV*, 16.120-127)

But his passion is not yet conquered; when the Lord Mayor offers Edward a drink, the king toasts to Jane, not the mayor; thus, he not only rudely ignores the Lord Mayor's reverence but forces Jane to drink with him (*1EIV*, 16.135-147). When Edward receives letters from France, he pretends to read while having eyes only for Jane and struggling with his inner turmoil:

> But other aid must aid us ere we go:
> A woman's aid, that hath more power than France
> To crown us, or to kill us with mischance.
> If chaste resolve be to such beauty tied,
> Sue how thou canst, thou wilt be still denied.
> Her husband hath deserved well of thee;
> Tut, love makes no respect where e'er it be.
> Thou wrongst thy queen; every enforcèd ill
> Must be endured where beauty seeks to kill.
> Thou seemst to read, only to blind their eyes
> Who, knowing it, thy folly would despise.
>
> *He starts from the table.*
>
> Thanks for my cheer, Lord Mayor. I am not well.
> I know not how to take these news – this fit, I mean,
> That has bereft me of all reason clean.
> (*1EIV*, 16.153-166)

The genesis of desire is inspired by beauty that enters through the eye and awakens lust that becomes stronger than the one desiring—an uncontrollable effect the "power of

beauty upon the human soul" has.[1283] Edward feels that he will die if he does not get what he wants, thereby placing his power and responsibility into the hands of the person he desires. Jane so far has not done anything yet except being present; she has not even signalled any interest in his advances. But Edward's passion has already grown so strong that he does not care whether she is married; congratulating Matthew on his wife, he thinks that love knows no boundaries (like matrimony). Though his passion transcends convention, his rationality voices objections. Edward knows he is on the verge of betraying his wife but blames the beauty that "seeks to kill"; what results from his passion must therefore be endured by his queen. Knowing that the others would loathe his "folly" if they knew he were contemplating adultery, Edward can only stop his thoughts by force, which translates into his body as he starts from the table, pretending not to feel well. He acknowledges that a "fit" befogs his reason and leaves the banquet without having touched anything because he can no longer control himself. Trying to de-escalate the situation, he gravely offends the mayor's hospitality by leaving so abruptly and, even more grossly, blames Jane explicitly for this sudden departure. But before he leaves, he promises Matthew Shore the outstanding recompense for his deeds, a promise that never comes true (*1EIV*, 16.169-177).

The mayor is devastated by the king's rash departure. Edward had behaved rudely all along when he neither noticed that the mayor's wife had died, nor ate anything from the banquet; not partaking in a municipal banquet equalled cancelling the bonds of solidarity.[1284] Thus, the king severs social bonds in a very offensive and careless way, and has no sense of decorum or duty towards his subjects; besides, he either does not know or care about the impact of his actions on others. Matthew tries to console the mayor that "Kings have their humours," not knowing how close indeed he is to the truth, but the mayor cannot get over the fact that his sovereign did not feel well in his house (*1EIV*, 16.178-201). Their worries do not interest Edward, but at least he has saved himself from total disgrace by completely succumbing to his passions.

As his promise of rewarding Matthew for his services is empty, so is his royal word. Edward is unable to maintain proper relations with his subjects on a moral and political level and lacks effective self-control. His sexual appetite is displayed in his rash and politically imprudent marriage to a widowed subject, the wooing of the tanner's daughter, Nell, and again in his passion for Jane. Lacking restraint in his erotic exploits, he proves unfit for rule, a character trait that also shows upon the political level.

The king's passion did not abate as he begins to stalk Jane in her husband's shop; when she is alone, he enters in disguise (*1EIV*, 17.21-25). He calls her "a case, to put a king in yet" (*1EIV*, 17.19), a crude sexual innuendo as "case" was a slang term for female genitalia.[1285] Unable to satisfy his gaze, he extols her as a "phoenix" without equal (*1EIV*, 17.37-38, 29). When Jane beholds the stranger, she asks him what he would like to buy; Edward wants her "fairest jewel" (*1EIV*, 17.40)—an innuendo that punningly asks for sex.

[1283] Altman 1978: 332; see also Burton 1850: 434.
[1284] Rowland 2005: 42-43.
[1285] See footnote referring to *1EIV*, 17.19, p. 167.

Indeed, the talk about the jewel Jane wears develops into a flirtation by Edward, who equates the worth of the stone to Jane's hand (*1EIV*, 17.40-49). Jane does not respond to the flirtation but claims that the stone is so valuable it might be worn by the king himself. Edward asks "Might he, i'faith?" (*1EIV*, 17.51), making clear later that he meant the hand instead of the stone (*1EIV*, 17.52). Jane thinks her strange customer wants to cheapen the price by his jesting and always gets back to business, but, after a bit of banter, Edward reveals his identity. Jane is surprised and asks the king to excuse her "boldness." She states she is willing to give everything in her possession to her sovereign—except her honour (*1EIV*, 17.52-98). Apparently, Jane had understood the double-speak and sexual innuendo completely but refused to give in.

Unabashed, Edward explicitly demands her love when Matthew Shore enters the shop and interrupts the encounter. Jane tries to make clear that Edward cannot have physical love, which she owes exclusively to her husband, Matthew. On the surface, the two seem to talk business about the stone while really negotiating sex; Edward claims that Jane will get no better offer, but she repeatedly declines when Matthew offers the customer his diplomatic skills in the bargain, unwittingly acting as a pimp. Edward cannot accept Shore's dubious offer and exits (*1EIV*, 17.99-115). The stage directions indicate that Matthew recognised the king and is deeply worried by this strange encounter. Jane inquires about the reasons for the concerned look on her husband's face, but Matthew, declining to talk about it, asks her if she knew the customer; she says no (*1EIV*, 17.116-120).

Her answer is the first rift in the relationship between the Shores as Jane has knowingly lied to her husband. When she asks Matthew whether this man is his enemy, he answers with a cautious "I cannot tell" (*1EIV*, 17.121). Matthew already feels threatened by the king and tells Jane who the stranger really was; already guessing Edward's true motivation, he hopes that the king only came for the jewel bargained for. Jane reassures Matthew that he does not have to fear for her love, even if there were a thousand kings. Matthew does not have any doubts about her fidelity; then, the stranger comes back (*1EIV*, 17.122-131). Edward had waited to see Jane alone and is disgruntled to find Shore still there. He asks Jane again whether she accepts his offer, telling her he will come back, "willing to buy" (*1EIV*, 17.132-135) which apparently does not depend on her acceptance, threatening the use of force. Jane tries desperately to get rid of the king and wants him to deal with her husband to get him off her back—but Edward flatly refuses and exits (*1EIV*, 17.136-143).

Jane tries to dissuade Matthew that the stranger was indeed the king, claiming that he would not wander around the city all alone and in disguise, but Matthew knows what he saw, understanding now that the king desires his wife. He is emotionally distraught; owing the king absolute loyalty as a subject, he feels the pain of the coming loss of his wife (*1EIV*, 17.144-148). Matthew expounds his dilemma of having a beautiful wife:

> Keep we our treasure secret, yet so fond
> As set so rich a beauty as this is
> In the wide view of every gazer's eyes?
> O traitor, beauty! O deceitful good,
> That dost conspire against thyself and love;
> No sooner got, but wished again of others;

In thine own self, injurious to thyself.
O rich, poor portion, thou good, evil thing:
How many joyful woes still dost thou bring.
(*1EIV*, 17.149-157)

A beautiful wife is dangerous; it would be best to keep her beauty a secret as others will desire her as well when her beauty is made public.[1286] Thus, she becomes a potential prey for other men, endangering her marital chastity. Jane tries to calm Matthew down; while he already fears being cuckolded, she claims that she does not love any king on earth like her husband (*1EIV*, 17.158-159). The scene, however, ends on a dissonant tone between the two.

Edward's preying on a subject's wife takes place in the economic setting of a shop; trying to bargain for her love, Edward feels that he has to overcome the restraints of marriage. While Edward hides his royal self under his disguise, his inner and outer selves seem to correlate well; his lack of self-control and his lowly desires hide his royalty just as his disguise hides his kingship. Unable to govern his desire and driven by the wish to have it fulfilled, he is not master of himself and quite unfit to rule others. His excessive passions overcome him and let his reason fail; these features were commonly ascribed to women who were not able to control their bodily humours and thus succumbed more easily to passion, becoming devoid of reason—and Edward acts likewise. Besides, he is not willing to accept the social and moral boundaries of either his or Jane's marriage, threatening the social order not only by his humorally troubled body but also by his active battering of established social institutions. Even though Jane has rejected him, the king keeps importuning her to such an extent that she has to seek support from her neighbour, Mistress Blage. He bombards Jane with letters and accepts no refusal (*1EIV*, 19.1-9); thus, Edward's tactics resemble the besieging of a town while he forgets himself and his royal state in the process:

He, he it is, that with a violent siege,
Labours to break into my plighted faith.
O, what am I, he should so much forget
His royal state, and his high majesty?
Still doth he come disguisèd to my house,
And in most humble terms bewrays his love.
My husband grieves: alas, how can he choose,
Fearing the dispossessment of his Jane?
And, when he cannot come – for him – he writes,
Offering beside incomparable gifts,
And all to win me to his princely will.
(*1EIV*, 19.10-20)

The king tries to break Jane's marriage vow that engirds her chastity like a wall protecting a besieged city. His repeated visits and violent declarations of love seek to breach Jane's "faith," her marital chastity. By wooing her that way, Jane feels that Edward debases himself and his royalty; his inability to control himself and his passion have already reached pathological dimensions. By never ceasing in his seduction, Edward wishes to break through Jane's resistance and even tries to entice her to become

[1286] See also Swetnam 1615: B2v, C1r-C1v, and *passim* for the dangers that a beautiful wife exposes her husband to.

his mistress with gifts. Matthew, fearing cuckoldry, is powerless against the advances of a king.

Mistress Blage evaluates the problems and opportunities of the situation but never provides proper counsel. On the one hand, Jane and Matthew will face shame if she gives in to Edward's wooing; but, on the other hand, she might face the king's wrath if she continues to resist him—so, either decision can prove disastrous (*1EIV*, 19.21-29). There may be a chance, however, that the king's glory might gloss over Jane's adultery and that he will protect and elevate her family if she becomes his mistress, but Mistress Blage refrains "I will not be she shall counsel ye" (*1EIV*, 19.30-37, 38-52). Mistress Blage thinks that Jane's life at court will be much more glorious than the humble life she leads as a goldsmith's wife, but Jane feels that this social mobility will taint her conscience and "mix my sweet with sour;" she is confused and does not know which way to turn (*1EIV*, 19.53-68).

Then, the king arrives and breaks off the conversation; Mistress Blage leaves (*1EIV*, 19.69-76). The king excuses this intrusion by quipping that love has guided his foot—and Jane, as an obedient subject, duly welcomes her sovereign. While she does not feel threatened by his physical presence, she fears the intentions of his heart. And indeed, Edward accuses Jane of fostering his love-sickness; her rejection hurt him so much that she has demeaned the dignity of his majesty. But Jane counters the accusation: as king, he should be able to overcome this, but Edward chooses to succumb to his desires in "wilful night," harming himself (*1EIV*, 19.77-90). As the king cannot counter the logic of her argument, he changes his tactics and addresses Jane as "Cynthia," the goddess of the moon apparently hoping for her mind to change, but Jane declares that "I may not wander. He that guides my car / Is an immovèd, constant, fixèd star;" the rhyme of her statement underscores her response (*1EIV*, 19.91-95). Edward interprets the "he" to be Matthew and promises the couple a good reward as well as a "shield […] from further blame" if she gives in. Jane argues that God would not approve of such a union and has scruples about illegitimate children (*1EIV*, 19.96-99).

Confronted with morals and a law higher than himself, Edward loses his nerve: as the commander of peers and the ruler of a realm, he orders Jane to comply and come to court (*1EIV*, 19.100-107). The king has thereby played his last trump card—now, as a subject, Jane has no choice but to comply (*1EIV*, 19.108-109). Promising her no regrets and the promotion of her family, Edward leaves Jane with a "true love kiss: / Nothing ill-meant" (*1EIV*, 19.113-114). While he indeed might intend no harm to come to Jane, he eventually ruins her socially (as well as her marriage); Edward is clearly only interested in the fulfilment of his sexual desires and not in Jane's well-being. As she cannot oppose an order from her king, Jane wants to prepare her soul for repentance of a sin not yet committed (*1EIV*, 19.115-116).

While Edward shows no scruples whatsoever, Jane is prepared to take on all responsibility for the adultery. Just as Edward did not engage in the Falconbridge rebellion, the affair between Jane and Edward is marked by the king's relative absence once he forced her successfully to come to court. Instead, the effects of the relationship are projected on the relationships around Jane and Edward. By cuckolding a subject,

Edward isolates Matthew Shore, who cannot turn to anyone for help or even exact revenge. It is Edward's egoism and his uncontrollable desire that break up the happiness of the couple, not Jane's distracting beauty.[1287] The Shores struggle to deal with their lives after the adultery and the king's intrusion into their private sphere; while Matthew wants to escape the country by ship, Jane tries to atone for her sin through charity (*1EIV*, 22). She tries to find a new role and does the penance that ought to be enacted by the king; she, the adulterous lover of the king, fills that void to gloss over his and her own transgressions. Socially, she has become a nothing—no longer maid, wife, or widow—a void in a world where a woman's status is entirely dependent on her husband (*1EIV*, 22.61-85). The king's authority has proven faulty as he is neither able to elevate Jane socially nor to protect her from scorn. The Shore story challenges the king's moral and political authority. Matthew is so devastated by all this that he wants to leave the country. Instead, he stays, disillusioned about Edward's failure to reward him for his service in the defence of London and bitter over the seduction of his wife (*1EIV*, 20.82-98).

After Edward forces Jane into concubinage, he appears only once more on stage in this context. Jane's conscience cannot be alleviated through atonement, for her benevolent work is ineffectual as the king continues to extract more money from his subjects (*2EIV*, 9.1-36). While relieving prisoners, the Marquis of Dorset enters and wants to take Jane to his mother, Queen Elizabeth. Jane senses nothing good, and Dorset indeed wants to leave her at the queen's mercy (*2EIV*, 9.40-106). Jane tries to defend herself, claiming that she is no concubine of her own accord and is ashamed, asking Dorset not to extradite her (*2EIV*, 9.107-109). Interestingly, no one blames Edward for forcing Jane into adultery—that he himself betrays his queen is never mentioned; the blame is all put on Jane. Not even Jane herself finds any accusatory words for the king's promiscuity, which seems more his innate right. Jane tries everything not to be presented to the queen as she fears mistreatment, but Dorset makes clear that he detests her for the political influence his mother lacks. Jane fears the worst—before she leaves, she bids the others to pray for her, knowing she cannot protect herself any other way (*2EIV*, 9.112-136).

The queen is immediately impressed by Jane's appearance and her suitability for queenship once presented to her at their first encounter (*2EIV*, 10.1-8). Despite her first impression, the queen showers all her scorn on Jane, mocking her political influence and social climbing, but Jane humbly prostrates herself before Elizabeth and admits that her sin cannot be adequately revenged. She pleads that her "woman's weakness" could not fend off "his strength" that made her fall, and she completely succumbs to the queen's mercy (*2EIV*, 10.10-35). When Dorset tries to incite his mother to abuse Jane, the queen puts him in his place; but despite some pity, the queen wants to torture Jane somewhat further. Elizabeth wants to know whether Jane would not also grieve, were she queen, being wronged by her husband and what revenge she thinks Jane deserves for wronging both the queen's and Matthew's bed (*2EIV*, 10.36-74). Jane says any and

[1287] Rowland 2005: 44.

all revenge is due and promises not to flinch during it, but when Dorset wants to use violence against her, his mother calls him back on pain of death, so he exits (*2EIV*, 10.75-89). The queen wanted to check on Jane's pride and her disposition towards her, but Jane's humility made her pass the test. As a last expression of her distress, the queen runs towards Jane with a knife in her hand but lets it drop and embraces her instead (*2EIV*, 10.91, SD). Smothering Jane with kisses, Elizabeth expresses her solidarity, forgives her and understands that she could not have possibly resisted Edward's violent wooing due to her female weakness. She admits that she could not have guaranteed her conduct either had she been in Jane's situation (*2EIV*, 10.92-106). Jane is surprised and thankful to find such mercy at a wronged wife's hand and feels even worse for Elizabeth's forgiveness; she would rather have been punished (*2EIV*, 10.107-115). Elizabeth then bids her new ally to call upon the king on her family's behalf, hoping to get more love and attention by manipulating Jane. She declares to love Jane as a sister; Jane, in turn, is more than willing to repay the queen's kindness by fulfilling her suit (*2EIV*, 10.116-129).

When Edward sees Jane kneeling in front of the queen, he gets angry as he thought Elizabeth wanted to humiliate his lover—instead, Jane begs for Elizabeth's love on her knees. She claims that she wants to be banished from the court rather than wrong her noble queen even further, but then Elizabeth pleads for Jane and accepts the adulterous relationship, claiming that she cannot plead adversely where the king loves. Edward is pleased by Elizabeth's disposition and promises to honour her for it; he admits that he feared his "Bess" could have harmed Jane. It is not even strange to him that the women have come to terms between themselves. By depriving his wife of love and respect, he has forced Elizabeth into accepting Jane as close to his heart and even has made her use Jane as a go-between for her love. Rather, Edward feels that the issue between the women is solved and immediately gets back to business. But when dealing with Brackenbury's suit about the innocent prisoners sentenced to death, he continues to display a startling lack of compassion (*2EIV*, 10.130-156). Edward explains that the prisoners will die because he gave the French king his word—cancelling his promise would dishonour him in the eyes of his ally. Even though he has just proven that he has no scruples in breaking his marriage vows, he intends to keep a political promise; neither is Jane's intervention heard. Edward declares that even though there is nothing he would deny her, his royal decree is stronger than her pleas, so he sees to it that the prisoners are executed (*2EIV*, 10.157-171). Eventually, however, he also breaks the word he gave Lewis by pardoning the prisoners, which is not shown on stage (*2EIV*, 12.102-119). The strategy of the play thus undercuts the validity of Edward's claims of royal authority by contradicting them; his word is worth nothing, for he breaks his promises repeatedly.

Jane knows that she will be left to the mercy of others when Edward dies, so she is determined to do anything to save his life—but to no avail (*2EIV*, 12.156-169). Indeed, Jane is thrown out of the court along with the queen by Richard, the new king, and she cannot hope for any kindness at his hands (*2EIV*, 13.56-74). Seeking shelter at her former friend Mistress Blage's inn, she is first received with much love and many declarations of friendship until Mistress Blage learns that a proclamation has been

issued forbidding anyone on pain of death to help, clothe or feed her. Instantly, she throws Jane out and seizes all her goods (*2EIV*, 13.80-87, 15.1-75, 18.78-113, 123-182). Jane has to endure public shaming as a whore before she is expelled from the city (*2EIV*, 18.198-239; *2EIV*, 20.1-55). Matthew Shore and former courtly suitors try to help and support her while Jane patiently endures her lot and even forgives Mistress Blage (*2EIV*, 20.56-205). Finally, one of her helpers, Master Aire, is apprehended for his support of Jane and condemned; though innocent, he is content to die, telling Jane that she had given him more than he can pay back. Commenting on the prospect of meeting in heaven, Aire is then executed (*2EIV*, 20.269-290, 21.18-31, 22.27-45). Shore, standing by, asks for Aire's body to do his friend one last good deed. Jane wants to know who the stranger is who asks her whether she recognises her husband; identifying him as Matthew, she swoons into his arms (*2EIV*, 22.46-68). Now that she feels that she will face death, the moment of true reconciliation has come. Jane feels death "seize upon [her] heart"; Matthew, too, knows he will die soon and bids Jane to wait but a little so that they may die together as man and wife. Matthew is able to truly forgive Jane as he hopes to be forgiven himself by God (*2EIV*, 22.69-89). They sit beside Aire's coffin and hold hands, grieving the inevitable (SD, *2EIV*, 22.90-97). In Jane's last speech, she combines the *topoi* of love and death in a quasi-orgasmic mode that extols the reunification with her husband:

> O, dying marriage! O, sweet married death!
> Thou grave, which only shouldst part faithful friends,
> Bringst us together, and dost join our hands.
> O, living death! Even in this dying life,
> Yet, ere I go, once, Matthew, kiss thy wife.
> (*2EIV*, 22.102-106)

Thus, with a kiss, she dies. Matthew's last speech turns Jane's dead body into an effigy of the world's vanity that defies the power of kings:

> Ah, my sweet Jane, farewell, farewell, pour soul.
> Now, tyrant Richard, do the worst thou canst:
> She doth defy thee! O, unconstant world,
> Here lies a true anatomy of thee:
> A king had all my joy, that her enjoyed,
> And by a king again she was destroyed.
> All ages of my kingly woes shall tell;
> Once more, inconstant world, farewell, farewell.
> (*2EIV*, 22.107-114)

In their last moments, the Shores resist the corrupting forces that regal power had over their private lives and escape these troubles through death. On stage, their bodies bent over Aire's coffin is a powerful image of defiance of both fate and kings whose rule did not prove beneficial for the realm and destroyed the lives of their citizens. Both Edward IV's lack of responsibility and the abuse of power to satisfy personal lust as well as the personal malice and power-hunger of Richard III proved pernicious to the well-being of their subjects and exist as an utter critique of royal reign.

3.4.5 "Our Mettle Is Bred Out"—Masculinity, Englishness, and Miscegenation

The history plays construct masculinity from a decidedly English perspective where the ongoing conflicts with France provide an arena for the kings to prove their masculinity, their mettle, and their Englishness. They seem to be eager to contrast themselves with the French, who, as foreigners and enemies, are depicted as effeminate fops counteracting English maleness and tough soldierdom.[1288] Especially in *Henry V*, the French male aristocracy effeminise themselves with their bragging, their affected and stylised language, and their lack of valour.[1289] Besides, martial and sexual conquest are two *topoi* closely related in Renaissance England. The plays *Edward III* and *Henry V* make this connection explicitly clear. Besides, both plays were connected to the English war in Ireland of the 1590s and often alluded to in the plays of the period; sometimes, it was even conflated with the conflicts in France or Scotland, as both plays show.[1290] Implicitly and explicitly, the English are contrasted with their bragging and effeminate enemies as masculine and valorous.

The first act of *Henry V* already sets the tone of the conflict; in the Salic law speech, the Archbishop of Canterbury insinuates that the French base their succession on the female side while using the law to bar Henry's claim that also goes back to his female inheritance (*HV*, 1.2.86-95). Thus, the French seem to be hypocrites who only seek their personal advantage. The archbishop encourages Henry to pursue his claim by invoking Henry's decidedly *male* ancestors and not the female ones from whom he claims (*HV*, 1.2.97-114). Thus, male Englishness is contrasted with what in France is connoted with female ancestry, which has to be won from usurping French. This dualism of gender becomes clear and pervades the rest of the play.[1291] The French attitude towards the English claim is embodied in the Dauphin's present of a chest of tennis balls that shows how the French ridicule Henry and his cause (*HV*, 1.2.245-260). While the Dauphin does not take Henry seriously, the English king promises to return the present as a volley of cannon balls (*HV*, 1.2.261-297).

Henry V seems to be the embodiment of pure Englishness, the impersonation of Edward III's and the Black Prince's "heroical seed."[1292] In connection to his ancestors, the French king describes Henry thus:

> The kindred of him hath been fleshed upon us,
> And he is bred out of that bloody strain
> That haunted us in our familiar paths.
> Witness our too-much-memorable shame
> When Crécy battle finally was struck,
> And all our princes captived by the hand
> Of that black name, Black Prince of Wales,
> Whiles that his mountant sire, on mountain standing,

[1288] The direct and somewhat blunt Englishman had long been an institution on the stage that could be wonderfully contrasted with the French effeminate fop (Tillyard 1944: 284).
[1289] Smith 2000: 116.
[1290] Cahill 2008: 103-104.
[1291] The danger of a Scottish invasion while the king is away in France also surfaces as a problem throughout English history (*HV*, 1.2.136-183).
[1292] Cahill 2008: 131.

Up in the air, crowned with the golden sun,
Saw his heroical seed and smiled to see him
Mangle the work of nature and deface
The patterns that by God and by French fathers
Had twenty years been made. This is a stem
Of that victorious stock, and let us fear
The native mightiness and fate of him.
(*HV*, 2.4.50-66)

And indeed, Henry pays the French back with his campaign. The French are portrayed as effeminate and weak throughout the play, a sign of their degeneration.[1293] The war could also be seen as a punishment for the effeminacy of the French that shows in their boasts about their strength and their belittling of the invaders.[1294] Before the besieged city of Harfleur, Henry refers to the qualities of English blood to make his soldiers sum up their forces not to betray their national origins:

[…] On, on, you noblest English,
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof,
Fathers that like so many Alexanders
Have in these parts from morn till even fought,
And sheathe their swords for lack of argument.
Dishonour not your mothers; now attest
That those whom you call fathers did beget you.
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,
And teach them how to war. And you, good yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding – which I doubt not,
For there is none of you so mean and base
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
(*HV*, 3.1.17-30)

In this speech, Henry tries to invoke a war spirit by referring the male ancestry of his soldiers; as the forefathers of the nobility had already fought successfully in the Hundred Years War, their descendants now have to prove truthful to their fathers by providing a model for the soldiers of lesser rank. But also the yeomen—who do not boast celebrated genealogy—can prove their English mettle. Having grown up on their proud island refines them and makes their eyes shine with "noble lustre." Henry of course relates here to geohumoral issues that make the English born warriors; Henry makes the provenience from England a worthy quality that elevates the men and their actions. Geography and corporeality are both joined to an inherited disposition. The difference of blood—and therefore of quality and "mettle"—is inscribed in the body itself.[1295] This speech already foreshadows Henry's ability to create an invincible "band of brothers" that is united by their quest for honour (see *HV*, 4.3.20-67). Not only their nobility and valour, but also their masculinities inherited from their fathers are constructed as a common good based on Englishness. Bourbon, however, derides the

[1293] Campbell 1947: 284.
[1294] Campbell notes: "To the righteous cause, God gives the victory. He had indeed plagued a wicked nation by filling them with the fatness of the land until they waxed rotten in idleness, dull of wit, slow of courage, weak-handed, and feeble kneed." (Campbell 1947: 285). Note how much Campbell's interpretation is based on the image of the male as active, able-bodied soldier.
[1295] Cahill 2008: 131-132.

English as "Normans, but bastard Normans, Norman bastards!" (*HV*, 3.5.10), and also the Dauphin states that the English are French mongrels, who should not dare to trump the French:

> *O Dieu vivant!* Shall a few sprays of us,
> The emptying of our fathers' luxury,
> Our scions, put in wild and savage stock,
> Spirit up so suddenly into the clouds
> And overlook their grafters?
> (*HV*, 3.5.5-9)

The descendants of the Norman invaders shall not overturn the order or dare to overpower their much more refined and sophisticated country of origin. The Constable emphasises the geohumoral differences between England and France that influence the characteristics of their inhabitants; the English, who seem to be barbarous, threaten the French with their power and endurance:

> *Dieu de batailles!* Where have they this mettle?
> Is not their climate foggy, raw, and dull,
> On whom as in despite of the sun looks pale
> Killing their fruit with frowns? Can sodden water,
> A drench for sur-reined jades – their barley broth –
> Decoct their cold blood to such valiant heat?
> And shall our quick blood, spirited with wine,
> Seem frosty? O for honour of our land
> Let us not hang like roping icicles
> Upon our houses' thatch, whiles a more frosty people
> Sweat drops of gallant youth in our rich fields –
> 'Poor' we may call them, in their native lords.
> (*HV*, 3.5.15-26)

But the French nobles fear to be outmanned by the strength and mettle of the English that makes them more attractive to the French women, a threat even worse than merely being overcome by a barbarous people:

> By faith and honour,
> Our madams mock at us and plainly say
> Our mettle is bred out, and they will give
> Their bodies to the lust of English youth,
> To new-store France with bastard warriors.
> (*HV*, 3.5.27-31)

The French mettle is bred out and exhausted, so the French women could be attracted by the more manly English who invigorate the French through miscegenation. While the French feel threatened by the rejection of their women on the grounds that they are not manly enough, the "bastard warriors" already hint at the fact that miscegenation was not positively rated. The mixture of English and foreign blood was—from an English perspective that developed in relation to Ireland—a degeneration that would lead to an "inferior breed" associated with rudeness and barbarity. Miscegenation, therefore, was perceived as a threat to one's own race that ideally had to be kept as pure as possible.[1296] Male issue that resulted from English-Irish intermarriage with an Irish mother especially should be brought up in an English environment,

[1296] Cahill 2008: 110-112.

"because we observe that the child follows more the mother than any in his language and manners."[1297] As the mother has a huge direct impact on the development of the child, male influence should be secured to guarantee male Englishness; due to this reasoning, Elyot advises that a boy should be educated in an all-male surrounding from the age of seven that he might not be effeminised by the influence of women.[1298]

Indiscriminate male sexuality, therefore, endangers martial valour, the hallmark of English masculinity; if desire gathers to a head, the activist grip on things slips away, and the rational focus on a political goals gets blurred.[1299] The "sexual menace" embodied by women endangers English masculinity profoundly and replaces the rule of reason with shame and humiliation caused by sexual desire.[1300] This indicates that French men, for all their sophistication, are not manly enough to breed good warriors, so their mettle has to be sexually restored with English influence on the bodies of the French women. The defeat of the French is enacted over the sexual conquest of women.[1301] And indeed, the English win the decisive battle of Agincourt despite being heavily outnumbered and weakened by the previous strains of war.[1302] The French knights on horseback were too immobile for the more agile English troops on foot but declined to get off their horses as this was against their ethos as warriors that inhibited them to fight the "peasants' army" challenging them.[1303] Apparently, the portrait of the French barons as pig-headed braggarts in Shakespeare's play has a historical basis; and, eventually, this was the cause of their defeat.

However, the last battle over France is fought in Henry's wooing of Catherine of France. Through the body of a French princess, Henry makes his final victory over the French evident; the scene not only mirrors the issues of race and procreation, but Catherine's "conquest" can also be read as a victory of the English in Ireland, which is alluded to in the chorus of the fifth act (*HV*, 5.0.22-35).[1304] Henry builds up a dichotomy between English and French that is—of course—embodied by the male Henry and the female Catherine. When Catherine plainly states that she "cannot speak your England" (*HV*, 5.2.102-103), Henry assures her that he is content if she loves him "soundly with [her] French heart" (*HV*, 5.2.104-105). The English tongue features as a means of male domination over the speechless French female who cannot express herself properly and is thus denied self-assertion. When Henry finally begins to speak French with her, Catherine is surprised that his French is better than his English—but Henry thinks that they are on common ground in the other's language, uniting the two (*HV*, 5.2.169-182).

[1297] Cahill 2008: 135.
[1298] Elyot 1962: 19. See also Erasmus 1997: 55.
[1299] Cahill cites Edward III's desire for the countess as an example. Elizabethan writers even charged Edward III with the claim that under his reign, the pureness of Englishness in Ireland faded away. The threat of miscegenation—or illicit desire—therefore endanger English masculinity and the pureness of the English "race" (Cahill 2008: 113-114). See also chapter 3.4.5.
[1300] Cahill 2008: 117.
[1301] See also *HV*, 4.5.10-15.
[1302] The Constable comments on the state of Henry's army that "his numbers are so few / His soldiers sick and famished in their march" (*HV*, 3.5.56-57).
[1303] Seibt 1987: 337. Other reasons were also the predominance of the Welsh archers in the English army as well as the superiority of the English fleet (Seibt 1987: 290).
[1304] Cahill 2008: 132-133.

Henry makes clear that he will marry her and that she "needs prove a good soldier-breeder"; the two of them shall "compound a boy, half-French and half-English, that shall go to Constantinople and take the Turk by the beard" (*HV*, 5.2.182-197). This boy, half-English and half-French, is the future Henry VI; rather than invigorating the French mettle by his English valour, he will prove the exact opposite: a mongrel weakling king who will lose all the English possessions in France. Rather than resplendently uniting the best sides of English and French, he can be interpreted as the product of degenerating miscegenation—the project of uniting France and England gone wrong.[1305]

The ensuing conflict is the basis for the plot of the *Henry VI* plays where the French are contrasted even more starkly with the English. In *1 Henry VI*, the male Talbots—themselves no royals—fight against the Dauphin and Joan la Pucelle, a female warrior associated with supernatural powers and later the devil. At Henry V's funeral, Exeter links the French with Henry's death, turning them into perfect villains who are even willing to conjure up evil spirits in their defence:

> Or shall we think the subtle-witted French
> Conjurers and sourcerers, that, afraid of him,
> By magic verses have contrived his end?
> (*1HVI*, 1.1.25-27)

Thus, the French do not accept their defeat as a judgment of God, challenging divine order. When Joan of Arc defeats the Dauphin in an attempt to prove her valour and courage in combat, she not only overcomes the male heir-apparent of France but also deeply confuses hierarchy and order.[1306] John Talbot junior, however, refuses to fight with Joan as his masculine code of chivalry forbids him to fight a woman (*1HVI*, 4.7.40-43). Thus, the English young warrior does not want to be effeminised by a possible defeat as the Dauphin was—either he really does not deem Joan worthy enough or he simply evades the chance of being beaten by a French woman.

While *1 Henry VI* recurrently genders the conflict between England and France, the political connection between war and physical love is closer in *Edward III*, a play that mirrors *Henry V*. Both plays open with a scene dealing with the English claim to the French crown and thus foreshadowing conflict.[1307] As in *Henry V*, the English king's claim to the French crown is based on female succession, a discussion that echoes through the Salic law speech in *Henry V*. Besides, Edward III as Henry's successful ancestor in the wars with France is continuously referred to during Henry's exploits as a role model for prowess, power, and Englishness. However, Edward's claim to the French throne is much less questionable than Henry's; Edward's maternal grandfather, Philip le Beau, was king of France, and all of his three uncles were kings; but when the last of them died without children, the crown did not go to Isabella, Edward's mother.

[1305] Cahill 2008: 133.
[1306] Tillyard 1944: 165-166. Historically, Charles abandoned Jeanne d'Arc, who asserted that she had heard voices since she was thirteen that ordered her to fight for the French cause (see also *1HVI*, 1.3.29-36, 51-67). After he was crowned and she had fallen into English hands, he did nothing to save her from the stake, where she died in 1431 (Seibt 1987: 339).
[1307] Cahill 2008: 102.

Rather, the le Beau line was declared "out," and the crown passed to the line of Valois.[1308]

Edward decides to fight for the French crown and invade France; but, before he can be a successful warlord, Edward has to overcome his passion for the Countess of Salisbury. He has to conquer the lust that makes him slave to a woman and thereby makes him effeminate. The terms with which he describes his lust for the countess equal his words for his feelings for France, linking sex and territorial conquest through imagery of wooing with war. Thus, according to Cahill, the play *Edward III* treats issues like "licit sexuality, racial purity, and future generations."[1309] France as unconquered territory is likened to a woman that will receive a racial English imprint.[1310] Cahill further argues that the battlefields of France are conflated with the contemporary conflicts in Ireland. The havoc wreaked in *Edward III* depicts the reality of the Irish wars, a conflict often associated with miscegenation that ultimately has a bad outcome for the English; warfare should create a kind of English racial purity that should be unassailable even in a foreign country.[1311]

While *Henry V* accepts miscegenation as a temporary solution to the English claims of the French crown, *Edward III* rejects this conclusion.[1312] Whereas the union between Henry and Catherine does not prove to be a lasting solution of the strife—the epilogue of *Henry V* already foreshadows the future French losses by Henry VI—*Edward III* shows how Queen Philipa's female reproductive force overcomes the male principle of power exertion at the end of the play. Queen Philipa's pregnant body and her mercy with the burghers of Calais mark a turning point in male politics that centres on the extermination of the natives.[1313] Not only does the claim to the French crown through the female line prove successful—but the mercy, wisdom, and foresight of the English queen have a lasting impact on the outcome of English politics in France. English racial purity—and thus the images of masculinity and martial prowess—can seemingly only be upheld by the force of a woman.

As the female body often serves as a projection screen of domination, conquest, and humiliation, Catherine is a symbol for the already conquered France that Henry woos like a soldier to complete his victory over the French as a last act of humiliation. Henry courts Catherine with brutality and war language, asserting himself as a soldier devoid of courtly refinement, not good looking but well-versed in combat, excelling in martial tasks but inexperienced in courtly wooing and social refinement, willing to father a soldier-boy and bullying Catherine into submission; she herself knows that she does not have a say in the matter, so she puts up only slight resistance. His stress of his English plainness and lack of refinement further widens the gap between him and the more sophisticated Catherine. The marriage is a business deal in which Catherine does not

[1308] Cahill 2008: 105. See also chapter 3.1.4.
[1309] Cahill 2008: 106, 118-119.
[1310] Cahill 2008: 121-122.
[1311] Cahill 2008: 124-129, 122.
[1312] Cahill 2008: 130.
[1313] Cahill 2008: 129.

have a say. Henry uncommonly stresses his unattractiveness to seem better than he is but also makes clear that he is trustworthy and truthful. Even worse, Henry has much superior language skills and can 'attack' Catherine both in English and French.

While Henry repeatedly declares his love for Catherine, the impression lingers that he does so out of sheer convention; while he describes himself as no big talker, he monopolises the lion's share of dialogue in this scene—a rift in his self-construction. His uses language to twist Catherine's objections around to fit his meaning and contradicts his own statements in the dialogue. To approach Catherine more closely, Henry switches to French, which he speaks fairly well. He forces himself onto her by declaring that "I know thou lovest me," assuming that she has already fallen for him.

The brutal nature of his wooing is further stressed by his demand for Catherine to breed a soldier-boy; Henry's ultimate goal is not the love of the French princess but the continuity of his dynasty and the assertion of his masculinity. While Catherine is evasive whether she will become his wife, Henry only speaks about himself in an attempt to flatter her. Catherine refers to her father's wishes as an obedient daughter should and gives in when Henry assures her that her father will not object but resents Henry's attempt to kiss her hand. Even worse, Henry kisses her lips and oversteps the borders she put up against him, literally invading her space, and vilifying her femininity by ascribing witchcraft to her lips. And even though Henry has to admit that his suit did not successfully induce love in Catherine, he asserts in a lewd banter with Burgundy that she will yield to him nevertheless—he knows that he cannot lose due to the asymmetries of power between himself and Catherine.

The French king is in no position to decline Henry's demand of Catherine as a wife, so Henry can enforce both his political as well as his sexual will onto the French. It is interesting however that the French king hopes that the issue from his daughter's blood will seal the unity between France and England—stressing the female, French side of the match. In the wooing process, Henry stayed true to his warrior ethos of subduing the enemy and extends his campaign linguistically in a deceitful one-sided battle of words to subdue the French princess.

An explicitly male-male manifestation of love is the relationship between Edward II and his favourite, Gaveston; interestingly, it is not the king's relationship with his minion that brings about the king's downfall but its social impact that disturbs the social order and enrages the nobles. The first scene of the play already exposes decidedly homoerotic tones and imagery between Edward and Gaveston that hint at a sexually consummated relationship. The two men build an opposition against the courtiers and, indeed, the whole world; while the barons never explicitly oppose the sexual nature of the relationship, they see Gaveston as a manipulating schemer who influences the king in his own favour; indeed, Gaveston plans to "draw the pliant King" with eroticised masques. Apparently, Edward is a very refined, sensitive man who tends towards his effeminate side and who is also aroused by sadistic displays of eroticism. Gaveston's motivations, however, are ambiguous. On the one hand, Gaveston plans to manipulate the king; on the other hand, he is emotionally attached to him and seems to love Edward genuinely. The king's strong identification with Gaveston is problematic, however; he

sees himself as "another Gaveston" and thus rejects his royal self, trying to annihilate himself through an impregnable union with his minion. He rejects the sovereignty of his self as a distinct unit that separates him from Gaveston—he not only aims at a close friendship but wants to literally fuse with him. That Edward promotes his friend above all others and spends his time exclusively with him is a politically and socially imprudent decision that culminates in the king's wish to use his reign for Gaveston's benefit alone. By doing everything for his friend and nothing for himself, Edward opens the door to tyranny and arbitrariness. However, as Gaveston claims that he only wants Edward's friendship, it is Edward's disinterest in politics and kingship that basically causes the problems. In this conflict, Edward is unable to stand his ground against the barons; the king is unable to enact his sovereignty against them because he has intrinsically renounced his royal self, so they can force their will upon the king and have Gaveston banished once again. Edward perceives any attack on Gaveston as an attack on himself, so the conflict with the barons who target the removal of Gaveston escalates. Edward promises revenge and declares his love for Gaveston will not die despite the separation, but he will only take efficient action against the barons when Gaveston is eventually killed. The experience of separation from his friend is like an alienation from his self, so Edward tries everything to have the banishment repealed—he even uses the frustration of his wife and threats against her to have her influence the barons. Meanwhile, his grief becomes excessive, and he can think of nothing else but the absent Gaveston. While Isabella is so frustrated that she works for the repeal of Gaveston's banishment, she begins to approach the barons and will finally defect to their party and begin an adulterous relationship with Mortimer, an affair that complicates the moral evaluation of the play and makes her shift from mourning wife to adulterous traitor. Out of gratitude, Edward is even willing to renew his marriage with Isabella—but only because she influenced the barons favourably for his cause. But the happiness does not last, and when Gaveston is killed by Warwick, his position as favourite is quickly taken by Spencer junior who becomes the king's confidant. While Spencer is also quite close to Edward, their relationship does not seem to be sexual.

The most intensely portrayed father-son-relationship between Henry IV and his son Hal stretches through both the *Henry IV* plays; in the first appearance of the newly crowned Henry IV, he complains about his "unthrifty son." Contact between them was sparse; Henry is frustrated about Hal's company and even feels that his son's conduct is a chastisement for his sin in deposing Richard II. His main worry is that Hal will not be able to successfully continue the newly founded line of succession, a worry that will torture the king throughout the plays until he is reconciled with Hal. The king fears that his life's work will come to naught and his legacy will be spoiled when Hal succeeds. While the prince seems unable to control his behaviour, the audience knows that he only stages his role as wild prince to be more celebrated as reformed king; that he tortures his father with worries and risks the loss of paternal affection does not seem to worry him. The relationship between father and son is so bad that Hotspur even thinks that Henry would not mourn his son should anything happen to him—an extreme evaluation. But while Henry does not wish for Hal's death, he wishes for a son more like Hotspur who embodies aristocratic, hegemonic masculinity; Henry's deep disappointment and

rejection is the price Hal pays for his role as wild prince. The king expects princely behaviour and chivalric comportment from his son, a condition for the love and respect of his father; and as Hal does not enact them, Henry's anxieties also reflect his fears of succession and kingship. In the crown-snatching scene, Henry fears that Hal would usurp his father's throne—a deed Henry himself did when he deposed Richard II. It seems as if Henry feared Hal because he works as a foil for the king's own youthful misdeeds that haunt him. So, Henry sees his unsteady power threatened by Hal's wildness and fears chaos in the kingdom.

Hal's relationship to his father is less clear; one scene, however, reveals how Hal relates to the king when he rehearses a meeting with the king in a role-play with Falstaff, doubly exposing both the relationship between the prince and Falstaff as well as that between Hal and his father. When Falstaff plays the king's part, Hal is not satisfied and assumes the role—and he immediately changes into a grave, earnest, and responsible figure who cares for the realm and chastises his son's behaviour; Hal knows his father does not approve of his life and offers a glimpse of his future reign, anticipating Falstaff's rejection that will come to pass not long after his coronation. While he knows his responsibilities, he still prefers to follow his rakish role and challenge his father's love. When he eventually meets the accusations of his father, Hal promises to reform and asks for pardon, submitting himself under Henry's majesty. The king then advises his son not to be too vulgar with the common crowd—a piece of advice Hal has been following all along with his role-play, even though he does it differently than his father envisages. Hal's submission apparently smoothes Henry's disappointment as they leave conciliatorily. In *2 Henry IV*, the relationship has become fonder; advising his younger sons on how to deal with Hal when he is king, Henry characterises the prince positively as merciful, charitable, and graceful, indicating a more affectionate perspective on Hal. After the crown-snatching scene, Henry is assured that Hal will continue the line of succession diligently and responsibly, and father and son are eventually reconciled for good before Henry dies.

Edward III stages a different relationship between father and son; even though the Black Prince is the epitome of young chivalric masculinity—an obedient, ideal son—his father does not seem to be very close to him. When they first meet in the play, the young man brings his father's raging desire for the Countess of Salisbury momentarily to a halt as he resembles his mother. He is a visual reminder of the king's duties neglected thus far while the boy himself serves his father's cause obediently. While his father struggles with his own emotions, the prince embodies all the qualities of royalty, surpassing those of his father and reflecting what the king should be but is not. When the prince direly fights for his knighthood, Edward III does not allow anyone to rescue or aid his son, claiming that the prince is expendable and can be replaced by his brothers. The prince has to prove his valour in combat and has to fend for himself to experience independence—or die. Edward risks his son's life to ensure his honour, a principle that is bigger than a father's love for his child. While it seems strange that Edward forbids any assistance to his son, he does care for the prince's legacy as a warrior: if he survives the challenge, he will have overcome his fear of death and become completely independent; his masculinity will be improved by these endeavours

in battle. When the Black Prince returns alive with the dead king of Bohemia, the seemingly cold welcome, "Welcome Plantagenet," is, in fact, a respectful address as the prince has lived up to his name. Obediently, he submits all his military exploits to the majesty of his father and hopes that he has proven worthy of knighthood. He is eventually initiated by his father into the circle of knights with his blood-stained sword; the irony of the situation is that Edward praises his son as a "fit heir unto a king" who is himself unfit to rule. While the prince is a promising, future king, he will never sit on the throne and prove the worthiness of his masculinity. Interestingly, it is the women who keep up male virtues in the play, dismantling the whole construct of royal masculinity; the Countess of Salisbury resists Edward III's advances by referring to the stronger divine law, and the pregnant Queen Philipa not only defends England from a Scottish invasion but also advises her husband to think of his future as the French king and spare his future subjects at Calais.

Edward IV's love life is quite unconventional; he follows his impulses and passions without being able—or willing—to bridle them; he does not see why his marriage to a widowed subject could be a political problem. He claims that he happened to marry his wife by chance and merely wants to continue his dynasty by fathering a son. His mother, however, predicts that his unborn child will rue this imprudence—a consequence the play does not show but that will become true when both his yet unborn sons will be killed in the Tower. Edward finds it more important that his child be born of an Englishwoman to avoid miscegenation—but it is probable that he just wants to turn his marriage into an asset. Even though he proves quite irresponsible, Edward will never feel the negative consequences of his actions himself, even though he has a limited understanding of the social implications of his actions. Besides, he also seems to have a limited scope of emotional understanding; this becomes evident when he cannot understand the hurt feeling of his wife in the face of his mother's accusations, fails to express his condolences to the newly widowed Lord Mayor, and is numb to any problem when his wife and his lover have to bond to get his attention. Rather, Edward's lust for his own pleasure pervades the whole play, and he does not shy away from exploiting his subjects, both financially and sexually.

While he destabilises the inner core of his realm, the play focuses on the deleterious impact on his subjects, especially in the case of Edward's affair with Jane Shore. At first, she is a devout wife who protests that she will never be persuaded to be untrue to her husband Matthew; but it will take more than mere declarations of intent to lead her astray. Jane and Edward meet at the banquet that the Lord Mayor gives for his king, and immediately, her beauty inspires passion in Edward. The audience can witness how Edward's control of himself wanes and how his passion rises. He chooses to leave the scene rather than succumb immediately; but nevertheless, his passion gets the better of him and shows in his body, provoking a "fit." His leaving is a grave offense to the Lord Mayor's hospitality that also damages the social bonds between the citizens and the king. He neither cares for decorum nor does he respect social mores such as the sacrament of matrimony; rather, he pursues his desire single-mindedly and stalks Jane in disguise when she works in her husband's shop. In disguise, he is not his royal self, but exposes his unroyal conduct towards Jane. Like Richard III, he uses the space

between linguistic ambiguities to open up his suit of Jane like a besieged city—but to no avail. As he cannot break through the wall of Jane's modesty, Edward uses the force of his royal command to have her come to court. As Jane has to follow her king's orders, he eventually has his will. After Jane becomes his concubine, there is hardly any interaction between the two, and, with Edward's lust quenched, he does not need Jane anymore (or the text does not relate anything about it).

The story following the adultery rather centres on the effects on the marriage of Matthew and Jane. While Jane not only bears the moral brunt and guilt of her liaison with the king, Edward does not feel any emotional impact. His carelessness for Jane's wellbeing and lack of responsibility—especially as he does not provide for her in the event of his death—shows that she is merely a dalliance to him. To atone for her sin, Jane does charity work, enacting justice that should be a royal virtue, but the king could not care less. Rather, he accuses Jane for the detrimental effect her beauty has had on him, but Jane makes clear that the king should be able to control his own desires. Effectively, no one blames him for betraying his wife; all the blame is put on Jane's beauty and her feminine weakness; apparently, a mistress is an innate right to a king. But while Edward claims that he cannot break the word he gave to his French ally, it is no issue for him to break his marriage vow; thus, he himself undercuts the validity of his royal word.

The decidedly English qualities of masculinity feature in a few of the history plays; Englishness is seen as an inspiring source of heroism, valour, and chivalric virtue. The French are usually the antagonists, representing effeminate, weakling braggarts who only fight with words and courtly robes. This gendered opposition between England and France pervades most of the plays and is implicit when the French are mentioned. Therefore, miscegenation is often portrayed as a threat that weakens strong English heroism; besides, the English superiority is further undercut as the English claim to the French throne is based on the female line through French ancestry of the English kings. They themselves are usually the result of French-English miscegenation and not the epitomes of pure-blooded Englishness. Even though Edward III is often evoked as the founding father of the English claim in France, it is the female French side that the English kings mainly pursue, even though this is rarely made explicit or concealed by the fuzziness of the argumentation of the Salic law speech in *Henry V*. Despite this rift, the qualities of English blood are inherited through family ties and bonds between men; it is the qualities of the fathers that are passed on while the mothers only serve as vessels that must prove chaste to guarantee for the purity of the transfer. The mettle of the English is inscribed in the bodies through the geohumoral qualities of having grown up in England, creating a common tie between English men. That the English are "bastard Normans" who disturb the peace of a more sophisticated society from a French point of view is an alternative but invalidated perspective (see *HV*, 3.5.5-10). However, the French also fear that their "mettle is bred out" (*HV*, 3.5.29); their women surrender to the appeal of new English invigorating influence. The English usually see miscegenation as a deterioration for their stock while the French see in *Henry V* that they are past their prime.

3.5 Royalty, Power, and Rule

A male, and especially a king, should be rational, self-controlled, and temperate; a ruler has to be able to rule himself so that he is legitimately able to rule others. Striving for the stability and well-being of his realm, a king is the supreme *pater familias*.[1314] As the head of state, the king should decide and rule in accordance with the other "members" of his body politic, his councillors and peers; nevertheless, as he enjoys special privileges, the ruler has the ultimate responsibility of his actions towards God from whom he derives all his power. As there was no single valid idea of good and adequate rule in the late sixteenth century, many different notions and norms contributed to the discussion and understanding of kingship.[1315] Machiavelli argues in the seventeenth chapter of *The Prince* that a ruler does not need to be loved but should avoid being hated.[1316] However, if a king evades his responsibility to care for the country, kingship becomes a void resting on the outward performance of majesty:

> Thy dignity or authority wherein thou only differest from other is (as it were) but a weighty or heavy cloak, freshly glittering in the eyes of them that be purblind, where unto thee it is painful, if thou wear him in his right fashion, and as it shall best become thee. […] Therefore whiles thou wear it, know thyself, know that the name of a sovereign or ruler without actual governance is but a shadow, that governance standeth not by words only, but principally by act and example; that by example of governors men do rise or fall in virtue or vice.[1317]

The history plays, therefore, have the very important role of negotiating good and responsible government and rule in times of war and other crises; different characters develop different strategies, becoming more or less successful in their pursuits. Masculinity, a constituent part in the construction of kingship, plays an important part in the evaluation of a good ruler.

3.5.1 "Upon the King"—Henry V and the Concept of Kingship

After the discussion with the soldiers, Williams and Bates, before the battle of Agincourt, Henry withdraws and struggles with his human self and the condition of monarchy in a soliloquy. The king had trouble accepting the soldiers' charges of responsibility for their lives and the well-being of their souls in case of their deaths. On his own again, Henry tries to tackle the heavy burden of royal responsibility towards his subjects, the condition of royalty, and the relation between monarch and subjects:

> Upon the King.
> 'Let us our lives, our souls, our debts, our careful wives,
> Our children, and our sins, lay on the King.'
> We must bear all. O hard condition,
> Twin born with greatness […].
> (*HV*, 4.1.212-216).

The soliloquy begins with an incomplete line, the metre is broken, and the words sound like a sigh: "Upon the King." Henry laments the burden that comes with being

[1314] Erasmus 1997: 33-34; Elyot 1962: 99-100; Schruff 1999: 123.
[1315] Schruff 1999: 276.
[1316] Machiavelli 1997: 61-64.
[1317] Elyot 1962: 165.

the master of a whole kingdom and feels that his subjects want him to bear *all* responsibility for their lives and family (which they had not said previously, actually), an enumeration that ends with "We must bear all" (*HV*, 4.1.215), a *pluralis maiestatis* indicating the special position a king has. Confronted with Williams' charges, Henry feels the responsibility for all his subjects descend on him, and the double-edgedness of majesty becomes evident in a moment that is not only decisive for the outcome of the French campaign but also in Henry's kingship. What might look like self-pity is, in fact, a struggle to come to terms with the political responsibility that ruling entails. The discussion with Williams and Bates sparked off something within Henry, a certain truth in the soldiers' arguments that he needs to come to terms with. Eisaman Maus, however, thinks that Henry's self-pity should not be taken seriously, as he constantly defers the blame for his actions on enemies and inferiors while accepting the rewards due to his exceptional status as king.[1318] However, Henry's conscience confronts him with the individual subject that has to trust the king and sets his hopes on him, and he feels it is a "hard condition, / Twin-born with greatness" (*HV*, 4.1.215-216). Responsibility is inextricably linked to being elevated above all the others, a condition that he experiences as pressure. Besides, the discussion had drawn the lines of difference between king and subject that he had tried to gloss over earlier. Trying to define what kingship means and how it differentiates him from his soldiers, Henry dismantles the construct of monarchy in all its brittleness that rests on only ceremonial show; the king thus becomes an effect of the social structure that he should guarantee and dismantles kingship as a self-referential system:

> […] O hard condition,
> Twin born with greatness: subject to the breath
> Of every fool, whose sense no more can feel
> But his own wringing. What infinite heartsease
> Must kings neglect that private men enjoy?
> And what have kings that privates have not too,
> Save ceremony, save general ceremony?
> And what art thou, thou idol ceremony?
> What kind of god art thou, that suffer'st more
> Of mortal griefs than do thy worshippers?
> What are thy rents? What are thy comings-in?
> O ceremony, show me but thy worth.
> What is thy soul of adoration?
> Art thou aught else but place, degree, and form,
> Creating awe and fear in other men?
> Wherein thou art less happy, being feared,
> Than they in fearing.
> What drink'st thou oft, instead of homage sweet,
> But poisoned flattery? O be sick, great greatness,
> And bid thy ceremony give thee cure.
> (*HV*, 4.1.215-234)

Henry feels that his responsibility encompasses even the simplest person in his realm, paying a dear price for his elevated position. As he is just a normal person who has a heavier burden to carry than commoners, he feels subjected to these claims—even "subject to the breath of / Every fool, whose sense no more can feel / But his own

[1318] Eisaman Maus 1997: 723.

wringing" (*HV*, 4.1.216-218). In a fit of envy, Henry calls his subjects dim-witted fools who cannot feel anything beyond their own limited scope and try to delegate all their cares to the king, who must carry out his office alone. And what are the recompenses for the additional care and burdens that a king must bear?—Ceremony is Henry's answer. He calls it an "idol" (222), a "kind of god" (223) and asks explicitly for its revenues and worth (225, 226); because it inspires fear and awe in others, ceremony separates him from other people, making him "less happy." In this passage, he addresses a few issues he has with being king. He might have the power to command people do something, but he has no power over their health or their souls; besides, he can never be sure whether the homage paid to him is sincere or mere flattery. The theatricality of kingship that maintains it as a self-referential system is a mere show of hollow ceremony, decorum, and regalia.[1319] None of it can provide him with the carefree, sound sleep his subjects enjoy after a full day's work.[1320] On stage, this heavy burden is often represented by a sleepless king. Just before he comes on stage to discuss obedience and kingship in the fourth act, the Chorus describes the sleepless Henry wandering through the camp (*HV*, 4.0.28-47).[1321] Ceremony is no real recompense for him but a mere chimera, an idol that creates a distance to his fellow human beings who fear him. Henry seems to feel alone and frustrated because he feels less happy at being feared; besides, the poison of flattery and insincerity cannot be compensated for by ceremony. However, Henry realises that this "poisoned flattery," masqueraded obedience, is part of the role-playing that constitutes kingship. This leads Henry to the insight that majesty also depends on the acceptance of the subjects and can never be absolute. He addresses ceremony:

> Canst thou, when thou command'st the beggar's knee,
> Command the health of it? No, thou proud dream
> That play'st so subtly with a king's repose;
> I am a king that find thee, and I know
> 'Tis not the balm, the sceptre, and the ball,
> The sword, the mace, the crown imperial,
> The intertissued robe of gold and pearl,
> The farcèd title running fore the king,
> The throne he sits on, nor the tide of pomp
> That beats upon the high shore of this world –
> No, not all of these, thrice-gorgeous ceremony,
> Not all these, laid in bed majestical,
> Can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave
> Who with a body filled and vacant mind
> Gets him to rest, crammed with distressful bread;
> Never sees horrid night, the child of hell,
> But like a lackey from the rise to set
> Sweats in the eye of Phoebus and all night
> Sleeps in Elysium […].
> And but for ceremony such a wretch,
> Winding up days with toil and nights with sleep,
> Had the forehand and vantage of a king.
> The slave, a member of the country's peace,
> Enjoys it, but in gross brain little wots

[1319] See Schruff 1999: 264.
[1320] Sleeplessness also features recurrently in the *Henry IV* plays and in *Richard III*.
[1321] See Schruff 1999: 232-233.

What watch the King keeps to maintain the peace,
Whose hours the peasant best advantages.
(*HV*, 4.1.238-256, 260-266)

Power is never as absolute as that it can control the health and well-being of subjects; rather, it is a "proud dream" that interferes with the king's sleep; Henry wants to dismantle ceremony by stripping it of its symbolic and metaphysical power. Instead of enjoying kingship, Henry has experienced the anxiety that comes with sleepless nights—mere peasants do not understand how much worry and care are connected to kingship. And even though Henry talks of his subjects in a deprecatory manner, it seems as if he wants to shed his regalia and live a life as simple and carefree as he imagines his subjects do—or maybe return to his careless Eastcheap days. Envying his subjects, the king attacks their alleged little intelligence to come to terms with the distress and pressures of his kingship. Henry feels subjected to higher causes by the condition of being a king, and ceremony only veils the fact that kingship is a heavy burden that cannot be delegated. His exclamation "We must bear all. O hard condition! Twin-born with greatness" (*HV*, 4.1.215-216) is testimony of this idea.[1322] Thus, Henry echoes one of the *topoi* of the mirrors of princes, which emphasises the fact that the ruler bears the heavy weight of responsibility on his shoulders, despite ceremony and glory.[1323]

This soliloquy shows clearly that Henry does not feel at home in his role of king but would rather prefer sleeping soundly after a hard day's work. All the props of ceremony that induce flattery and insincerity are no compensation for him, so he is envious of his subjects who cannot grasp what personal sacrifices kingship entails. This seems to be the other side of the unhappy king who has let the visor down to unveil his true feelings. Henry nevertheless fulfils his role in the expected manner and even becomes an ideal for later kings. However, even an "ideal" king has problems accepting his state and fulfilling the expectations of others.

3.5.2 "Weak Men Must Fall"—Richard II and Divine Right Gone Wrong

Richard II sets off the problems the later plays of the two Shakespearean tetralogies have to deal with; it portrays the fall of the last Plantagenet monarch that eventually leads to the Wars of the Roses due to an unsolved question of legitimacy. Richard II was thus the last king to reign according to divine right.[1324] The play contrasts his ritualistic and linguistic refinement of medieval kingship with the rougher, more activist, and "newer" world of Bolingbroke, tracing the transition from a medieval to an early modern style of reign, so that Bolingbroke's deposition of Richard can be seen as the victory of the Machiavellian politician over the old feudal system.[1325] Even though Richard's claim to the throne is unquestionably based on his bloodline and divine right, his legitimacy is not enough anymore to reign successfully as he lacks the political pragmatism and diligence of the *realpolitik* Bolingbroke embodies; his metaphysical

[1322] Schruff 1999: 224.
[1323] Schruff 1999: 224; see also Elyot 1962: 165.
[1324] Tillyard 1944: 253; 254-255. See also Champion 1977: 22, 24.
[1325] Tillyard 1944: 259; Smith 2000: 46.

understanding of kingship proves eventually ineffective.[1326] So, Richard is a politically weak king, described by his uncle John of Gaunt as a not yet grown-up youth who does not know his way around.[1327] And while Richard II indeed started his difficult reign as a minor, there is no historical proof that he died forcibly in 1400.[1328] However, Richard matures due to his grief and finds his poetical and philosophical strength in the second half of the play. The play is a key to the question of legitimacy and the basis of kingship by delineating the fall of a legitimate monarch who commits crucial errors that finally deprive him of his power. Paradoxically, Richard so strongly identifies with his kingship that he dismantles it himself by merely trusting in its metaphysical qualities instead of effectively opposing Bolingbroke.

How Richard incompetently manages crises is the focus of the play from the first scene onwards where the king chairs a charge of high treason between Henry Bolingbroke and Thomas Mowbray. Bolingbroke accuses Mowbray to be a traitor and is willing to answer the charge even with is life but does not disclose what the misdeed of his adversary is (*RII*, 1.1.30-46). Mowbray, the accused, does not feel that a "woman's war" of words and taunts can solve the problem; neither the king's presence nor Bolingbroke's royal birth hinder Mowbray to defy him and charges him to lie (*RII*, 1.1.47-68). Like Bolingbroke, Mowbray does not specify what he accuses his enemy of; rather, Bolingbroke throws down the gauntlet and challenges Mowbray to a duel according to "all the rites of knighthood" (*RII*, 1.1.69-77). Mowbray takes up the challenge, wanting to defend his cause according to "chivalrous design of knightly trial" in an ordeal by battle (*RII*, 1.1.78-83). The king intervenes only after the men have already settled on a judgment of God and asks them in a very distanced and elevated fashion what charges they put up against each other; his use of the *pluralis maiestatis* indicates that he wants to keep the distance as a remotely elevated king (*RII*, 1.1.84-86). Bolingbroke then charges Mowbray to have misused money received for the payment of soldiers and to have conspired against the throne—the worst allegation, however, is his involvement in the death of Thomas of Woodstock, the king's and Bolingbroke's uncle, who died while in Mowbray's custody. As a relative, Bolingbroke wants to revenge this death on Mowbray (*RII*, 1.1.87-108).[1329] Asked by the king for his defence, Mowbray bids his sovereign to turn a deaf ear so that he may vent his hate against Bolingbroke, but Richard claims to be unprejudiced against his cousin; as both Bolingbroke and

[1326] Howard 1994: 141.

[1327] Smith 2000: 90-91. This character trait is more elaborated on in the anonymous play *Woodstock*. There, Richard follows his own appetites and desires excessively without caring at all for his kingdom; rather than managing his realm, he concentrates on creating new fashions. This might indicate that he is still too young to master himself and his humours as well as he is unfit to rule others.

[1328] Seibt 1987: 328.

[1329] John of Gaunt, Woodstock's brother, insinuates in 1.2. that Richard himself was involved in Woodstock's murder. As he cannot take revenge against his sovereign, Gaunt has to count on God's justice (*RII*, 1.2.1-8). Woodstock's widow, the Duchess of Gloucester, is not happy about his complacency and urges him on to revenge her husband's death, arguing that Woodstock was a descendant of Edward III, so royal blood had been spilt (*RII*, 1.2.9-36). But Gaunt remains firm: "God's is the quarrel," he claims; as God's anointed on earth is the murderer, no one else but God can take revenge, as Gaunt himself will never touch his sovereign. Rather, the duchess should also trust in God (*RII*, 1.2.37-43).

Mowbray are subjects, the king is impartial and wants to have Mowbray freely deliver his defence (*RII*, 1.1.109-123). Mowbray claims to have used a part of the money to cover a loan the king still owed him with his consent. Concerning the death of Thomas of Woodstock, Mowbray admits that he was not as circumspect as he should have been but dismisses the charge of murder. He further admits to have once laid "an ambush for your [i.e. the king's] life"; but as he rued the sin and was granted a royal pardon, he dismisses the rest of the accusations as mere lies—and therefore bids the king to set a date for the men to duel (*RII*, 1.1.124-151). Richard perceives the problem as a humoral disease that he wants to cure without letting blood, so he asks the men to just calm down and forget their enmity; while John of Gaunt, Bolingbroke's father, should look to his son's temper, he himself would care for Mowbray's (*RII*, 1.1.152-159). John of Gaunt and the king bid the opponents not to accept the mutual challenge, but they do not obey. Rather, Mowbray prostrates himself before his king, imploring him for permission to clear his name of slander through combat—his honour is apparently dearer to him than his life (*RII*, 1.1.160-173). Before he is willing to hand back Bolingbroke's gage, Mowbray wants to have his honour cleared of all accusations—but, as his immaculate reputation is his most cherished treasure, he prefers fighting for his honour to living a life of shame. Likewise, Bolingbroke does not hand over Mowbray's gage as he deems it a disgrace to his father (*RII*, 1.1.173-195). As the king proved unsuccessful in appeasing the two, he sets a time and place for a trial by combat; his royal word proves not effective enough to solve the problem, so established chivalrous rituals take over (*RII*, 1.1.196-205).

The admission of powerlessness contradicts Richard's posture as an omnipotent feudal lord in this scene, a tension that is exploited when the combatants meet at Coventry, all eager and prepared to fight (*RII*, 1.3.1-6). Richard chairs the ritual of the ordeal by battle with his usual decorum and formality; the ritualistic language as well as the formal proceedings create a feeling of medieval chivalry, a legalistic rite between men (*RII*, 1.3.7-41). The king never addresses the combatants directly as the Lord Marshal acts as intermediary; Richard seems to be too unapproachable and removed for even his cousin to speak to directly. Thus, Richard acts the role of God's anointed to the extreme; Richard's descent to greet and embrace Bolingbroke therefore seems like a very magnanimous courtesy (*RII*, 1.3.42-54). Despite his declaration of impartiality in the first scene, Richard takes Bolingbroke's side as he thinks his "cause is just." However, in case Bolingbroke is slain, Richard cannot revenge his death but is prepared to lament it (*RII*, 1.3.55-58). But Bolingbroke does not want to be mourned if he is killed; indeed, he underscores his determination to fight. When taking leave of his father, John of Gaunt, Bolingbroke portrays himself as his father's successor who seeks to keep up the family name with the help of Gaunt's blessing. After receiving his father's well wishes, Bolingbroke invokes his innocence and St. George, hedging his bets for victory (*RII*, 1.3.59-84). When Mowbray delivers his speech, he stresses his determination, his loyalty to the king, and the justice of his cause. He wishes everyone around "happy years" and wants to die calmly as the truth of his quest settles his soul (*RII*, 1.3.85-96). Richard detects "[v]irtue and valour" in Mowbray's glance and bids the Lord Marshal to start the trial (*RII*, 1.3.97-99). Both Bolingbroke and Mowbray

receive a lance, and two heralds repeat the charges of the combatants against their counterpart. And just as the trumpets sound to mark the beginning of the duel, Richard stops the fight (*RII*, 1.3.100-118, SD). Breaking off the duel at the last moment will prove a momentous mistake as Richard disrupts the "rites of chivalry" he himself ordered, a sacrilege against the rights of the knights as well as a violation of the ritual involved to solve the conflict.[1330] Richard takes the solution of the conflict into his own hands and does not rely on God's judgement. Rather than spilling blood, he orders the combatants to disarm and return to their chairs while he retires with his nobles to deliberate upon his sentence. Richard banishes both from the kingdom but on different terms; Bolingbroke is exiled for ten years and is not to return on pain of death while Mowbray receives banishment for life, even though Richard admits that it is done so "unwillingly" on his part (*RII*, 1.3.119-147). Bolingbroke accepts his sentence quite composedly, but Mowbray is shocked to be expelled from England and live as an outcast abroad forever—a sentence he experiences as a "speechless death" (*RII*, 1.3.148-167). Richard orders the two to swear that they will not maintain any sort of contact in exile so that they would not plot any ill against their sovereign, an oath they both swear to keep (*RII*, 1.3.172-185). However, Richard does not seem to be satisfied with his solution even though he interrupted the duel because he did not want to witness bloodshed (*RII*, 1.3.124-133); especially in Mowbray's case, he apparently feels that his sentence is not just (*RII*, 1.3.142, 168-169). Having decided on the sentences with his council, Richard acts like a ruler in an organic relationship with his advisors, but his unease with the situation and the oath he forces from the banished opponents are the first cracks in his self-construction as an unassailable, elevated representative of God on earth. And the solution does not work out either: Bolingbroke tries to force Mowbray to confess his sins, but Mowbray refuses and accuses him back in turn. Before he leaves, Bolingbroke predicts that the king will soon regret his decision (*RII*, 1.3.186-200).

Richard eventually reduces Bolingbroke's banishment to six years because he feels pity with John of Gaunt's grief (*RII*, 1.3.201-205); this not only renders the situation more unjust but exposes the king's arbitrariness despite his previous assertions. Bolingbroke interprets the abbreviation of his exile as a manifestation of the linguistic might of kings; however, Gaunt, his father, has mixed feelings about the decision. Even though he is happy that the duration of his son's exile is reduced, he does not think that he will see him again as he feels death approaching. The king immediately (and light-heartedly) dismisses Gaunt's objection who further reminds Richard that he may have the power to inflict grief on others but is not omnipotent. Richard wants to know why his uncle is so bitter when he himself was part of the council that decided on Bolingbroke's banishment, and Gaunt explains that he voted that way to not seem too lenient against his own flesh and blood (*RII*, 1.3.206-235.4). Then, Richard urges all to take their leave from Bolingbroke and exits.

Aumerle, the Lord Marshal, Gaunt, and Bolingbroke stay behind to say farewell (*RII*, 1.3.236-237). When Aumerle arrives at court, Richard is anxious to hear about

[1330] McCoy 1989: 1.

Bolingbroke's departure and wants to know the details: whether tears were shed, his words of goodbye, and how far Aumerle accompanied him. Aumerle, however, does not cater to Richard's queries; his answers indicate instead that he is happy Bolingbroke is now gone (*RII*, 1.4.1-18). While Richard reminds him of their common cousinhood but doubts himself that Bolingbroke wants to see his relatives when he returns from exile (*RII*, 1.4.19-21). Richard and his cronies—Bagot, Bushy, and Greene—have observed how Bolingbroke courted the commoners and became very popular with them, a fact that Richard evaluates critically:

> Ourself and Bushy, Bagot here, and Greene
> Observed his courtship of the common people,
> How he did seem to dive into their hearts
> With humble and familiar courtesy,
> What reverence he did throw away on slaves,
> Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles
> And patient underbearing of his fortune,
> As 'twere to banish their affects with him.
> Off goes his bonnet to an oysterwench.
> A brace of draymen bid God speed him well,
> And had the tribute of his supple knee
> With 'Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends',
> As were in reversion our England his,
> And he our subjects' next degree in hope.
> (*RII*, 1.4.22-35)

Richard does not approve of Bolingbroke's way of relating to commoners; he, in contrast, keeps his distance from the common people due to his kingly image of degree and decorum. Apparently, he finds his cousin's popularity and proximity to the people somewhat threatening. Bolingbroke shows humility and treats simple workers as his equals, thereby demeaning himself in Richard's eyes; while Bolingbroke stresses the Englishness they share in common, Richard acts as if he were an entity detached from the rest of humanity, a man above all others. That he had been observing Bolingbroke and now banishes him leaves a bad aftertaste. Again, Richard did not act as impartial judge but rather for his own gain; banishing Bolingbroke, he could get rid of a potential rival. Green supports his sovereign's intentions—Bolingbroke is now gone and with him his popularity; Richard should now focus on the oppression of the revolt in Ireland. Richard plans to lead the Irish war himself; but as he spent too much money on luxuries, his coffers are empty. To raise money for the expedition, he has to tax the kingdom; blank charters shall solve the problem by skimming revenue from his rich subjects (*RII*, 1.4.36-51). When Richard learns that John of Gaunt is dying and has sent for the king, he plans to use his uncle's fortune to equip his army and hopes they will come too late to find Gaunt dead (*RII*, 1.4.52-63).

But when they arrive, Gaunt is still alive and eager to advise his king, even though York does not believe that Richard will appreciate any counsel. Gaunt unrealistically hopes that his impending death and his grief will unlock the king's ears (*RII* 2.1.1-16). Richard, however, is more interested in the latest fashions and his flatterers, so York advises Gaunt to spare his waning strength—but Gaunt feels that he has to tell Richard that his "fierce blaze of riot cannot last" and that he has to implement a steady economic policy to sustain the kingdom (*RII* 2.1.17-39). Gaunt's famous declaration of love to

England as "[t]his other Eden, demi-paradise" follows; the country is way too precious to be farmed as Richard does it, who defiles the country by merely extracting money for his whims (*RII* 2.1.40-68).

Richard enters the scene with his entourage after this speech. York advises Gaunt to deal mildly with the king as he is young; but while the queen addresses Gaunt with all due reverence, Richard is rather uncouth (*RII* 2.1.69-72). Gaunt wittily turns his answer into wordplay on his name, and Richard is surprised at his uncle's sharp mind. In the ensuing exchange, Gaunt warns the unreceptive Richard that he is sicker than the dying Gaunt because of the state the kingdom is in (*RII* 2.1.73-96). Criticising the king as the embodiment of the state, Gaunt accuses Richard of relying on his flatterers too much, thus damaging the kingdom and shaming his kingship—Gaunt even goes so far as to call Richard a mere "[l]andlord of England," effectively denying his kingship (*RII* 2.1.97-114). Instead of taking Gaunt's reproach as advice, Richard is so incensed that he interrupts Gaunt mid-sentence, saying, were he not his uncle, he would cut off Gaunt's head (*RII* 2.1.115-124). Richard describes his fury as a humoral excess caused by his "royel blood" (*RII* 2.1.119-120), a sign that he is not able to rationally control his temper; this inability to take criticism indeed exposes his predilection for flattery. But having nothing to lose, the dying Gaunt dares his king and asks him not to spare him, just as he did not spare his uncle Woodstock, whom he had killed. Cursing Richard that this shame will torment the king for the rest of his life, Gaunt is carried off-stage, never to return again (*RII* 2.1.125-137).

York tries to intercede on Gaunt's behalf and calm down the king, but Richard misunderstands York's claim that Gaunt loves Richard like Bolingbroke to mean that Gaunt hates him as Bolingbroke does, and not that Gaunt loves him like his own son (*RII* 2.1.140-147). Northumberland informs the party that Gaunt just died; and while York yearns for death to end his woes, Richard quickly begins to plan his Irish war. As he desperately needs money, he promptly seizes all of Gaunt's possessions and effectively disinherits his cousin Henry Bolingbroke (*RII* 2.1.148-163). This is the second of Richard's two cardinal errors that he will not be able to amend: by cancelling the duel between Mowbray and Bolingbroke and thereby denying them the opportunity to defend their honours, and, by disinheriting Bolingbroke, Richard breaks the chain of succession from father to son, an original political sin he and the rest of the realm will come to regret. His mismanagement of these events reveals that Richard is unable to establish or maintain bonds between men—the basis of his feudal kingship. In a patriarchal kingdom, he has to keep the order of the realm, which means fostering the relations between men in a ritualistic fashion in general and family ties in particular.

Renaissance historiography, however, evaluated the causes for the downfall of Richard II differently. Hall explicitly connects his deposition with Edward II's and sees its cause in corrupted counsellors. He writes:

> [U]nprofitable counsailers wer his [king Richard's] confusion and finall perdicion. Suche another ruler was kyng Edwarde the seconde, whiche two before named kynges fell from the high glory of fortunes whele into extreme misery and miserable calamitee.[1331]

Likewise, Holinshed sees evil councillors as the reason for Richard's deposition, despite his intrinsically positive characteristics:

> Thus was king Richard depriued of all kinglie honour and princelie dignitie, by reason he was so giuen to follow euill counsel, and vsed such inconuenient waies and meanes, through insolent misgouernance, and youthfull outrage, though otherwise a right noble and woorthie prince.[1332]

The text criticises Richard's violation of family succession; York enumerates Richard's shortcomings as a king like his involvement in his uncle Gloucester's death, Bolingbroke's banishment, and Richard's role in hindering Bolingbroke's marriage. He is not willing to keep still anymore as he feels it is his duty to his sovereign to advise him; besides, he reminds Richard that his father, Edward the Black Prince, raged like a lion against the French—but never against his own countrymen and friends. York cannot keep quiet about Richard spending the money his forebears earned and spilling his uncle's blood (*RII* 2.1.164-186). When Richard pretends not to understand what York means, his uncle elaborates that the king's plan to disinherit Bolingbroke breaks the link of succession between father and son that Richard's throne itself rests on. He makes clear what problematic implications this short-term gain has:

> Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time
> His charters and his customary rights:
> Let not tomorrow then ensue today;
> Be not thyself, for how art thou a king
> But by fair sequence and succession?
> Now afore God – God forbid I say true –
> If you wrongfully seize Hereford's rights,
> […]
> You pluck a thousand dangers on your head,
> You lose a thousand well-disposèd hearts,
> And prick my tender patience to those thoughts
> Which honour and allegiance cannot think.
> (*RII* 2.1.196-202, 206-209)

Richard is still determined to disinherit his cousin Bolingbroke despite his uncle's objections (*RII* 2.1.187-211). Rather than calculating the future political risks of this disinheritance, Richard goes for the immediate short-term results; that he ignores good counsel is a sign of his unfitness to rule. Through Bolingbroke's disinheritance, Richard takes the first step towards his downfall by tearing away the basis of patriarchal succession that legitimises his own reign. Indeed, when confronted with Bolingbroke's popularity and his own hollowed-out basis of kingship, Richard is unable to steady his faltering rule. Even York feels uneasy to cling to a king who rejects and destroys the very basis of his throne by interrupting the ties of inheritance between father and son. Unwilling to witness the seizure of Bolingbroke's goods, York again warns Richard that nothing good will come out of this, stressing the point with a rhyming couplet at the end

[1331] Quoted from Campbell 170-171.
[1332] Holinshed 1808 vol. II: 868.

(*RII* 2.1.212-215). But instead of caring about his uncle's concerns, Richard immediately instructs Bushy to prepare Richard's departure to Ireland the next day; interestingly, however, he makes York, who just reproached him for his unwise decision, Lord Governor of England in his absence as he feels York's justice and love towards his sovereign (*RII* 2.1.216-224). Even though Richard does not put York's counsel into practice, he senses that his uncle deeply cares about political matters, so apparently Richard is not totally deaf to York's objections.

However, Richard's decision leaves a few nobles discontented: Northumberland, Willoughby, and Ross stay to discuss Bolingbroke's disinheritance. Northumberland thinks that the king is not himself as he has so egoistically mistreated a member of the royal family; he feels the king has been led astray by flatterers who will induce the king to treat other nobles as he had Bolingbroke (*RII* 2.1.225-246). The prominence of the dichotomy of shame versus honour in this scene is interesting; Gaunt, York, and the nobles represent the ideal state of honour and decency opposed to the king's behaviour that represents shame and disgrace. This royal shame disrupts the whole established order of the kingdom and makes the nobles fear for their goods and families. Instead of representing honour, the king degrades the kingdom with his own baseness. Northumberland explicitly draws the connection between the person of the king and the "declining land" (*RII* 2.1.241). Burdening commoners and nobles alike with taxes and fines, the king is unpopular, even more so as he uses the money to cater to the whims of his court and not on the vital expense of war. Richard made himself dependent on the Earl of Wiltshire to whom he leased out the kingdom, a fact that makes the king " [m]ost degenerate" (*RII* 2.1.263) to the nobles who feel they have to strike back if they do not want to fall (*RII* 2.1.247-270). Northumberland, when urged by Willoughby and Ross, discloses that Henry Bolingbroke, his supporters, and a navy of three thousand men head for England while the king is away in Ireland to "[r]edeem from broking pawn the blemished crown, / Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt, / And make high majesty look like itself" (*RII* 2.1.295-297). Northumberland prepares to await Bolingbroke at Ravenspurgh and the others join him (*RII* 2.1.271-302). What they are up to amounts to high treason as Bolingbroke was sentenced under pain of death not to return for six years from his banishment. His return on his own account is treasonous, especially as the king is abroad. Nevertheless, the nobles want to free the country from shame and the "slavish yoke" (*RII* 2.1.293) of Richard's reign, accusing him of tyranny.

In the royal palace, the queen feels some kind of "unborn sorrow" that is beyond her grief of separation from her husband (*RII* 2.2.1-13). The queen thus becomes the mouthpiece for the unfolding tragedy; even though her feelings are irrational (she does not know yet about Bolingbroke's return), her sorrow is so physically present that she portends something ominous she cannot yet name (*RII* 2.2.14-40). And this exact moment, Green enters and reports that Bolingbroke has arrived at Ravenspurgh, supported by Northumberland and an army—news that confirm the queen's earlier forebodings (*RII* 2.2.41-55). State officials like the Lord Stewart, the Earl of Worcester (Northumberland's brother) resigned his office and defected to the rebels. Hearing this, the queen despairs—and no one can assuage this (*RII* 2.2.56-72). When York enters partly armoured, she craves words of comfort, but York himself is close to despair; due

to old age, he can hardly keep himself up. Now, he hopes that Richard's flatterers might defend Richard's sovereignty in the king's absence. The situation looks bleak as the king lacks aristocratic supporters, and even the commoners are likely to defect to Bolingbroke (*RII* 2.2.73-89). On top of it all, the Duchess of Gloucester, whom York wanted to appeal to for financial support, just died, so York is at a loss of what to do. He lacks money to take appropriate measures so not even messengers were dispatched to Ireland to inform the king about the situation. Thrown into a chaotic situation where he cannot act rationally, York simply wishes for death; he feels torn between his allegiance to his sovereign and the feeling that Bolingbroke was wronged and has to seek justice. All he can do is to bid the nobles present to muster an army—everything is unsure and uneven, even the metre of his speech in line 120; the situation looks desperate indeed (*RII* 2.2.90-122). The courtiers Bushy, Bagot, and Green know that they are in danger because to their proximity to the king; instead of mustering up men, Green and Bushy decide to flee to Bristol Castle while Bagot wants to join Richard in Ireland. Bushy thinks that they can meet again if York proves successful, but Green understands that the duke faces a quixotic task, so they share a last goodbye with Bagot (*RII* 2.2.123-149). Even though Richard's cronies allude to their closeness to the king, the play does not show much of it; it is rather a convention the text accepts. Besides, only Bagot, probably the king's closest confidant, decides to join his sovereign in Ireland while the other two merely give up and flee.[1333]

Bolingbroke has finally landed in Gloucestershire, and Northumberland welcomes him with praises of quasi-magical powers. Bolingbroke's mere company sweetens the rough way and motivates the others to hasten to his presence (*RII* 2.3.1-18). His ability to attract others hints at an innate majesty in Bolingbroke, a supernatural attribute that elevates him among his own. His modest reply that his company is worth less than Northumberland's kind words further stress his natural elevation through humility (*RII* 2.3.19-20). Then, Henry Percy, son of Northumberland and the Hotspur of *1 Henry IV*, recounts that his uncle Worcester defected to Bolingbroke's faction; Henry Percy himself promises his service to Bolingbroke's cause, an offer that Henry happily accepts (*RII* 2.3.21-50). Bolingbroke's promise to likewise honour this allegiance later becomes the main conflict in *1 Henry IV*; likewise, Henry promises financial rewards to the lords Ross and Willoughby when they arrive to support his cause; they however claim that their leader's presence is reward enough (*RII* 2.3.47-67).

Then, Berkeley, a messenger of the king's party, enters and wants to know what Bolingbroke intends to do during the king's absence (*RII* 2.3.67-80). The ensuing quibble over Bolingbroke's title of address is strange—while Henry chides Berkeley for addressing him by his lesser title of Duke of Hereford, the self-same address of Hereford was no problem in Northumberland's and Percy's case (see *RII* 2.3.32, 36). Henry declares that he returned to reclaim his title of Lancaster (and thus his inheritance) that he was deprived of by Richard. The messenger then asks why

[1333] While the relationship between Richard and Bagot is very close (and might have exceeded mere friendship), Bolingbroke explicitly charges Bushy and Green with male-male sexual relationships with the king (*RII*, 3.1.1-15).

Bolingbroke bears arms against York, who is the "most gracious regent of this land." York himself enters, and Bolingbroke pays him due reverence by kneeling in front of him, but the regent demands true obedience, not outward shows. Bolingbroke is a traitor as he returned against the king's orders and threatens the country with war. If age did not inhibit him, York claims that he would chastise the unruly young man as he represents the royal body politic in the king's absence (*RII* 2.3.81-104).

When Bolingbroke wants to know in what way he erred exactly, York explains again that his armed return from banishment makes him a traitorous rebel (*RII* 2.3.105-111). But Bolingbroke appeals to York's impartiality to evaluate his wrongs; he was banished as Hereford but now returns to reclaim his title of Lancaster. If his cousin Richard reigns due to the right of succession, his own title of Lancaster has to be granted to him as well, otherwise his life would have no worth—just as York's son Aumerle will be Duke of York after his father's death, so Bolingbroke has to be Lancaster. Now, he comes to demand his rights and seizes the means available to him as a subject (*RII* 2.3.112-135). Bolingbroke justifies his armed invasion as lawful and just; if others have a right to their title, he himself has the right to take back his, even if he has to resort to the force of arms. York understands the wrongs Bolingbroke suffered but cannot approve of the means. When Northumberland explains that Bolingbroke merely returned to claim his own and nothing more, York objects and claims that if he were stronger and better manned, he would not hesitate to subdue them under the sovereignty of the king. Torn between his duty towards the king and his understanding for his returned nephew, York declares himself to be a "neuter"—effectively a declaration of surrender (*RII* 2.3.136-158). He even offers them shelter at Berkeley Castle where the king's party resides, so it is clear that he has already taken a stand against the king.

Bolingbroke accepts the offer and tries to win York over completely by asking him to join them against Bushy and Bagot who lie at Bristol Castle. Bolingbroke is determined to weed out these "caterpillars of the commonwealth"—and so already exceeds his initial claim to regain his title and inheritance. Despite Bolingbroke's transgression of his initial aims, York wants to pause and rest before making a decision; he is unwilling to break the laws of the country and is also exhausted. Again declaring his neutrality, York wants due proceedings even though he implicitly has already given in to his nephew's cause and cannot take care of the matters at hand anymore (*RII* 2.3.158-179).

The situation for Richard worsens considerably when a Welsh military enforcement of the royal army dissolves itself; they think the king dead as for a long time they have not received any news and taken to bad omens like meteors as an indication of how the situation in the state is about to develop. Salisbury, the king's partisan, already foresees the unstoppable fall of Richard when his allies forsake him (*RII* 2.4.1-24). Indeed, Richard was notably absent since he left for Ireland and did not even contact his Welsh allies—again he does not care about establishing bonds with other men, leaving him isolated and desolate in the end. Additionally, Bushy and Green are captured and sentenced to death at Bristol Castle; Bolingbroke tries to wash their blood off his hands and justifies their deaths with an enumeration of their crimes against the realm, accusing

them of having corrupted the king, who is naturally a "happy gentleman in blood and lineaments" (*RII* 3.1.9). Further, Bushy and Green allegedly maintained sexual relations with the king and caused the rift between Bolingbroke and his royal cousin to profit from his inheritance. This last point is Bolingbroke's most important; it seems as if he takes personal revenge and does not adjudicate fairly, even though he tries to justify their deaths (*RII* 3.1.1-30).

It becomes clear that Bolingbroke not only returned for his inheritance but also for personal revenge; furthermore, he presumes judicial power and even the right to condemn others to death, a blatant transgression. As an exiled subject, he has no legitimacy from the king—the central source of jurisdiction—to exact sentences on fellow subjects. The defendants react rather coolly; Green however curses Bolingbroke with "injustice [plagued] with the pains of hell"—a curse that will come true in the troubled reign of Bolingbroke in the *Henry IV* plays. Henry tries to appear impartial against the king's party; while he took revenge on his personal enemies Bushy and Green, he makes sure that the queen is treated well, for York conveys letters to her that express his friendly inclination towards her (*RII* 3.1.31-42).

Henry's last lines in the scene—a call to fight against Glyndwr—are a further proof that Bolingbroke already acts like a conqueror, meddling in matters that have nothing to do with his disinheritance (*RII* 3.1.42-44). He does not even explain why he now turns against the Welsh; only the fact that they are allies of the English king would justify an attack; thus, he indirectly attacks the king while not aiming at him directly. His motivation to act like a conqueror is not explained; all that can be presumed is that he takes a form of personal revenge that fires up his ambition.

When the king returns from Ireland, Richard is relieved to be back; touching the earth, he delivers a speech that reveals a lot about his organic understanding of the relationship between king and his country:

> Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,
> Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs.
> As a long-parted mother with her child
> Plays fondly with her tears, and smiles in meeting,
> So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee my earth,
> And do thee favours with my royal hands.
> Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,
> Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense;
> But let thy spiders that suck up thy venom
> And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way,
> Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet
> Which with usurping steps do trample thee.
> Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies,
> And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower
> Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder […].
> Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords.
> This earth shall have a feeling, and these stones
> Prove armèd soldiers, ere her native king
> Shall falter under foul rebellion's arms.
> (*RII* 3.2.6-20, 23-26)

Richard likens his relationship to the earth of his kingdom to the proximity between a mother and her child; like a caring parent, he has returned to take up his

responsibilities and care for the kingdom. Interestingly, he likens himself to a mother and not a father, an uncommon idea that reverses the idea of the earth as the nurturing female. With the quasi-magical touch of his royal hand, he invokes the earth against his enemies, exposing his belief in the metaphysical quality of kingship and a natural connection between the soil and its sovereign. His strong belief in the sanctity of kingship will prove a liability for Richard as he trusts too much in it to take personal action; while the Bishop of Carlisle promises that his sacred kingship will keep Richard on the throne, Aumerle warns that this metaphysical concept does not hinder Bolingbroke's ascent (*RII* 3.2.27-31). Richard does not share Aumerle's scepticism but rather believes that the traitors will understand their sin when the king will rise in the east like the sun (*RII* 3.2.32-49). To emphasise his claim, Richard expresses his core understanding of kingship:

> Not all the water in the rough rude sea
> Can wash the balm from an anointed king.
> The breath of wordly men cannot depose
> The deputy elected by the Lord.
> To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,
> God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay
> A glorious angel. Then if angels fight,
> Weak men must fall; for heaven still guards the right.
> (*RII* 3.2.50-58)

Richard believes in political orthodoxy: the king as God's representative on earth cannot be deposed by earthly means—and if anyone should attempt it, God will revenge the deed. This mind-set is the only viable explanation for his inactivity against Bolingbroke as he thinks he is under special protection from above; but when he hears that the Welsh allied army has dispersed and defected to Bolingbroke's party, his confidence is instantly shattered. Lacking substantial military backup, Richard admits that he was proud a moment ago when he believed in his own strength (*RII* 3.2.59-77). Aumerle reminds him of who he is, a cue Richard takes to awaken his "sluggard majesty" once again. The attack of a "puny subject" should not make him despair while his title of king elevates both him and his followers. When Scrope enters, Richard is prepared for any kind of news; arguing that rule is care, the loss of his kingdom would mean to be rid of care—a striking contradiction to his previous invocation of sacred royalty. Richard reasons that Bolingbroke would serve God if he should strive to be king, so he would be willing to serve him. The changes of Richard's attitude towards his kingship show how desperate and undetermined the king is; a few lines earlier, he had wanted to attack the "puny subject" with his name alone, while now Richard is even willing to hear that he has to die; if his subjects defected to the rebels, he cannot do anything against it and surrenders to the facts (*RII* 3.2.78-99). Richard feels desperate and is ready to comply with anything—his former resolve is gone. Scrope is glad to find the king so prepared for the disaster: subjects of all ranks, sexes, and ages overwhelmingly support Bolingbroke against the monarch (*RII* 3.2.100-116). This reality creates a rift between Richard's former beliefs in the unquestionable allegiance of his kingship to actual fact. Now, his initial lack of care for the realm violently strikes back and threatens his position—he had not been the caring parent but leased out his

kingdom and burdened his subjects with taxes for his own gain. The improvidence of ignoring Gaunt's warnings against this policy has now struck back.

When Richard asks for allies, he is not interested in the Duke of York and his army anymore after hearing that Bushy, Green, and the Earl of Wiltshire are dead; he turns completely morbid. His laments mark the beginning of his downfall; Richard feels he cannot access his kingship as a source of strength anymore, willing to give up before having fought for his throne. He already imagines his deposition, a thought that would have been completely alien to him at the beginning of the scene. Sorrow and words are all that are left to him; connecting his feelings to the Earth, he himself dismantles his incantation of the magic of kingship as mere words and outward show:

> Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs,
> Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes
> Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.
> Let's choose executors and talk of wills—
> And yet not so, for what can we bequeath
> Save our deposèd bodies to the ground?
> Our lands, our lives, and all are Bolingbroke's[.]
> […]
> For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground,
> And tell sad stories of the death of kings—
> How some have been deposed, some slain in war,
> Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed,
> Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping killed,
> All murdered. For within that hollow crown
> That rounds the mortal temples of a king
> Keeps Death his court; and there the antic sits,
> Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
> Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
> To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks,
> Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
> As if this flesh which walls about our life
> Were brass impregnable; and humoured thus,
> Comes at the last, and with a little pin
> Bores through his castle wall; and farewell, king.
> Cover your heads, and mock not flesh and blood
> With solemn reverence. Throw away respect,
> Tradition, form, and ceremonious duty,
> For you have mistook me all this while.
> I live with bread, like you; feel want,
> Taste grief, need friends. Subjected thus,
> How can you say to me I am a king?
> (*RII* 3.2.141-147, 151-173)

Richard dissects the other side of royal power—the vulnerability of the mortal king who is threatened by the hunger for power by others. Kingship is an illusion that makes the king a jester in his foolishness. Now, bereft of his companions, Richard feels that he has lived in an illusory world; he recognises that he is just a human being that does not have quasi-magical powers and is just as frail and vulnerable as his subjects. But if nothing really distinguishes the king from his fellow humans, what is the essence of his kingship, Richard asks—and implicitly reaches the conclusion that it is nothing, so he is king no more. The Bishop of Carlisle cannot take these musings and calls on Richard's masculinity: "My lord, wise men ne'er wail their present woes" (*RII* 3.2.174). Rather than lamenting, the king should take action and fight Bolingbroke; the bishop thinks

that the king's musings are a weakness that strengthens the enemy, so Richard should never fear death or fighting. Likewise, Aumerle tries to cheer up his sovereign by referring to York's army that will support him (*RII* 3.2.174-183). The admonitions eventually come to fruition; Richard feels prepared to meet Bolingbroke in single combat to fight out their conflict, and his "ague-fit of fear is overblown." Again overreacting, he thinks it is an "easy task" to defeat Bolingbroke (*RII* 3.2.184-187). Confident and ready to fight, he asks Scrope about York's army; but the messenger has even worse news to tell. Not only did York join Bolingbroke but the southern nobles have also defected to the rebel side. Richard is inconsolable and even chides Aumerle for his attempt to "lead me forth / Of that sweet way I was into despair." So does Richard actually savour his despair? It seems reasonable to assume that he does, as he is determined to repair to Flint Castle and wait there for his death rather than fight back. On top of that, he twice orders to have his soldiers dispersed and even forbids any attempt at consolation or advice (*RII* 3.2.190-214). The sun of Richard's rule has already eclipsed.

But York did not completely forego his allegiance to Richard as he backs up his majesty in the rebel camp. York reminds Bolingbroke not to infringe on divine law that restricts his range of action as a subject—a charge Bolingbroke dismisses as not applying to him (*RII* 3.3.1-19). When Harry Percy informs Bolingbroke that close-by Flint Castle is "royally […] manned"—Richard stays there with his supporters Aumerle, Salisbury, Scrope, and the Bishop of Carlisle—Bolingbroke assigns Northumberland to send his allegiance and subservience to Richard—but under the condition that his inheritance is re-established and his banishment repealed. If the king does not yield, he threatens him with an attack—a thought he claims to be far from his mind, even though he just vented it and wants his troops to approach the castle to show off his good equipment. He wants to meet the king whom he sees as his complementary counterpart—but the metaphor of fire and water he uses cannot be twisted enough to express his submissiveness, it simply does not work (*RII* 3.3.19-60). Effectively, Bolingbroke forces the king into submission, knowing he is in a better and stronger position than the king whose power crumbles like the castle he dwells in. And his move shows results; the king appears on the walls of Flint Castle, above the action of the scene—remote as always from political matters. Bolingbroke likens the king's appearance to the red, rising sun that portends bad weather as "envious clouds" "dim his glory" (*RII* 3.3.61-66). The loyal monarchist York, however, detects an innate royal look in Richard's eyes—an aspect dimmed by Richard's unroyal treatment (*RII* 3.3.67-70). Richard is amazed by Northumberland's irreverence during their encounter; he thought himself to be Northumberland's king, so he would have expected him to kneel before his sovereign. Richard wants to know the divine reason for his apparent deposition and assumes his old, elevated, and remote style of speech to reclaim his sacred kingship, again using the *pluralis maiestatis* so common in the first act. No one can deprive him of his majesty except by profane stealing or usurpation; and even if all his subjects turn on him, Richard is sure that God is on his side. He curses the rebels that dare threaten his throne with God's revenge and reminds Bolingbroke that every step he takes on Richard's land is pronounced treason—interestingly, Henry had

himself referred to England as Richard's (*RII* 3.3.46). Henry would have to level the country with war before he can wear the crown in peace, an endeavour that many lives would answer for (*RII* 3.3.71-99). Northumberland hopes that the king will not resume a call to arms, a strange thought given that it was Bolingbroke who threatened the king with war. Stressing their common descent from Edward III, Northumberland conveys his message that "[t]hy thrice-noble cousin / Henry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss your hand" and asks subserviently for the re-establishment of his inheritance and the repeal of his banishment with "no further scope." If Richard grants this, Bolingbroke will not attack and become a loyal subject again. The king, forced to comply, grants all of Bolingbroke's wishes (*RII* 3.3.100-125).

After the insurgents left, Richard shows his real feelings; he thinks that he debased himself by yielding; he even contemplates calling Northumberland back and risking his death by denouncing them all as traitors. As he knows that any resistance would imply his death, Aumerle thinks it wiser to calm the enemy with appeasing words and strike when times are more favourable (*RII* 3.3.126-131). Richard laments repealing the banishment he himself once pronounced; feeling debased, he wishes to be as great as in his imagination or to forget his former power so that he could not recognise the difference now; the overpowering enemy has the might to beat both him and his heart—and thus control his entire being (*RII* 3.3.132-140). When Northumberland returns, Richard awaits the worst and is willing to give up everything that marks him as a king to become a monk or a beggar; he even fears he has to give up the life that he connects with the kingdom for "a little grave / A little, little grave, an obscure grave" where subjects may tread on his anointed head. Richard notices that Aumerle weeps for his king and makes clear that their sighs and tears have no impact (*RII* 3.3.141-170). Unable to fight back, Richard resorts to sarcasm and calls Northumberland "most mighty prince" and his cousin "King Bolingbroke"; he asks what "his majesty" intends to do lets him live or not (*RII* 3.3.171-174). But Northumberland only bids him to "come down" to meet Bolingbroke "in the base court"—the image is telling and more than allegorical: Bolingbroke holds an audience with his sovereign, who has to descend to a profaned court to learn what will become of him. Richard immediately understands the implications and anticipates his fall: "Down, down I come like glist'ring Phaethon"—just as Phaethon could not reign the horses of the sun-chariot, Richard has proven unable to manage his own realm. He knows that he disgraces both the court and his position if he answers the charges of a traitor (*RII* 3.3.175-182).

Before the meeting, Bolingbroke instructs his followers to pay due reverence to the king, knowing that he has to keep up the show of subservience; as he already has the power to command a king, Bolingbroke has already effectively conquered Richard and England with him. So when he meets Richard, he calls him "[m]y gracious lord" and kneels in front of him (*RII* 3.3.183-186). But Richard understands that this is mere show, he would prefer Bolingbroke's heartfelt love to a falsely bended knee—Richard knows his cousin actually is reaching for the crown despite these declarations of submission. As he cannot put up any effective resistance, Richard surrenders everything to Bolingbroke who has only asked for the restoration of his dispossessed rights—his rights, inheritance, himself, and the realm. Bolingbroke declares that he only wants to

serve his sovereign to deserve his love, but Richard does not believe in the sincerity of his cousin's explanations; he tells him that he deserves his love well as he bullied his way through with "the strong'st and surest way." Finally, Richard installs Bolingbroke as his heir: "What you will have I'll give, and willing too; / For do we must what force will have us do" (*RII* 3.3.204-205). Thus, Richard admits that he is forced to surrender. When Bolingbroke affirms that they will all go to London now, Richard expresses his powerlessness by a simple "[t]hen I must not say no." The king knows that any resistance to his adversary would result in his death, even though his over-mighty subject clad his superiority in terms of love and subservience (*RII* 3.3.187-207).

The famous garden scene draws a parallel between the macrocosm of politics and the microcosm of a gardener's regiment in his compound; the gardener instructs one of his helpers to bind up apricot branches that bend under their weight and the other one to cut off some boughs that grow too fast while he himself is going to weed out pest plants. Interestingly, he likens his instructions to childrearing and the beheading of overweening offenders—as "[a]ll must be even in our government" (*RII* 3.4.25-40). That his cropping and ordering his garden is a deliberate parallel to the matters of state is even clear to one of his helpers; he objects:

> Why should we, in the compass of a pale,
> Keep law and form and due proportion,
> Showing as in a model our firm estate,
> When our sea-wallèd garden, the whole land,
> Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers choked up,
> Her fruit trees all unpruned, her hedges ruined,
> Her knots disordered, and her wholesome herbs
> Swarming with caterpillars?
> (*RII* 3.4.41-48)

If the king is not able to establish law and order in the country but has it overgrown with his favourites who take advantage of the land, the assistant does not see why they should keep "law and form and due proportion" on their small patch of earth. The gardener restrains his man; the king is now fallen himself, and all the favourites who profited from their position are killed by a more thorough gardener, Bolingbroke, while the "wasteful king" is taken prisoner. He compares the king's negligent rule to his own diligent reign in his garden and accuses Richard of having caused his own downfall (*RII* 3.4.49-67). The first man wonders if the gardener's words are treasonous—but the gardener merely claims that Richard is already humiliated and fears his deposition is imminent (*RII* 3.4.68-72). The queen, who had overheard the conversation, cannot keep quiet anymore and reproaches the gardener for his traitorous speech, asking him where he got the news from. The gardener, however, just recounts what everyone knows, namely that Richard is in Bolingbroke's hands who is supported by a mighty faction of all the English peers (*RII* 3.4.73-92). The queen cannot believe what has happened and leaves with her ladies for London to meet the king (*RII* 3.4.93-108).

Meanwhile, Bolingbroke also got hold of Bagot and sits in judgement on him because he accuses him to be involved in the death of the Earl of Gloucester, Richard's and Bolingbroke's uncle (*RII* 4.1.1-4). This moment mirrors the first scene of the play under distorted circumstances; as Richard sat as a judge over Bolingbroke and

Mowbray, Henry now transgresses his competence when he acts as a judge over a fellow subject. When asked to freely speak his mind, trying to appear just despite his obvious bias against his enemy, Bagot accuses Aumerle, a man who was always loyal to Richard, to have been involved in the murder; Aumerle, however, denies this charge and challenges Bagot to retain his honour (*RII* 4.1.5-28).

When Bolingbroke forbids Bagot to pick up the gage, Fitzwalter challenges and accuses Aumerle in Bagot's stead. Then, Henry Percy backs up Bagot and Fitzwalter and throws down his gage to challenge Aumerle as well (*RII* 4.1.29-47). The question of honour, truth, and justice is caricatured by the many challenges and charges of lying; the whole idea of settling disputes by an ordeal of God becomes farcical. In the end, Aumerle runs out of gages and has to borrow one—and even Mowbray is challenged in his absence as the height of absurdity (*RII* 4.1.48-76). The challenges become a verbal contest of bombast that has nothing to do anymore with finding out the truth.

What was only hinted at in the first scene of the play now becomes apparent: the old social order based on masculine honour, degree, and truth does not work anymore. Richard inflicted the first rifts of this order by halting the duel between Mowbray and Bolingbroke and later through his cousin's disinheritance while Bolingbroke then tore the system completely apart by overstepping the boundaries of a subject by forcing his sovereign to submit to him. His attempt to create order ironically results in disorder. Bolingbroke's solution to the situation is awkward: he orders the challenges to stand until Mowbray—banned for life—returns from exile. Henry even presumes to repeal Mowbray's banishment and restore all his titles and estates to him; only then will he pursue Aumerle's trial (*RII* 4.1.77-81).

By repealing his enemy's exile, Bolingbroke tries to establish himself as just and unbiased; but this attempt is crossed when he learns that Mowbray is already dead and cannot be used to demonstrate mercy on anymore (*RII* 4.1.82-93). Henry then postpones the trial against Aumerle to a date he personally sets—that Henry uses the *pluralis maiestatis* in this declaration discloses that he already acts like a king (*RII* 4.1.94-97). Then, York enters and establishes this as fact: Richard wants to make him his heir, so York declares him King Henry IV, legitimising the present state of things. Henry accepts the crown with a mere and unceremonious "In God's name I'll ascend the throne" (*RII* 4.1.98-104). It all seems set and done when the Bishop of Carlisle objects on the grounds that subjects cannot depose God's anointed:

> Would God that any in this noble presence
> Were enough noble to be upright judge
> Of noble Richard. Then true noblesse would
> Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong.
> What subject can give sentence on his king?
> And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?
> […]
> And shall the figure of God's majesty,
> His captain, steward, deputy elect,
> Anointed, crownèd, planted many years,
> Be judged by subject and inferior breath
> And he himself not present? O, forfend it, God,
> That in a Christian climate souls refined
> Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed!

I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks
Stirred up by God thus boldly for his king.
My lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king;
And if you crown him, let me prophesy
The blood of English shall manure the ground,
And future ages groan for this foul act.
(*RII* 4.1.108-113, 116-129)

The bishop openly criticises Henry's instalment as king, trying to save what is left of the old established order. Reminding the others of their place within the structure of political orthodoxy, he predicts that the presumption against one's sovereign will be revenged over the course of time; and indeed, his prophesy proves true as the confusion of legitimacy ensuing from Richard's deposition will eventually lead to the Wars of the Roses (*RII* 4.1.105-140). Thus, he proves to be a clear-sighted realist, but Northumberland arrests the bishop on charge of capital treason because he accused the future king of England to be a traitor (*RII* 4.1.141-142). It is an ironic twist that the defender of royal prerogative and divine order is going to pay for his argument in the name of the king. To proceed the trial of Richard, Bolingbroke orders him to be brought before him to erase all doubts regarding succession (*RII* 4.1.143-152). Apparently, Bolingbroke is aware of the fact that if he ascends the throne, he will need backup to justify his rather shaky legitimacy.

When Richard enters, it is apparent that he is not so willing to give up his crown or "regal thoughts;" he is not yet ready to be a subject that flatters and curtsies but hopes that sorrow will teach him submission with time. Sarcastically, he remembers that all the nobles present once praised him as their king just as Judas did, implicitly debunking them as traitors. But other than Christ he is forsaken by all of his former friends; his bitterness is highlighted in his "God save the King," whether it be Bolingbroke or himself. Bolingbroke's coup-d'état rendered kingship arbitrary and made the metaphysical legitimacy of royalty obsolete (*RII* 4.1.153-166).

When Richard asks why he is brought before Bolingbroke, York reminds him that he wanted to surrender his throne to his cousin due to "tired majesty" (*RII* 4.1.168-171). Though he is obviously unwilling to resign, Richard offers Bolingbroke the crown with the words "Here, cousin, seize the crown" (*RII* 4.1.172)—the wording alone reveals Richard's reluctance to give up the throne and that he interprets Bolingbroke's coronation as a coup-d'état. When the two men hold the crown in their midst, Richard visualises the balance of nominal power that has been tipped by Richard's grief and tears (*RII* 4.1.173-179). Richard's sorrow makes him not only eloquent but wise. Now, no longer king, he is able to stage his departure from power in a very powerful way—while he did not calculate the consequences of his actions in the first part of the play, the deposed king now knows that his acts have a historic dimension to them and stages them accordingly with much linguistic skill.

Bolingbroke is astonished that Richard is unwilling to resign; York's earlier message had indicated the contrary. Now, confronted with Richard's grief and reluctance to let go of the crown, Bolingbroke is at a loss for words. While Richard surrenders the crown to Bolingbroke, he makes clear that he may not reign over grief

and sorrow, the last domain of Richard's sovereignty (*RII* 4.1.179-183). Bolingbroke tries to comfort Richard in saying he takes over some of Richard's cares with the crown—but Richard bemoans bitterly the loss of authority due to his irresponsibility; Richard will never be able to let go of his cares and his intrinsic relation to the crown even though Henry takes over actual rule (*RII* 4.1.184-189). Bolingbroke becomes impatient and asks Richard again if he is now ready to abdicate. Annihilating his self in wordplay with the homophonous "ay" and "I," simultaneously assuring and negating his inclination to resign, Richard begins to "undo" himself (*RII* 4.1.191). Dismantling his regalia one by one, the king renounces his political legacy and releases his subjects from their allegiance to him. Thus, he strips himself bare of his royal essence until nothing is left of his former self. By his ritualistic self-deposition, the last resort of his sovereignty is his annihilating grief:

> Now mark me how I will undo myself.
> I give away this heavy weight from off my head,
> [*BOLINGBROKE accepts the crown*]
> And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,
> [*BOLINGBROKE accepts the crown*]
> The pride of kingly sway from out my heart.
> With mine own tears I wash away my balm,
> With mine own hands I give away my crown,
> With my own tongue deny my sacred state,
> With mine own breath release all duteous oaths.
> All majesty and pomp I do forswear.
> My manors, rents, revenues I forgo.
> My acts, decrees, and statues I deny.
> God pardon all oaths that are broke to me.
> God keep all vows unbroken are made to thee.
> Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved,
> And thou with all pleased, that hast all achieved.
> […]
> What more remains?
> (*RII* 4.1.193-207, 212)

While Richard thinks there is nothing more to do than strip his self bare of all royalty, the change of rule requires a new base for Henry's legitimacy, so Northumberland wants Richard to read out a list of grievances that he and his favourites have allegedly committed against the realm. Richard is reluctant to be further humiliated; while his own faults torment him, Richard does not want to comply by washing the hands of the usurpers clean, so he asks Northumberland whether he, too, would be likewise shamed if he had to enumerate all his shortcomings; explicitly, he names the deposition of a king and the breaking of oaths (*RII* 4.1.212-232). But Northumberland loses his patience and orders Richard to read the articles, but the latter tries everything not to; he even claims that he cannot read because his eyes are full of tears—yet he sees enough to recognise traitors around him. However, he also denounces himself as a traitor because he has deposed and stripped himself of his own majesty (*RII* 4.1.233-242). Rather than resigning willingly, Richard makes clear to the others that his forced abdication is a sin—a debasement of the whole realm in his person.

When Northumberland calls him "[m]y lord," Richard berates him that he is neither his nor anyone's lord anymore. He does not have any titles left, so he lacks a proper identity; interestingly, this lack of proper title was the very reason Bolingbroke returned

from exile. Bereft of title and social position, Richard does not know what to call himself and wishes he could just melt away—and to assure him of himself, he asks for a mirror to look at his face. Bolingbroke lets him have his will without question while Northumberland again tortures Richard to read out the declaration, but Henry stops Northumberland's insistence and exercises pity. Richard claims that he will be confronted enough with his sins; besides, he is sure that the commoners will be satisfied without him reading out the paper (*RII* 4.1.243-265). Richard takes the mirror to "read," but his unchanged appearance despite his lack of majesty astonishes him—he accuses the mirror to be a flatterer as it does not reflect the change of his inner self. He can detect some "brittle glory" in his visage, at least, the fading rest of his innate royalty. As he understands that the glory of royalty—and with it also the concept of divine right—is as brittle as glass, he shatters the mirror, just as he had preciously shattered his self by stripping off his kingly accoutrement, destroying the last rest of his old self within him (*RII* 4.1.266-281). The mirror did not reflect Richard's essential change from king to nobody, so the old order of mirroring analogies is shattered as well. As the world does not mirror divine order anymore, power has become arbitrary, so not only Richard's former self but also a part of the medieval world view lies shattered on the floor and political chaos is likely to ensue.

While Bolingbroke understands Richard's musings, he claims that it was Richard's grief that destroyed the mirror along with his own face. But Richard dissects the essence of human existence bared of all worldly status in a philosophic discourse sharpened by his sorrow:

> 'The shadow of my sorrow' – ha, let's see.
> 'Tis very true: my grief lies all within,
> And these external matters of lament
> Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
> That swells with silence in the tortured soul.
> There lies the substance, and I thank thee, King,
> For thy great bounty that not only giv'st
> Me cause to wail, but teachest me the way
> How to lament the cause.
> (*RII* 4.1.284-292)

Bereft of his social identity, Richard constructs his self in the grief he expresses—how else other than in words could he experience himself now that he is a virtual nobody devoid of hope? Richard has only one wish left: Instead of asking for freedom or wealth, he only wants to be removed from Bolingbroke's sight—in his retraction from court and the new king, Richard also retracts from society, where he no longer has a home. Bolingbroke has him conveyed to the Tower: the verb "conveying" makes Richard pun on its alternative meaning of *stealing*, accusing the others of rising by stealing from him (*RII* 4.1.292-308). When Richard is gone, Bolingbroke goes about his business unmoved, ordering the date of his coronation. Aumerle, the Abbot of Westminster, and the Bishop of Carlisle remain alone on stage to ask if there is a way to undo Richard's deposition. Indeed, the Abbot of Westminster admits they are plotting against Bolingbroke, but instead of giving away details, he invites Aumerle to supper where he will let him in on his plans (*RII* 4.1.309-323). The political chaos that the Bishop of Carlisle had foreseen is already unfolding.

When the queen meets Richard at the front of the Tower, she feels that her husband has changed significantly. Richard tries to console her by asking her to imagine their former glory as a dream from which they awoke; he advises his wife to go to France and retire to a nunnery, but the queen reminds him of his royalty, using the image of a dying lion that "wounds the earth" in rage instead of giving up. For her, Richard's submission is a sign of self-abandonment (*RII* 5.1.1-34). Richard would rather have her think him dead and speak of him as in a sad tale (*RII* 5.1.35-50). Northumberland disturbs the spouses to take Richard to Pomfret Castle and have the queen transferred to France. Richard, clear-sighted since his fall, predicts that Northumberland, the "ladder wherewithal / The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne," will become a liability for the new king; Northumberland's relationship to Bolingbroke is mostly motivated by his greed for revenue. Rather, Bolingbroke will fear Northumberland's expertise in deposing kings, a fear that eventually might turn into fatal hate. Northumberland takes the prediction coolly and urges the couple to separate (*RII* 5.1.51-70). And indeed, Richard's prediction will come true; Northumberland will rebel against Henry IV because he feels that his services were not rewarded sufficiently. Thus, Richard proves that he gained a sharp political understanding through his fall. Richard experiences the separation from his wife as the separation from his crown; deeply connected to both, these bonds are now denied him. As in the abdication scene, he confirms and undoes his marriage vow at once, releasing his wife from her marriage vows with a kiss. The queen begs to be banished with her husband as she does not want to part from him, but Northumberland coolly thinks of it as "some love, but little policy," probably having legitimate progeny in mind that could threaten Bolingbroke's legitimacy. Understanding that they have to part forever, the spouses begin to take their leave, clinging together and kissing until they have only grief as their companion (*RII* 5.1.71-102). Richard is now left devoid of all social contact that had endowed his self with a social structure; he is even dislocated geographically from the centre of power—London—to the periphery of Pomfret.

Bolingbroke enjoys huge popular support while Richard is shamed by the masses; and even though York pities Richard's state, he is loyal to Bolingbroke as his new sovereign (*RII* 5.2.1-40). When York accidentally discovers his son's involvement in a plot against Henry, he decides to betray him to the king, even at the cost of losing his own son—a heavy sacrifice for loyalty. The Duchess of York has a stronger emotional attachment to her son, but when she sees that York is unstoppable, she sends Aumerle to the king to plead for his life (*RII* 5.1.41-117). York is a loyal subject to whoever is king, even at the cost of severing his own family ties. His rigorous and orthodox principle of obedience is a contrast to the duchess' more female, adaptable, and pacifying approach. She is more emotionally bound to her son due to her physical connection to him; she explicitly cites her labour pains, which induce more pity in her.

Bolingbroke's first appearance as the newly crowned King Henry IV begins with a lament about his son Hal who cannot be found, foreshadowing the problems he is going to face during his troubled kingship (*RII* 5.3.1-22). The king's strained relationship with his son is nicely linked to Aumerle's entrance, which continues the family dynamics from the previous scene. Aumerle arrived before his father and is granted a private

audience with Henry; in the privacy of the meeting, Aumerle begs for a pardon before admitting his treachery—he even locks the door to ensure that no one will enter. Henry promises to pardon Aumerle if he did not yet commit the deed when York arrives outside the door and wants to warn Henry of Aumerle's treason. Letting York in, the king learns of Aumerle's involvement in a plot against his person and is devastated. York urges the king to punish the repentant Aumerle when the Duchess of York arrives and pleads on her knees for her son's life, resolved to stay on the ground until she hears Henry grant the pardon (*RII* 5.3.23-129). Finally, Henry pardons Aumerle but orders the execution of all the others involved—now, Aumerle has to prove himself loyal (*RII* 5.3.130-144).

Henry has already developed a fear of his companions like Richard predicted; a courtier of his, Piers Exton, interprets the king's ambiguous question 'Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?' as a personal request to kill Richard. To prove his allegiance to Henry, Exton decides to kill Richard at Pomfret without any royal decree (*RII* 5.4.1-11). This little scene exposes an anxious and isolated Henry who wants to secure his brittle legitimacy. But instead of threatening the new king, Richard ponders existential questions about the salvation of his soul in his prison. Even though he knows he cannot flee, he fantasises about leaving the jail he has come to see as the world. Richard still tries to figure out the nature of his identity that ranges from king to a beggar until he realises he is a nobody; he understands that he is a human being but also knows he is threatened as such by the erasure of the self through death (*RII* 5.5.1-41). Hearing some music, he realises that the world around him is out of key and that he did not have the ear for the harmony of reign, an insight that makes him go mad—having lost the opportunity to act, he feels that he is wasted by time just like he wasted time in his day. Now, he cannot chose anymore (*RII* 5.5.41-66). When his food arrives, Richard asks the keeper to taste it first, but the keeper is afraid because Piers Exton commanded the contrary. Incensed, Richard strikes the keeper who calls for help—and Exton and his men rush in. A fight ensues in which Richard kills two men until Exton stabs him. Fatally wounded, Richard curses Exton's murderous hand that dared wound the royal body and thus the country, drawing a parallel between the body private and the body politic in his last words, dying as a king (*RII* 5.5.98-112). Exton acknowledges Richard's royal valour and doubts whether his deed was good; but even though evaluating his murder negatively, Exton decides to take the dead body to Henry (*RII* 5.5.113-118).

The troubles of Henry's reign worsen when a rebellion against his kingship breaks out. Northumberland and Sir Fitzwalter report some victories against the insurgents and are promised a good reward for their deeds; when Henry Percy enters with the rebellious Bishop of Carlisle, Henry shows mercy and lets him live because of the bishop's valour and honour (*RII* 5.6.1-29). When Exton presents Richard's coffin to his sovereign, Henry knows that the murder will cause future problems; he is ambivalent about how to treat Exton—while he wished for Richard's death, he rewards the murderer with his bad conscience and has him banished (*RII* 5.6.30-44). Just as Richard had Mowbray banned who had helped him to get rid of an annoying critic, the guilt-stricken Bolingbroke bans Exton for securing his throne by murder. To atone for

Richard's blood, Henry promises to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, ending the play with a promise that will never come true (*RII* 5.6.45-52). Rather, the sin of killing an anointed king will haunt the following plays and even surfaces in *Henry V* in a time of crisis.[1334]

The whole play centres on the question of legitimate rule; while Richard reigned with an unassailable claim, he proved politically imprudent. Having broken the line of succession by Bolingbroke's disinheritance, he paved the way for Bolingbroke's ascent that disrupted the line of succession and led to the deposition of an anointed king. In the abdication scene, the symbols of kingship are undone, so divine right becomes obsolete as the sole cause for legitimacy. Bolingbroke's popularity and his practical, active approach to kingship denote a change in the whole concept of kingship and rule, but his reign stands on brittle ground due to his questionable legitimacy he struggles to secure. Richard, on the other hand, draws his legitimacy from the firm medieval concept of divine right that endows the anointed with quasi-magical powers and an intrinsic connection to the country. Trusting too much in his divine legitimacy, he followed imprudent, short-sighted, and unrealistic policies instead of taking the consequences of his actions into account. The strength of his legitimacy finally proved to be a weakness that Bolingbroke could exploit with a different political concept, a new vigour indicating the change to early modernity. But this change is brought about by the destruction of the old order, which will eventually lead to the chaos and bloodshed of the Wars of the Roses; in that respect, Richard's deposition may be the political Fall of Man in early modern English history. All of the plays that follow negotiate how a new political order may look and how it can be legitimised; different kinds of male characters try to fill the not-yet-defined new role of king successfully, a process marked by trial and error.

3.5.3 "Didst Thou See His Majesty?"—Royal Misrule in Edward IV

Despite the title of the play, Edward the Fourth is not the main protagonist. It is probable that Heywood just used the name of a king as a means to pocket the revenues at the theatre box office to produce a play that rather chronicles the development of a civic urban society based on the middle classes rather than royalty, is much more convincing.[1335] Besides, the citizens embody all ideal male virtues that the king lacks—so his absences, preying, and carelessness towards his subjects mark the examination of his rule. Instead of portraying the life of a monarch, *Edward IV* echoes a wide range of sources like pamphlets, ballads, political philosophy, sermons, and other contemporary contexts that mirror the situation in London during the 1590s.[1336] Rowland explains the king's absence from stage for eight scenes with the absence of a major actor in the troupe—not a very striking argument.[1337] While the play places itself in the tradition of

[1334] See chapter 3.1.4.
[1335] Rowland 2005: 55-56.
[1336] Rowland 2005: 12.
[1337] Rowland 2005: 7-8.

the history plays of the 1590s, it sometimes even reacts against it.[1338] So, Edward's reign serves as a cover for the criticism of the instability of the monarchy or a morality about marriage threatened by adultery.[1339] Nevertheless, the king's absences and his lack of royal ethos are telling in the construction of Edward's rule and his masculinity, just like his use of disguise, his dissembling towards unknowing subjects, and his voluptuousness. The first scene already discloses his political carelessness and tendency to neglect his duties for his own pleasures (see chapter 3.4.4) that becomes most striking in his lack of involvement against the rebels who threaten London. The king enters the scene only after the citizens have successfully defended the city and the rebels flee—after a stage absence of eight scenes. The mayor obediently dedicates his victories to his sovereign, who only wants to know whether Falconbridge was captured or slain, and the brevity of his lines makes clear he is interested only in the outcome (*1EIV*, 9.189-197). He seems to have a bad conscience, though, as Edward begins to excuse his absence in this emergency:

> Thanks, good Lord Mayor. You may condemn us
> Of too much slackness in such urgent need;
> But we assure you on our royal word,
> So soon as we had gathered us a power
> We dallied not, but made all haste we could.
> (*1EIV*, 9.203-207)

Edward seems to be at a loss to explain things; rather than making haste, he had postponed the gathering of forces to the next day and delegated the task to his courtiers (*1EIV*, 1.154-163). Edward's reaction to the crisis was slack, and his need to apologise shows that he knows he has neglected his duties; to make up for it, he promises to pay the reward for the capture of Falconbridge from his own coffers (*1EIV*, 9.210-215). What seems to be very generous is, in fact, the only possible solution. Why should the city of London, whose citizens had twice fought back rebel attacks threatening the whole country without aid, pay the reward for the capturer of the rebel leader? That the king pays this is the very least he can do. To reward the city officials for their deeds, Edward knights the Lord Mayor, Josselyn, and the Recorder of London; Matthew Shore, however, demands only his sovereign's respect as he thinks he is not worthy enough to be a knight (*1EIV*, 9.219-239). What seems to be an act of subservience eventually evolves into defiance—by refusing the knighthood, Shore asks more of his sovereign, he demands *respect* (even though only the meanest form of it is enough for Shore)—and thus he demands something the king did not show on his own behalf. He distributed favours and honours—but not respect; and even Shore's modest request will be cancelled later on in the play when the king eventually cuckolds him. Edward's promise to "Some other way / We will devise to quittance thy deserts, / And not to fail therein, upon my word," (*1EIV*, 9.240-241) rings hollow in the ears of an audience who knows that the king will answer the deeds of his subject by whoring with his wife. The "royal word" as a means of truth is repeatedly used in this scene—first in Edward's assurance that he had wanted to help the city of London against the attack of the rebels

[1338] Rowland 2005: 11.
[1339] Rowland 2005: 12.

and in the promise to reward Shore in another way than with a knighthood (*1EIV*, 9.205, 242). While Edward might have intended the best with his royal word, its implementation is faulty. While the king stresses that he left his new bride to "hasten" for help to the citizens against the rebels (*1EIV*, 9.244-246), nothing in the first scene indicates haste on Edward's side; his bride and the feast were much more important, so Edward's honesty can be questioned. When nothing is left to be done for him, Edward rewards the defenders of London and wants to leave with the mayor to talk with him (*1EIV*, 9.247-257). That conference is only alluded to in scene ten, where the mayor praises Edward as "affable" and comments on the king's ability to entertain with "merry talk" (*1EIV*, 10.104-106). Josselyn strangely comments that Edward will "prove a royal king" (*1EIV*, 10.107)—this means that the king has not yet proven very royal but shows promising signs. Through his compliment, Josselyn denies his king's actual royalty and criticises his style of rule.

Edward's strategies in dealing with subjects become most apparent in the interaction with the tanner Hobs, a plain and outspoken worker who likes women. After an encounter with the royal hunting party, he meets the courtiers Sellinger and Howard who look for the king, but Hobs innocently wants to know which king they mean (*1EIV*, 11.1-54). The courtiers are surprised and do not know whom else than King Edward they could mean, but Hobs reminds them of Henry VI, whom some call the "honester man of the two." When they warn him not to speak treasonously, he does not want to have anything to do with it but admits that it is hard for simple working men like him to know who he is the subject of as the political to and fro from one king to the other has the consequence that "a man cannot go upright but he shall offend t'one of them." He even proposes being ruled by both kings at once (*1EIV*, 11.56-67). The tanner's attitude towards his king reveals a lot about the subjects' relationship to their monarch: they do not understand politics and have to care about their own lives, so it does not really matter who is king at the moment. Hobs just wants to be upright and honest but understands that he cannot do that without offending one of the political parties, so honesty always implies the charge of treason. The courtiers remind Hobs that he should "speak well of the king" and exit to continue their search for him. When the courtiers have gone, Hobs only wants to care about his leather, not about politics and wishes that God should make the king an honest man (*1EIV*, 11.67-78). The tanner lends his voice to express the perspective of subjects who do not necessarily care about politics or their king—that he mentions Henry VI, who is imprisoned by Edward IV, potentially destabilises Edward's legitimacy and thus threatens the basis of his reign.

Then, the king enters in disguise, and Hobs is amazed by the number of people swarming through the woods; he turns to leave as he suspects the intruder to be a "thief." Besides, Hobs has already learned that "a man cannot tell amongst these courtnoles who's true" (*1EIV*, 11.81-82). Without knowing it, he has hit the nail on the head: a king in disguise is not true, just as the whole system around him is built on pretension and flattery. On a deeper level, the king is not true to his royal essence because he does not appear as himself. However, Edward seems to be more like himself when he does not appear as the king, as his being is not very royal and lacks decorum, self-restraint, and responsibility. The stranger bids Hobs to stay "[i]f thou be a good

fellow," but the tanner fears being robbed by the stranger; Edward asks him if he thinks him a thief, but Hobs wittily wriggles himself out of this trap by answering that "[t]hought is free, and thou art not my ghostly father." Edward cannot assure the tanner that he does not want to harm him as he does not trust him (*1EIV*, 11.83-95). Hobs' defiant answer affirms his autonomy and cautiousness towards a complete stranger, and it is not quite clear whether the encounter with the courtiers has made him more cautious or if he feels threatened by society as such. Only Edward's repeated assertion that he means no harm calms the tanner down; the king is quite informal with him and speaks prose, asking Hobs if he saw the king, "his majesty" (*1EIV*, 11.97-101). The poor tanner, eager to get away, does not understand the question and thinks "majesty" to be the king's horse; Edward's try with "grace" has the same effect but Hobs now asks which king exactly Edward means (*1EIV*, 11.102-105). This sparks off a cross-interview; Hobs cannot fight the king's inquisitiveness who tries to find out what his subjects think of him. He asks the tanner whether Hobs knows more than one king (*1EIV*, 11.106-107). Hobs, remembering his encounter with the courtiers, evasively answers that he thinks of Edward. The tanner's comment that Edward is "high" only because he put Henry "low" is a telling criticism of politics and Edward's legitimacy (*1EIV*, 11.108-113). Therefore, Edward wants to know how low the king put Henry, but the intimidated tanner claims that he "cannot tell, but he has put him down, for he has got the crown." To save his head, just in case, Hobs adds that "much good do't him with it" (*1EIV*, 11.114-116). Edward exploits the ignorance and honesty of a poor subject to gather information about his standing in the population. The king wants to know the tanner's name, claiming that he likes the plain frankness of his *vis-à-vis* but not giving away his own identity; he lets Hobs believe that he is just a passer-by.

Hobs is surprised that the stranger never heard of him when he discloses his name; he still fears that he is a thief who wants to lure him in with his talk but assures himself that he has to fear nothing as all his valuables are securely stacked with his man down the hill (*1EIV*, 11.117-128). When Edward tells him that there is only one horse down the hill, Hobs fears to lose his money and his goods, and scrambles for his horse (*1EIV*, 11.129-141). Edward then wants Hobs to accompany him to Drayton, a town off the tanner's way; and, as he began to like the stranger, they go off together (*1EIV*, 13.1-14). Alone with a subject, the king seizes this unique opportunity to gather more information and asks him what the people think of their king. Hobs corrects him: "Of the kings, thou meanst." Already suspicious of the inquisition, Hobs asks whether the stranger is an informer who will pass on the intelligence; Edward's answer is ambiguous: "If the King know't not now, he shall never know it for me" (*1EIV*, 13.15-19). Feeling more secure, the tanner discloses his opinion on Henry VI: "'Mass, they say King Harry's a very advowtry man" (*1EIV*, 13.20). Edward gets the malapropism and corrects "advowtry"[1340] to "devout," but wants to know what people think about King Edward. Hobs is honest: "He's a frank franion, a merry companion, and loves a wench well. They say he has married a poor widow because she's fair," and predictably Hobs likes the king "the better" for it because his own tastes are similar (*1EIV*, 13.21-27). This

[1340] "Advowtry" means "adulterous," see footnote on p. 141 referring to *1EIV*, 13.20.

characterises the king as a rather plebeian person and not a ruler who lets reason and discretion guide his comportment. Edward is not yet satisfied by Hobs' answer and wants to know how the population love the king. The tanner's reply is revealing again:

> Faith, as poor folks love holidays: glad to have them now and then, but to have them come too often will undo them. So, to see the King now and then, 'tis comfort, but every day would beggar us. And, I may say to thee, we fear we shall be troubled to lend him money, for we doubt he's but needy.
>
> (*1EIV*, 13.29-34)

The answer discloses a gap between monarch and subjects; the king is something special that is enjoyed once in a while, but if he meddles too often with the lives of his subjects, he becomes burdensome. The subjects loathe and fear their duty to support the king financially as it impoverishes them; and indeed, later on, they will have to lend money to their king. As Edward knows of his brittle finances, he further inquires if the tanner is willing to provide money for his sovereign, and Hobs would do anything to help out his king (*1EIV*, 13.35-37).

Then, Edward wants to know about the loyalties of the tanner and asks which king he loved better—Edward or Henry. Hobs is reluctant to disclose his thoughts, so the king tricks him and claims that he himself considers Henry the true king (*1EIV*, 13.38-41). What should provoke a declaration of clear partisanship makes Hobs explain that he loves both the houses of Lancaster and York; his loyalties are like a windmill that "grind[s] which way so e'er the wind blow." To him, any king may be hailed and followed as he cannot chose anyway (*1EIV*, 13.42-48). Not yet satisfied, Edward tries again to obtain a decisive answer and calls the reigning king "but an usurper, and a fool, and a coward" (*1EIV*, 13.49-50). Edward apparently knows how precarious his conduct as well as his legitimacy is, but Hobs defends the king and charges his acquaintance with treasonous talk: "Nay, there thou liest; he has wit enough, and courage enough. Dost thou not speak treason?" (*1EIV*, 13.51-52).

While Hobs defends the king, real praise sounds different. Edward feels urged to disclose the source for his intimate knowledge about kings, so he claims to have worked for the former king and is now the butler of the new one as Ned; through his position, he could get a few favours from the kin and do the tanner some good, but he only reproves him for being unloyal to his former master (*1EIV*, 13.53-62). Hobs is not impressed, and he would rather see the king in his cottage in Tamworth. Ned offers to take the tanner to court to have a suit fulfilled, but Hobs does not want to have anything to do with the court and just wants to go home with his cowhides. If the king wants to meet Hobs, he would be welcome, he adds (*1EIV*, 13.63-71).

When Edward tells Hobs that he could ask for a letter patent, the tanner refuses flatly as these patents just aggravate the already bad situation and further corruption; he rather thinks that what is in the hand of a few would do better in the hands of many (*1EIV*, 13.72-83). Hobs then invites Ned as a servant of his sovereign to dinner and a nightcap at the hands of his daughter Nell, even though he thinks that the king has "many honester" servants. Ned agrees and promises to be in Tamworth after having

served the king. The tanner encourages him to hurry or otherwise he will be locked out (*1EIV*, 13.84-96). After Hobs is gone, Edward remarks:

> Farewell, John Hobs, the honest true tanner.
> I see plain men, by observation
> Of things that alter in the change of times,
> Do gather knowledge; and the meanest life,
> Proportioned with content sufficiency,
> Is merrier than the mighty state of kings.
> (*1EIV*, 13.97-102)

Edward acknowledges the tanner's unadulterated view on things and laments that plain subjects lead happier lives than monarchs.[1341] The encounter with Hobs revealed not only intelligence about his own acceptance as a king but also how a subject sees the world. When Howard and Sellinger finally find the king, they tell him that he is expected at a feast that night, but Edward wants to visit the tanner as a "jest" because he is "such a merry mate, / So frolic, and so full of good conceit / That I have given my word to be his guest, / Because he knows me not to be the King" (*1EIV*, 13.103-115). Edward wants to have his "humour," indicating that he has to watch his humoral balance; any folly or excess might tip it over and he could forget himself (*1EIV*, 13.117). To be able to see the tanner, Edward sends Howard away to the feast and invites Sellinger to accompany him to Tamworth (*1EIV*, 13.116-123). There, they will be "plain 'Ned' and 'Tom'" (*1EIV*, 13.122). Then, Edward receives letters with "good news" that will make the visit at the tanner's the merrier—Henry VI has died (*1EIV*, 13.128-136).

Meanwhile, Hobs makes sure that everything is in good order and that the visitors will have enough food (*1EIV*, 14.1-29). He instructs his daughter Nell not to fall in love with Ned, as he is "a spruce youth" (*1EIV*, 14.6) because "courtiers be slippery lads" (*1EIV*, 14.7). The tanner is happy when Ned arrives, praising his "honesty" as he "keep[s] promise," even though he brings "another misproud ruffian" with him (*1EIV*, 14.30-31). He welcomes them both and is amazed by the cost of his guests' clothing; he reasons that either they must rob their master or the master—the king—must rob his subjects.

Hobs does not follow his thoughts further and busies himself as a host (*1EIV*, 14.35-51). Both guests consider Nell so pretty that they both kiss her—Edward would even be willing to marry her, so Hobs begins to bargain; he would give him his daughter if Ned set up a trade somewhere as his job in service is no basis for a household or a lasting income; Hobs would even help Ned settle down as a tanner or a shoemaker. Nell is apparently interested as she casts Ned "sheep's eyes" and thinks he is "a pearl in my eye" (*1EIV*, 14.52-73). So, not only is Edward interested in beautiful women, but he himself is also quite attractive.

As the guests neither eat nor talk, Hobs asks for news from the court. He learns that Henry VI has died and comments that these are "light news, and merry, for your master King Edward" (*1EIV*, 14.76-80). Edward, inquisitive about the *vox populi*, wonders

[1341] This issue also recurs in *2HIV*, *HV*, and *3HVI*.

what the commons will think about these news; Hobs does not think they will take it ill, as death affects all humans. While the old king will simply be replaced with a new one, he admonishes that "seldom comes the better, that's all we say." Even Sellinger is impressed by Hobs' insight (*1EIV*, 14.81-87). Hobs doubts that his guests will know him if he came to court, but Edward affirmatively drinks to his "wife that may be" and denies the charge (*1EIV*, 14.88-94). What may be a simple flirtation for Edward is a rather cruel game with the expectations of both Nell and the tanner. Apparently, Edward's lust is insatiable; he has just married a woman against all political odds to satisfy his lust for her and will fall for Jane Shore just two scenes later—Edward takes what he can get.

When the guests muse that Nell is an only child, Hobs admits that he has a son who spends all his money on fashion but does not want to work, so his father fears he may end up at the gallows. Edward does not receive Hobs' remark well that filthy breeches would save much money if they were a fashion—he just wants to hear the tanner's song (*1EIV*, 14.96-106). Hobs and two of his servants recite a pleasing patriotic song that makes Sellinger remark that he wished the king could have heard that. Hobs then has the food taken away so that the guests can retire to a bed made in the best affordable fashion, but the guests refuse Hobs' hospitality and claim that they have to go. They thank their host and bid him to come to court to seek them out, but Hobs still does not believe that Ned and Tom will receive or recognise him at court. They affirm their offer and promise to welcome him; before they leave, the tanner wants them to "[c]ommend me to the King, and tell him I would have been glad to have seen his worship here." Without promising to convey the tanner's message to the king, they leave (*1EIV*, 14.109-139).

Edward's conduct in this scene is irresponsible; just as he later will leave the mayor's banquet without accepting his hospitality, he refuses what Hobs prepared with much care. Besides, he raises the hopes of both the tanner and Nell to marry her, taking the chance to kiss and admire her. But Edward not only abuses the goodwill of his subjects for his own amusement but uses a disguise to collect intelligence about the political tendencies in his realm. He asks the tanner and his neighbours about their opinions on the king, a practice that will later encompass the whole kingdom, drawing a parallel to Elizabeth's spymaster Walsingham who had also cast a net of spies over the kingdom until his death in 1590.[1342] His legacy was probably still remembered by 1599 when the play was performed. Sellinger and Howard explicitly wear green, and as the king appears in disguise, he possibly wears green as well, drawing a connection to the green-clad outlaw Robin Hood. The clothing abolishes status and difference, and the king can roam freely among his subjects, enabling him to collect intelligence from his citizens unsuspectedly, the means of an oppressive state apparatus.[1343] Besides, the king's lack of self-restraint and his inclination to follow his moods and whims further disqualify him as an ideal ruler.[1344] So far, the characterisation of King Edward was none

[1342] Rowland 2005: 32. See also Smith 1986.
[1343] Rowland 2005: 32-33.
[1344] See Rowland 2005: 33, 50.

too pleasing: a king who cares neither for his rank or marital alliance, who leaves his subjects fend for themselves in times of need, who likes feasting and is inclined to whore.

When King Edward needs money for his French campaign, he asks his subjects for funds: but instead of instituting a tax, the king asks for "benevolences"—a "voluntary" donation from his subjects. Two justices collect the money in Hobs' village where the tanner "persuades" his unwilling or unable neighbours to give money (*1EIV*, 18.1-27, 32-82). Because the villagers feel pressured by Hobs, they remind him of his son in jail, who will probably die at the gallows. While the tanner still has hope for his son, he nevertheless weeps (*1EIV*, 18.83-89). The officials—among them Howard—equal the amount a person gives to their love towards the king; the forced loyalty implies that the "benevolences" are not voluntarily given but rather extracted from the population (*1EIV*, 18.90-99).[1345] When it is the tanner's turn, he gives so willingly and liberally that Howard wants to inform the king about his generosity; Hobs then asks how the king, Ned, and Tom are and remembers that Ned promised him to effect a suit with the king, so he asks Howard whether he could get a pardon from the king for his son. Howard invites Hobs to the court and promises that Ned can achieve the pardon and even more (*1EIV*, 18.100-125). Hobs is overjoyed and plans to come to court as soon as possible, even promising Howard two hens for his pains (*1EIV*, 18.126-128). Sellinger and Howard inform the king of the tanner's generosity and that he has come to London to seek a royal pardon for his son. Edward is already looking forward to some "little sport" at the entrance of the Lord Mayor, whom he thanks for the financial support of the Londoners (*1EIV*, 21.1-39).

When the tanner arrives at court, Edward interrupts his war preparations for his reception but disguises himself again, so that he is not recognisable as the king (*1EIV*, 23.1-114). To have a bit of fun with a poor commoner, the monarch delays state matters—a rather cruel form of entertainment. Edward's kingship is just as fluid and changeable as his self that he constructs by putting his regalia on and off at will. When Hobs enters, he is overjoyed to see his friends Ned and Tom. Edward asks what made him come to London, and the tanner tells him about his worries about his incarcerated son. When Edward promises to put in a word for the tanner's suit, the overjoyed Hobs offers him a handkerchief from his daughter Nell (*1EIV*, 23.15-37). Edward promises to wear it for her sake, even in good presence. Hobs wonders if the Lord Mayor was the king because he wears a long beard and a red petticoat—signs that denote kingship in the plays the tanner had seen at Tamworth (*1EIV*, 23.38-50). For Hobs, costume denotes identity and is an expression of a person's status that he had learned in a theatrical setting. As role-playing and status correlate for him, this incident explicitly exhibits the performativity of kingship at court, so Hobs is at a loss to identify the king correctly

[1345] The handling of the term "benevolences" in this scene would be understood by the contemporary audience as an allusion to not-quite-voluntary payments the government extracted from citizens during the years with bad harvests, especially in 1595-1597; in 1599, when the play was produced, the Irish campaign led by the Earl of Essex led to a further financial strain on public finances. Surveillance and the use of coercion are disguised in the play, but their presence under the reigning king is always obvious (Rowland 2005: 39; see also Braddick 1996: 84-87).

because Edward does not wear his royal insignia.[1346] Edward's comportment and majesty apparently do not seem very royal when stripped of the signs of kingship. Edward sets Hobs right about the man with the beard and explains that he will meet the king before he goes to get the pardon for his son (*1EIV*, 23.51-54). The king orders the Lord Mayor to welcome Hobs and invite him to dinner—but Hobs is too upset and wants to get the pardon for his son before he can eat again (*1EIV*, 23.59-69). Before Hobs is about to get the pardon, the Master of St. Katherine's spoils Edward's charade when he addresses "Ned" with "my sovereign"—the tanner is so flabbergasted that he swoons; when he recovers again, he feels so ashamed that he only wants to die and accuses his king—who had put on his regalia again—of the way he had dealt with him. He fears to be hanged because he offended his sovereign with too much familiarity (*1EIV*, 23.70-92). Edward, however, pardons both the tanner and his son and rewards Hobs with forty pounds; Hobs cannot believe his ears, but Edward assures him "on our royal word" (*1EIV*, 23.93-104). This is the only incident when his royal word is valid; Edward had already promised Matthew Shore a reward that turned out to be coercing Shore's wife into adultery, and later on, Edward will even break his word to the French king about the execution of the prisoners (*2EIV*, 10.157-171, see chapter 3.4.4).

After the tanner is provided for, the Master of St. Katherine's personally delivers the benevolences of his parish, accompanied by the widow Mrs. Norton (*1EIV*, 23.105-121). Edward begins a playful banter with the widow during which he kisses her. The woman, revived by the attention of an attractive young male, offers Edward forty angels for a further kiss, and Edward accepts (*1EIV*, 23.122-141). The king asks the widowed Hobs if he would like to marry Mrs. Norton but he declines as her kisses are too expensive for him; Edward then thanks the citizens and provides for the tanner's remuneration to continue his war preparations (*1EIV*, 23.142-155). This scene shows how the king exploits his subjects both sexually and economically; he plays with Hobs for his entertainment (who consequentially fears for his life), and flirts with any female he can get hold of.[1347] The play continuously comments on the depravity of the king, just as many criticised the government of Elizabeth in the 1590s. So, it is interesting to note that this play, which is rather critical towards the monarchy, was licensed just months after the implementation of the Bishops' Ban in 1599.[1348] The style of rule depicted in *Edward IV* is both comic entertainment and a blatant abuse of power; the king abuses his authority to force an innocent woman into misery, collects information in disguise, and uses a subject's naivety for his entertainment. The use of disguises both covers and reveals Edward's unstable and unroyal character; he meets both Hobs and Jane, the two subjects he is most familiar with, in disguise, and it is he who visits them, not the other way round. The king forces himself on his subjects, just as he forced his way onto the throne through the incarceration of Henry VI. He gives his royal word only to repeatedly break it, so on top of being an irresponsible lecher, he is not reliable. That he at least rewards Hobs for the fun he had with him by granting his suit is more an act of

[1346] Rowland 2005: 49-50.
[1347] See also Rowland 2005: 50. The king dallies with Nell and Mrs. Norton, and he marries Elizabeth Grey to satisfy his lust. Forcing Jane into concubinage, however, is a different case: See chapter 3.4.4.
[1348] Rowland 2005: 18-19, 14-15.

justice than of mercy. However, even though he does not prove to be a good king, the king succeeding him is even worse, he has military successes in France, and enjoys the unbroken loyalty of his subjects. Apparently, the circle of divine reward and punishment does not work anymore on a political plane.

3.5.4 "But What Are Kings, When Regiment Is Gone?"—The Rule of Edward II

The personal obsessions and lusts of the ruler have a strong impact on public matters and the state in *Edward II*, and eventually lead to a revolt by the barons. The play discloses how the public and the private spheres intertwine in the life of a king, leaving the individual who seeks only personal happiness and peace shattered to pieces. Like a tragedy in the classical sense, it accompanies the tragic hero on his fall from grace. In his strife for personal happiness, Edward evades his duties and fights with words instead of actions, ineffectively countering the challenges he faces—a tendency that becomes stronger in the second part of the play and culminates in the fifth act, when his situation cannot be remedied any more. The beginning of the play exposes the conflict that pervades the whole story: Edward's passion for Gaveston that evokes the fierce opposition of the barons. While his homoerotic relationship and the barons' revolt are already treated above in chapter 3.1.3. and chapter 3.5.3, Edward's rule shall be focussed on here. When the king asks his barons like a schoolboy to "grant" Gaveston's return from exile (*EII*, 1.1.77), he faces open defiance. Edward tries to put Mortimer junior, his main antagonist, in his place, threatening him and the others should they want to hinder him have Gaveston (*EII*, 1.1.91-97). However, he uses only words without letting deeds follow. Kent's reaction to Lancaster's question as to why the king opposes his barons so strongly is interesting in regard to his image of a king—especially considering Edward's apparent deficiencies:

> Barons and earls, your pride hath made me mute.
> But now I'll speak, and to the proof I hope:
> I do remember in my father's days,
> Lord Percy of the North, being highly moved,
> Braved Mowbery in presence of the King.
> For which, had not his highness loved him well,
> He should have lost his head, but with his look
> The undaunted spirit of Percy was appeased,
> And Mowbery and he were reconciled.
> Yet dare you brave the King unto his face?
> Brother, revenge it; and let these their heads
> Preach upon poles for trespass of their tongues.
> (*EII*, 1.1.107-118)

Recovering from his speechlessness, Kent invokes his father's ability to appease opposing factions merely with his royal look; while his father's majesty was so present in his eyes that he could restrain the violent energy of his nobles with a glance, Edward cannot even achieve this with his words, so Kent urges his brother to revenge the barons' offense. While he himself has stayed mute, it is the king's brother who tries to maintain order and restrain the nobles' defiance. Warwick's ironic reply "O, our heads!" is countered by Edward's desperate "Ay, yours; and therefore I would wish you grant" (*EII*, 1.1.119-120)—he still wishes that the peers would accept Gaveston back after the conflict already became manifest. Claiming that he will have his "will" (*EII*,

1.1.178), Edward does nothing more than repeat his desire; as a king, he could punish the barons for trespassing and have his will—but Edward stays inexplicably inactive and inarticulate. Only when all the nobles are gone does Edward express his anger: "Am I a king and must be overruled?" (*EII*, 1.1.135). The question itself already sounds like a defeat, but now he is willing to fight for the return of his friend and orders his brother to "display my ensigns in the field" (*EII*, 1.1.136). At that moment, Gaveston steps forward, and the two friends are reunited. As Gaveston has returned, the immediate need for military action is gone, but it will not take long until Edward has to reassert himself against the barons again.

Edward asserts his will after Gaveston's return in an act of tyranny against the Bishop of Coventry; to punish his involvement in his friend's banishment, he strips him of his office, attacks him, and hands him over to Gaveston to decide on the revenge for his exile. The bishop ends up in the Tower (*EII*, 1.1.175-206), a fact that enrages the nobles and gives them a new cause to oppose their king. It is striking how Edward's behaviour changes with Gaveston's presence; he feels invincible enough to attack a single man who cannot defend himself, and treats him brutally, a deed completely against the ideal of self-restraint and mercy of a king, and a sign that he is not fit for rule. Just a few moments before, he had not dared to oppose the barons' party on his own when they challenged his will. Unable to maintain stable relationships with the people surrounding him (except Gaveston, of course), Edward does not manage his marriage well, either; now that he has his minion, he completely neglects his wife Isabella who desperately approaches the barons with her problems:

> For now my lord the King regards me not,
> But dotes upon the love of Gaveston.
> He claps his cheeks and hangs about his neck,
> Smiles in his face and whispers in his ears;
> And when I come he frowns, as who should say,
> 'Go whither thou wilt, seeing I have Gaveston.'
> (*EII*, 1.2.49-54)

United in their wish to get rid of Gaveston, the barons and Isabella approach each other; and while Isabella does not want to support an open rebellion against her husband (*EII*, 1.2.64-67, 80-81), she is not averse to a new move against Gaveston. Eventually, the barons decide to have him banished again; when they approach the king with their resolution, he literally replaced Isabella with Gaveston by seating him at his side (see stage directions *EII*, 1.4). As the conflict heats up, the nobles even dare to draw their weapons in the king's presence (stage directions, *EII*, 1.4.21)—it is they who take action and who prove stronger in this battle of wills; eventually, they force Edward to acquiesce to Gaveston's banishment. Edward is desperate:

> Nay, then lay violent hands against your king.
> Here, Mortimer, sit thou in Edward's throne;
> Warwick and Lancaster, wear you my crown.
> Was ever king thus overruled as I?
> (*EII*, 1.4.35-38)

This little passage shows well how Edward evaluates the situation—he perceives the opposition of the barons as a clear attack on his royalty, denying him the right to

execute his rule. By ironically offering his throne and the crown, he forgets that it is not only the royal insignia that make a king, as Lancaster's pointing answer to the charge shows: "Learn to rule us better and the realm" (*EII*, 1.4.39). Lancaster admonishes his king to both actively *rule* the realm and his nobility—he should become active and considerate, taking the rule into his own hands, something he has not done so far. Instead of maintaining the social order that was distorted by the social elevation of Gaveston, Edward just wanted to force his will by advancing his friend. As the barons cannot "brook this upstart pride" of the outsider (*EII*, 1.4.41), they try to do the king's job and reinstall the order he had rendered into chaos. Edward is speechless and lacks effective strategies to secure his position, immobilised by these attacks (*EII*, 1.4.39-42). Unable to control them, his feelings get the better of him; it seems that Edward understands that he cannot counter the barons as he is unable to act on his own. In his paralysis, he wants to give up his political responsibility, an offer of utter surrender:

> It boots me not to threat; I must speak fair,
> The legate of the Pope will be obeyed.
> (*To Canterbury*) My lord, you shall be Chancellor of the realm;
> Thou Lancaster, High Admiral of our fleet.
> Young Mortimer and his uncle shall be earls,
> And you, Lord Warwick, President of the North,
> (*To Pembroke*) And thou of Wales. If this content you not,
> Make several kingdoms of this monarchy,
> And share it equally amongst you all,
> So I have some nook or corner left
> To frolic with my dearest Gaveston.
> (*EII*, 1.4.63-73)

Edward senses that the barons strive for political power, so he offers the leading peers highly influential posts. But just after that, he makes the mistake of giving away his agenda: he wants to appease them by power, and if they are not content with what they get, he is willing to get rid of his realm only to have his private peace with Gaveston. But all the barons want is Gaveston's banishment; they are not satisfied with the power offered, but want to have their will implemented just as the king (*EII*, 1.4.74-84). Eventually, the barons make Edward acquiesce to the banishment of his friend (*EII*, 1.4.81-86). It is hardly understandable how a sovereign king can be forced to comply with the will of his peers; he complains about the "rude and savage-minded men" (*EII*, 1.4.78) that his barons are. When he is alone, Edward constructs Gaveston's banishment as a popish plot that he had to submit to:

> How fast they run to banish him I love;
> They would not stir, were it to do me good.
> Why should a king be subject to a priest?
> Proud Rome, thou hatchest such imperial grooms,
> For these thy superstitious taper-lights,
> Wherewith thy antichristian churches blaze,
> I'll fire thy crazèd buildings and enforce
> The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground,
> With slaughtered priests make Tiber's channel swell,
> And banks raised higher with their sepulchres.
> As for the peers that back the clergy thus,
> If I be king, not one of them shall live.
> (*EII*, 1.4.94-105)

Again, Edward vents his anger only after the barons have left; for him, the plot to banish Gaveston was motivated by the Archbishop of Canterbury who acted as an agent of the Roman Catholic Church. Instead of questioning their political motives, Edward attacks the Catholic Church in unrealistic, Tamburlaine-like dimensions; but despite his bombastic rhetoric, Edward will not strike back yet. Isabella's state has not improved since Gaveston's banishment; rather, she is willing to have his exile repealed as she has been banished from her husband's presence until Gaveston is returned (*EII*, 1.4.187-197, 200-203). Edward indirectly blames her for his friend's absence; treating her that way, Isabella begins to conspire with Mortimer to bring back Gaveston—and thus the two of them approach each other (*EII*, 1.4.198-229). They plan on revoking the banishment and allowing Gaveston back to topple him in England, where he has no friends (*EII*, 1.4.242-262, 264-270).

Revoking Gaveston's exile sets the scene for reconciliation between Edward and his nobles, initiated by Isabella (*EII*, 1.4.337-340). Relieved that he will have his friend back, the king rewards his peers with high posts (and his wife with a "second marriage," *EII*, 1.4.335-336) to show his gratitude, trying to bind them to his cause (*EII*, 1.4.341-366). Isabella calls Edward "rich and strong" now that the organic rule of the king in the midst of his nobility is re-established in England. But instead of celebrating the reconciliation with his nobles, Edward is eager to prepare his friend's return with celebrations and Gaveston's marriage to Margaret de Clare, Edward's niece. Warwick allows his king to "command us" when Edward bids the nobles to support the festivities—a new turn from the barons to feign compliance (*EII*, 1.4.369-386). When Gaveston is back, the reconciliation proves to be a sham (see chapter 3.1.3). After the conflict between the opposed parties has flared up again, Mortimer junior and Lancaster confront the king with his political failures. They enumerate the duties Edward neglected because of his fancy for Gaveston:

> The idle triumphs, masques, lascivious shows,
> And prodigal gifts bestowed on Gaveston
> Have drawn thy treasure dry and made thee weak;
> The murmuring commons overstretchèd hath.
> *Lancaster:* Look for rebellion, look to be deposed:
> Thy garrisons are beaten out of France,
> And, lame and poor, lie groaning at the gates;
> The wild O'Neill, with swarms of Irish kerns,
> Lives uncontrolled within the English pale;
> Unto the walls of York the Scots made road
> And, unresisted, drave away rich spoils.
> *Mortimer:* The haughty Dane commands the narrow seas,
> While in the harbour ride thy ships unrigged.
> *Lancaster:* What foreign prince sends you ambassadors?
> *Mortimer:* Who loves thee but a sort of flatterers?
> *Lancaster*: Thy gentle Queen, sole sister to Valois,
> Complains that thou hast left her all forlorn.
> *Mortimer:* Thy court is naked, being bereft of those
> That makes a king seem glorious to the world –
> I mean the peers whom thou shouldst dearly love.
> Libels are cast again [*sic*] thee in the street,
> Ballads and rhymes made of thy overthrow.
> *Lancaster*: The northern borderers, seeing their houses burnt,
> Their wives and children slain, run up and down

Cursing the name of thee and Gaveston.
Mortimer: When wert thou in the field with banner spread?
But once! And then thy soldiers marched like players,
With garish robes, not armour; and thyself,
Bedaubed with gold, rode laughing at the rest,
Nodding and shaking of thy spangled crest
Where women's favours hung like labels down.
(*EII*, 2.2.154-184)

Edward failed on all fronts: He emptied the treasury through unnecessary spending, is unable to fight his enemies successfully (indeed, he had called the French invasion into English territory "a trifle," *EII*, 2.2.10), cannot protect his own subjects, failed at his marriage, does not care about sea commerce, is politically isolated, and has proven a fop in battle. As they suppose Gaveston behind all this, they hope to bring Edward to his senses by his friend's removal. The list of grievances shows—if true—that Edward has both abused his power and neglected his duties. The kingdom is just as corrupted by Gaveston as the king is; and in confronting the king with the state of things, the barons point their fingers at his inability to reign. Only when the two are gone, Edward reacts; he does not refer to the charges he was presented with but is frustrated that he cannot simply live a private life with Gaveston (a wish he had expressed various times earlier) and is consequentially enraged that he cannot escape his situation. Reminded of his duties, he reacts on a personal level:

My swelling heart for very anger breaks!
How oft have I been baited by these peers
And dare not be revenged, for their power is great?
Yet, shall the crowing of these cockerels
Affright a lion? Edward, unfold thy paws
And let their lives' blood slake thy fury's hunger.
If I be cruel and grow tyrannous,
Now let them thank themselves and rue too late.
(*EII*, 2.2.197-204)

The barons are a nuisance to the king, just like his political duties; even though he feels abused ("baited," *EII*, 2.2.198), he does not dare to strike back as the peers are powerful—but now he reassures himself that he, as a royal lion, cannot be harmed by the mere "cockerels" (*EII*, 2.2.200) but wants to assuage his rage with their blood, even willing to become "cruel" and "tyrannous" (*EII*, 2.2.203), adjectives that do not go well with good rule and responsible government. Besides, he blames the barons for the consequences of Edward's rage; he is afraid of the peers, feels bullied, and does not have a lot of self-esteem. Rather, he has to talk himself into action against them—action that he will not take until he gets to know about Gaveston's murder in 3.1. A lion, in Edward's mind, is brutal and cruel, qualities that he feels he needs to develop against the barons. Taking their grievances into account or trying to amend his failures does not come to his mind—rather, it is a fact to Edward that those who do not approve of Gaveston and Edward's style of reign are against them, while the peers seem still to be motivated by real political issues.

His brother Kent has a more realistic view on things and asks Edward to banish Gaveston as the nobles now threaten war—a disaster for the kingdom (*EII*, 2.2.205-208). Edward is astonished by his brother's criticism and asks whether he is an enemy

of Gaveston; Kent affirms this and is consequently thrown out by his brother (*EII*, 2.2.209-216). Unable to face criticism or manage his relationships, Edward isolates himself—while commenting on *Gaveston's* isolation. He just wants to live with his minion at Tynemouth and does not care about the peers' threat of civil war (*EII*, 2.2.217-220). When Gaveston, Isabella, and Margaret de Clare enter with their train, Edward cannot hide his disdain for his queen whom he suspects behind the second banishment of Gaveston. He accuses her of backing up the barons' revolt and favouring Mortimer. In an aside, Gaveston counsels Edward to speak kindly to Isabella; so Edward excuses his attack, and the queen accepts (*EII*, 2.2.221-228). Gaveston's manipulative character and influence on the king have become apparent; when Edward elaborates on his troubles with Mortimer's threats of civil war, Gaveston quickly suggests that Edward could imprison his opponent in the Tower, but Edward is reluctant to implement this: "I dare not, for the people love him well" (2.2.229-232). Gaveston then wants to have Mortimer murdered: "we'll have him privily made away" (*EII*, 2.2.233), but Edward does not dare to take action against Mortimer and Lancaster, even though he wishes for their deaths (*EII*, 2.2.33-236). The king thus evades Gaveston's influence, for he does not take action against his rebel barons; somehow, he seems to be stuck between fear and unwillingness, a situation that paralyses him. He dares to attack the barons only verbally, and the use of language intensifies in the course of the play, culminating in the fifth act.

When the rebels attack Tynemouth where Edward has withdrawn with Gaveston, the king worries only about his friend's well-being (*EII*, 2.4.1-3). He plans to flee with Spencer by land while Gaveston goes by ship to Scarborough to distract and confuse the attacking forces. Gaveston assures Edward that the rebels will never touch their king as they only come for him, but Edward does not trust them (*EII*, 2.4.4-9). Rather than facing the attack and fighting back, the king steals away in a very unmanly escape. Edward just wants to make sure that his friend is well while he forgets about his wife, whom he already charges to be an adulterer; eventually, his bad treatment of Isabella will drive her into Mortimer's arms, but his suspicions are striking. Even Gaveston's confidence that he is the only target of the rebels fails to reassure him. The king sees threats everywhere and rather resembles a hunted deer who tries to confound its hunters than a lion who faces his attackers. For now, he is safe—but his friend Gaveston will be hunted down and murdered, Edward's worst-case scenario. Edward still hopes to see his Gaveston again when he talks with Spencer junior about the conflict with the barons (*EII*, 3.1.1-31). Spencer junior tries to evoke Edward's courage and honour by recounting his pedigree:

> Were I King Edward, England's sovereign,
> Son to the lovely Eleanor of Spain,
> Great Edward Longshanks' issue, would I bear
> These braves, this rage, and suffer uncontrolled
> These barons thus to beard me in my land,
> In mine own realm? My lord, pardon my speech.
> Did you retain your father's magnanimity,
> Did you regard the honour of your name,
> You would not suffer thus your majesty
> Be counterbuffed of your nobility.
> Strike off their heads, and let them preach on poles;

> No doubt such lessons they will teach the rest,
> As by their preachments they will profit much
> And learn obedience to their lawful king.
> (*EII*, 3.1.10-23)

Edward constantly needs assurance from outsiders. Spencer tries to instil Edward with courage by invoking the worth and honour of the royal family; action can forge a link to Edward's father and the honour of his name that he should assert against the rebels. His majesty has to claim obedience with harsh measures; Edward admits that he has been too lenient with his nobles, but he is resolved to strike back if they do not send him Gaveston (*EII*, 3.1.24-27). Spencer applauds Edward's meek speech of intended measures against his barons as "haughty resolve" (*EII*, 3.1.28); he serves as an outward influence that appeals to Edward's kingly honour. Thus, Spencer becomes an advisor and favourite of the king, and a new intimacy between them emerges, drawing the two of them together. When Spencer senior enters and offers Edward unhoped-for support, Edward is so moved that he immediately creates him Earl of Wiltshire and lavishes financial resources on him to outbid the barons in the selling of land (*EII*, 3.1.32-57). It is apparently a character trait of Edward's to immediately shower titles of gratification on his supporters, thus destabilising the established order of his realm for which the barons fight. Just when Edward is invigorated in his resolve to take action, Isabella enters with the young Prince Edward and a messenger from France. Due to Edward's neglect in paying homage, her brother, the French king, had seized Normandy—a political crisis (*EII*, 3.1.61-73). Edward does not see the gravity of the situation and sends his wife and son off to sort out the situation, not taking any responsibility or personal initiative. All of his resolve is directed against the barons, motivated by his love and care for Gaveston. Rather, his son, whom he interestingly calls "your little son" (*EII*, 3.1.70), meaning Isabella's, shall fulfil his duty with "majesty" (*EII*, 3.1.73) and bear himself "bravely" (*EII*, 3.1.72). The boy apparently sees the situation clearer than his father: "Commit not to my youth things of more weight / Than fits a prince so young as I to bear," but assures his father that the charge is safe with him (*EII*, 3.1.74-78). Edward sends his wife and son off to France while he engages in civil war at home. Isabella calls the upheaval in England "unnatural wars, where subjects brave their king" (*EII*, 3.1.86)—the natural state of things would be obedience to one's sovereign, of course. Thus, she positions herself with her husband's party and takes the responsibility to resolve the problems with France, a task that the English king has refused. Thus, she acts as a deputy to her husband—a role that will change while she is away.

Edward does not take political responsibility but rather chooses not to act at all. But his inactivity does not stop the development of things; Arundel enters and delivers the news of Gaveston's death, recounting the whole story of the barons' unwillingness to leave Gaveston to the king and Warwick's final ambush who then beheaded his victim (*EII*, 3.1.89-120). Spencer junior immediately evaluates the facts: "A bloody part, flatly against law of arms" (*EII*, 3.1.121). Edward, in contrast, is immobilised by his grief: "O, shall I speak, or shall I sigh and die?" (*EII*, 3.1.122). This single line is the beginning of his defeat. His earlier "haughty resolve" is gone and he is reduced to a speechless creature unable to act. Spencer urges him on to fight against the barons in the

field (*EII*, 3.1.123-127), and now that his favourite is gone, Edward is willing to channel his rage into action:

> By earth, the common mother of us all,
> By heaven and all the moving orbs thereof,
> By this right hand and by my father's sword,
> And all the honours 'longing to my crown,
> I will have heads and lives for him as many
> As I have manors, castles, towns, and towers.
> Treacherous Warwick! Traiterous Mortimer!
> If I be England's king, in lakes of gore
> Your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail,
> That you may drink your fill and quaff in blood,
> And stain my royal standard in the same,
> That so my bloody colours may suggest
> Remembrance of revenge immortally
> On your accursed traitorous progeny –
> You villains that have slain my Gaveston.
> And in this place of honour and of trust,
> Spencer, sweet Spencer, I adopt thee here;
> And merely of our love we do create thee
> Earl of Gloucester and Lord Chamberlain,
> Despite of times, despite of enemies.
> (*EII*, 3.1.128-147)

Edward rages intensively against the barons, swearing he wants just as many lives as he has towns and castles—quantifying his bloodthirstiness and qualifying only those of Warwick and Mortimer as the lives he wants to take. Not only does he want to defile their "headless trunks" but also plans to stain his own royal standard with their blood to revenge Gaveston's death on their progeny forever. Talking about his intended revenge, he showers Spencer with titles and adopts him as a substitute for Gaveston in defiance of the barons, "despite of times, despite of enemies." Gaveston's death eventually sparks off Edward's actual involvement against the barons; in a battle, he eventually defeats them and has Lancaster and Warwick executed—but still he does not touch Mortimer, the head of the rebel party (see also 3.2, chapter 3.1.3). Mortimer is incarcerated in the Tower—an incomprehensibly mild sentence (*EII*, 3.2.37-70). For Kent, Edward is an "unnatural king" for killing his nobility (*EII*, 4.1.8), indulging in "looseness" (*EII*, 4.1.7)—a term that can either denote incompetence or sexual misconduct.[1349] Edward's faction meanwhile triumphs "uncontrolled" (*EII*, 4.3.3); the unlimited excess of Edward's is paralleled by the executions going on throughout the country. The editors of the text inserted a list of all the people executed as followers of Mortimer from *Holinshed's Chronicles* (*EII*, 4.3.1-11); Edward is apparently glad that the executed are no longer dangerous; the only remaining problem is the escaped Mortimer whom Edward thinks still in England; for him, it is impossible that anyone can leave the country against the king's orders (*EII*, 4.3.12-23). At the moment when Edward feels that he has conquered all his enemies, letters from France arrive that inform him about Isabella's war preparations with Kent and Mortimer (*EII*, 4.3.24-40). Edward cannot believe that Mortimer had escaped and that his own brother Kent supports the rebels; he wants to meet them all in battle. He is inconsolable that his "little

[1349] See footnote referring to *EII*, 4.1.7 on p. 141 in the play.

boy" (*EII*, 4.3.51) was turned against his father; eventually, Edward goes to Bristol to prepare for war (*EII*, 4.3.41-55).

When Edward meets his opponents in battle, the king's party is about to be defeated; Spencer junior and Baldock flee to Ireland and bid Edward to flee as well, but the king is resolved to fight against Mortimer and his crew until he dies "in this bed of honour." As a king, he is not born to flee, Edward claims (*EII*, 4.5.1-7), a thought he did not have at Tynemouth. Baldock does not believe that this is the right time for such heroism and undercuts Edward's steadfastness (*EII*, 4.5.8-9). Edward's hesitancy to resolve the conflict with the barons finally backfires, leading to Edward's inexorable downfall. Fleeing from the victors, Edward, Spencer junior, and Baldock—disguised as monks—seek asylum in a monastery. The abbot knows of their identities, and assures them that they are safe within his premises. Edward hopes that the abbot is true to his word (*EII*, 4.7.1-8); he then delivers a speech about the cares of a king. This speech does not only mark Edward's shift from warrior to defeated, lamenting king, but shows how Edward himself evaluates his situation:

> O hadst thou ever been a king, thy heart,
> Pierced deeply with sense of my distress,
> Could not but take compassion of my state.
> Stately and proud, in riches and in train,
> Whilom I was powerful and full of pomp;
> But what is he, whom rule and empery
> Have not in life or death made miserable?
> Come Spencer, come Baldock, come sit down by me;
> Make trial now of that philosophy
> That in our famous nursery of arts
> Thou suck'st from Plato and from Aristotle.
> Father, this life contemplative is heaven –
> O that I might this life of quiet lead!
> (*EII*, 4.7.9-21)

Edward bemoans the loss of his former glory yet claims that kings inevitably wind up miserable, constructing himself as a care-ridden monarch who despite all his riches cannot be happy. This evaluation is somewhat misleading as Edward himself had tried to evade all political responsibility and only acted when his favourites were concerned—it seems that Edward cannot reflect properly on the situation he is in. Edward feels that "this life contemplative" is the quiet life that he had wished so long for instead of being burdened with the business of kingship. Bidding the scholar Baldock to share some classical philosophical wisdom, he now hopes that he can enjoy this "life of quiet" that seems so comforting to him now. The monks assure the king that no one else knows they are in the monastery, but Spencer has made a curious observation: "Not one alive" may know of them; but he a "gloomy fellow in the mead below" who gave them a long look—in times like these, such attention might be dangerous (*EII*, 4.7.22-32). The juxtaposition of "not one alive" with the mower recalls the image of Death as the Grim Reaper, a haunting spectre that is neither alive nor dead and adds a chilling note to the observation, foreshadowing disaster.

The refugees are afraid to be found by their enemies; when Mortimer's name is mentioned, Edward reacts hysterically, putting his head, "laden with mickle care" on the abbot's lap, and wishes that he will never get up again (*EII*, 4.7.33-43). Spencer senses

that this melancholy is not a good omen (*EII*, 4.7.44-45)—and just in that moment, Rhys ap Howell, the mower, and the Earl of Leicester enter. The mower had indeed betrayed the refugees, and Leicester arrests Spencer and Baldock for high treason in the name of the queen (*EII*, 4.7.46-60). Edward is devastated and accuses his destiny; being deprived of his friends is like death for him. To rescue them, he offers Leicester his own heart (*EII*, 4.7.61-67). While the queen's henchmen want to proceed speedily, Spencer requests to be granted a final farewell from his king, who, instead of commanding, is being commanded (*EII*, 4.7.68-73). While Spencer blames the heavens for their fortune, Edward simply accuses Mortimer and no metaphysical instance (*EII*, 4.7.74-75). Like a true Renaissance scholar, Baldock stoically takes leave from his king. When Edward anxiously asks what is to become of him, Leicester informs him he "must" to Kenilworth castle (*EII*, 4.7.76-81). Edward bitterly comments "'Must'! 'Tis somewhat hard when kings must go," *EII*, 4.7.82. Leicester urges him on as a litter waits for Edward and it is getting late (*EII*, 4.7.83-84). Edward experiences the farewell from his friends like death; he eloquently pours out his feelings:

> A litter hast thou? Lay me in a hearse,
> And to the gates of hell convey me hence;
> Let Pluto's bells ring out my fatal knell,
> And hags howl for my death at Charon's shore,
> For friends hath Edward none but these, and these,
> And these must die under a tyrant's sword.
> (*EII*, 4.7.86-91)

The king who had declared his intention to tyrannously fight his enemies now blames them for being tyrants. The repetition of "and these, / And these" emphasises the grief of the king who may be sobbing. In the second part of the play, Edward's rhetoric becomes more and more figurative and imaginative when he develops from the pompous king to warrior to the lamenting and fallen monarch; while he knows that he has to accept the separation from his friends, his pain is genuine (*EII*, 4.7.94-98). Heartbroken, the king exits with Leicester to Kenilworth where he cannot be consoled by Leicester's sympathetic words to imagine his prison as his court. Edward appreciates the kindness but thinks that kings' sorrows are not as easily abated than common men's (*EII*, 5.1.1-14). Edward tries to come to terms with his situation:

> And so it fares with me, whose dauntless mind
> The ambitious Mortimer would seek to curb,
> And that unnatural Queen, false Isabel,
> That thus hath pent and mewed me up in a prison.
> For such outrageous passions cloy my soul,
> As with the wings of rancour and disdain
> Full often am I soaring up to heaven
> To plain me to the gods against them both.
> But when I call to mind I am a king,
> Methinks I should revenge me of the wrongs
> That Mortimer and Isabel have done.
> But what are kings, when regiment is gone,
> But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?
> My nobles rule; I bear the name of king;
> I wear the crown, but am controlled by them –
> By Mortimer and my unconstant Queen
> Who spots my nuptial bed with infamy,
> Whilst I am lodged within this cave of care,

Where sorrow at my elbow still attends
To company my heart with sad laments,
That bleeds within me for this strange exchange.
(*EII*, 5.1.15-35)

Edward feels that he is sinned against without fault, but his self-image rather amounts to wishful thinking. Edward showed resolve against the rebels only once while he did not dare to take action against them for the most part of the play. To speak of a "dauntless mind," therefore, is mere fantasy—only if Edward's rhetoric is taken into account, one might allow for at least verbal dauntlessness. His actions never met the rhetoric of his kingship; otherwise, Mortimer would not have been able to rise to his present state. The accusations against Isabella are also rather unfair; it was Edward's own negligence that drew his wife to Mortimer, who then used her for his own gain. And it was initially Edward who had eyes only for Gaveston and perhaps even physically consummated his infatuation in sodomitical intercourse. Here, Edward exposes a double standard in the evaluation of his own and other people's deeds; but his claims to feel "outrageous passions" indicate that he lacks rationality at this moment. Edward understands that he is bereft of power, even though he still wears the signs denoting kingship; he cannot act anymore but rather has to obey his keepers. Thus, the regalia are devoid of meaning, and Edward is reduced to a mere shadow of his former self. His kingship is demystified and stripped of any metaphysical meaning—it is power that counts, not mere title. It is striking that Edward laments the loss of his regal power he had not used to vanquish the nobles earlier; now, all that is left to him is a life of lament in prison.

Edward fears that Mortimer will be crowned, but the Bishop of Winchester informs him that his son, the prince, will become king for the good of the realm. Edward understands that his son is only a pawn in Mortimer's play for power and fears for his safety. If Mortimer were crowned, however, Edward predicts that the cosmos would succumb to chaos (*EII*, 5.1.40-48). Leicester urges Edward to decide whether he will yield the crown or not, but Edward takes his time to expound how he feels about the issue; he cannot bear the thought of losing his kingdom for Mortimer's sake as he feels deposed "without cause." Rather, he perceives Mortimer as a mountain that "overwhelms my bliss" and feels that "my mind here murdered is." However, he accepts his destiny (*EII*, 5.1.49-56). At first, he offers both his crown and his life, only to request to stay king until night. He wants time to satisfy his gaze with his crown; then, he is prepared to give up both his life and his throne. Still, he wishes that night would never come. However, he still does not understand why his opponents want his crown—and his life (*EII*, 5.1.57-73). The fear of losing his life is exclusively Edward's as no one has ever explicitly said they would kill him. When he puts on the crown and sees that it has no effect, he becomes elegiac and desperate; the feeling of the crown on his head is his only comfort, so he begs Leicester to be allowed to wear it for a while (*EII*, 5.1.74-83). The parliamentary representative also urges Edward to decide on his abdication; then, the king begins to rage that he will never resign while he is alive (*EII*, 5.1.84-89). The bishop and the representative want to leave with this answer, but Leicester reminds Edward that his son would lose the right to the throne if he does not call them back. Edward is too moved to speak, so Leicester informs them that Edward is

willing to resign (*EII*, 5.1.90-94). This intervention likely saved Edward his own undoing and ever-changing indecision, but Edward has effectively no choice as he bears only the title of a king. He then wants to abdicate but retracts again; to the torture of the others, he offers to hand over his crown to the person who most wants him dead—Mortimer and Isabella—but, he then gives in and delivers the crown to the bishop. Edward imagines to be crowned in heaven and bemoans his situation (*EII*, 5.1.95-109), closing with the words

> Come death, and with thy fingers close my eyes,
> Or if I live, let me forget myself.
> (*EII*, 5.1.110-111)

He can either remain king in heaven when he dies, or has to forget his royal self should he survive. The bishop wants to calm him down, but Edward is "lunatic" because of his grief (*EII*, 5.1.114). Because of the extremity of the situation, his humoral balance is completely off-kilter; Edward is forced to renounce his royal self, a part of his essence, hence his mood-swings and the extreme changes in his behaviour. When he can think clearly again, Edward only worries about the safety of his son, Prince Edward (*EII*, 5.1.113-117). He hands over a handkerchief for the queen to move her pity; if it does not serve this end, they should return it and dip it in Edward's blood (*EII*, 5.1.117-120)—a reminiscence of the handkerchief dipped into Rutland's innocent blood in *3 Henry VI*. Edward prepares for death and bids the ones present to commend him to his son, who hopefully will rule better than his father. Still, Edward does not understand how he ended up in his position, "Unless it be with too much clemency" (*EII*, 5.1.119-123). Indeed, he had been too reluctant to act against the barons, but his reflections do not include any personal shortcomings; rather, Edward perceives himself as an innocent victim of ambitious climbers who spitefully want to harm him and is certain of his imminent and cruel death—a thought that he now welcomes (*EII*, 5.1.125-127). When Berkeley arrives with a letter, Edward is sure it is his death warrant, but Berkeley claims that one of "noble birth" would "think not a thought so villainous" (*EII*, 5.1.128-134). The letter shifts Edward's charge from Leicester to Berkeley, a decree from the "council of the Queen." When Edward learns that Mortimer signed the letter, Edward tears it up. He understands that his defiance is just a "poor revenge," an act of impotence—but nevertheless, it is a way to express Edward's wish that Mortimer's limbs should be torn like the document (*EII*, 5.1.135-143). When Berkeley urges Edward to follow him, he surrenders with the words that "every earth is fit for burial" (*EII*, 5.1.144-146). Edward has now turned stoic, accepting his new warden and coming death (*EII*, 5.1.147-158).

Edward's sufferings worsen under the custody of Mortimer's henchmen Maltravers and Gourney. Tortured by restless journeys, the exhausted king wonders why he has to endure all these strains—if his keepers want his life, they should just kill him and hand over his heart to Isabella and Mortimer, "the chiefest mark they level at" (*EII*, 5.3.1-12). While Gourney claims that Isabella wants to keep Edward safe and that his "passions" only increase his pain, Edward understands that his suffering just prolongs his misery (*EII*, 5.3.13-16). He enumerates the abuse he has to endure:

But can my air of life continue long
When all my senses are annoyed with stench?
Within a dungeon England's king is kept,
Where I am starved for want of sustenance.
My daily diet is heart-breaking sobs,
That almost rends the closet of my heart.
Thus lives old Edward, not relieved by any,
And so must die, though pitied by many.
O water, gentle friends, to cool my thirst
And clear my body from foul excrements.
(*EII*, 5.3.17-26)

Edward is kept in deplorable misery and has to endure hunger, thirst, and filth, torturing himself with his "heart-breaking sobs." Despite his abdication, he still claims to be "England's king." His wish for water is cruelly met by his keepers; they begin to shave him with sewage water, so that Edward will neither be recognised nor rescued. As he fears being murdered, Edward tries to resist them, but eventually he surrenders to the *status quo* and understands that there is no hope for mercy "at a tyrant's hand" (*EII*, 5.3.27-36). Throughout the fifth act, Edward develops a power of speech that is unparalleled in the previous acts and that grows as his political power diminishes. Language becomes the strength of a monarch who finds his essence, royalty, and human greatness when he is about to fall, waiting for his death. It seems that Edward now gets an idea about what led him to the situation he is in:

Immortal powers, that knows the painful cares
That waits upon my poor distressed soul,
O level all your looks upon these daring men,
That wrongs their liege and sovereign, England's king.
O Gaveston, it is for thee that I am wronged;
For me, both thou and both the Spencers died,
And for your sakes a thousand wrongs I'll take.
The Spencers' ghosts, wherever they remain,
Wish well to mine; then tush, for them I'll die.
(*EII*, 5.3.37-45)

Edward understands that his relationship to Gaveston and the Spencers caused both their deaths and his misery; he is willing to suffer for their sake and feels the closeness of the Spencers' ghosts that wish him well. Even though Edward first invokes Gaveston, who was the main cause of the barons' revolt, he finally wants to die for the Spencers' ghosts—at least that is what the word order indicates.

Edward's brother Kent has meanwhile repented his support for Mortimer's party and wants to free his brother, the legitimate king. When the train with the king wants to enter Kenilworth, Edmund of Kent requests to speak with his brother, but instead the guards seize him in a brawl and have him transported to court. Kent's answer is revealing: "Where is the court but here? Here is the King, / And I will visit him" (*EII*, 5.3.49-60). The court is where the king is—and as there is no legitimate or crowned king other than Edward, the court is at Kenilworth.[1350] Maltrevers, however, thinks that power is the designator of the court: "The court is where Lord Mortimer remains" (*EII*, 5.3.61). Kent can only bewail the state of things in England: "O, miserable is that

[1350] Kent resonates an important medieval concept here, see Esler 1966: xix.

commonweal, where lords / Keep courts and kings are locked in prison!" (*EII*, 5.3.63-64). The order in the realm is reversed, and chaos reigns. Kent understands now that he cannot help his brother any longer and is willing to die as a prisoner (*EII*, 5.3.65-67).

Edward's keepers are astonished that he survived all their disgusting treatments (*EII*, 5.5.1-12). Then, Lightborne, the murderer sent by Mortimer, enters and instructs the keepers to light a fire and prepare a spit that shall be red hot, a table, and a featherbed (*EII*, 5.5.13-35). When he enters Edward's dungeon and meets him, the king knows that he just met his murderer, but Lightborne insists that he brings him comfort and news (*EII*, 5.5.41-44). And indeed, Lightborne feigns compassion for Edward's state; the prisoner seems to open up to him and shares his misery of being kept in a stinking and humid vault where "the filth of all the castle falls," deprived of sleep, and fed only bread and water (*EII*, 5.5.45-69). When Lightborne offers Edward some rest, he feels uncomfortable and instinctively knows that Lightborne will murder him. While he fears him, Edward also values the company of a fellow human being whom he can share his misery with. He asks Lightborne only to warn him just before he strikes, asking why Lightborne had put up such a show (*EII*, 5.5.70-81). Edward tries to calm himself by accepting Lightborne's lies, trying to secure his life with his last jewel. His body, however, reveals his fear as he trembles; Edward grieves that he is a king bereft of a crown, so he wonders how he still can be alive, thoughts that Lightborne dismisses as the products of an exhausted brain (*EII*, 5.5.82-91). But these thoughts keep Edward awake (*EII*, 5.5.92-95)—now, after all the time he had dismissed any political responsibility, the worry about his royalty keeps him awake, resounding the *topos* of the sleepless king. His nerves are at a breaking point; he falls asleep and wakes up again because he fears to be killed. Edward feels that if he falls asleep, he will never get up again—and when he asks Lightborne again what he is there for, he admits that he came to kill him (*EII*, 5.5.96-106). Edward is too weak to put up any resistance and commends his soul to God; meanwhile, Maltrevers and Gourney fetch the table and the red hot spit; Edward just wants to die quickly or be spared. Lightborne instructs the others to "lie the table down and stamp on it; / But not too hard, lest that you bruise his body" (*EII*, 5.5.107-112, 111-112). Interestingly, modern directors and editors often construct the murder scene as an anal rape with the red-hot poker—recurring to Holinshed, not to Marlowe. Neither the 1594 nor the 1598 quartos demand the use of the spit in the stage directions – so the text only indicates that Edward is pressed to death with the table. Marlowe explicitly does *not* use the method of murdering Edward that would brand him with his sin, as Bredbeck suggested even though he remarks that the actual cause of the death is absent from the text[1351]—a wonderful Marlovian break that undermines the play more than Edward's death through the poker would; however, it would fill the gap of what to do with the spit. Maltrevers' fear that the cry of the victim could "raise the town" (*EII*, 5.5.113) is not necessarily caused by the spit's insertion; someone pressed to death would probably scream out in pain, so Edward's cry is understandable either way.

[1351] Bredbeck 1991: 76; Orgel 1996: 47-48.

That the king was deposed and murdered indicates the absolute corruption and chaos within a kingdom where an over-mighty subject is now effectively the ruler. But instead of being just a puppet for Mortimer and Isabella, the young prince re-establishes order and majesty; his first action is directed at the main target of the rebel party—Mortimer, the man his father had never dared touch. Even though it hurts him immensely, Prince Edward disregards his feelings and has Mortimer executed and his mother imprisoned (*EII*, 5.6.25-92). Now, crowned Edward III, he can control and channel his emotions unlike his father who became paralysed and speechless in the face of opposition. Thus, Edward III is both the antithesis and the continuity of Edward II's reign, both avenging his father's murder and discontinuing the weaknesses that led to his fall. Edward's own imprudent politics and his dependence on the barons caused his downfall; unable to face the barons' opposition, he tried to push through his own will in a non-conciliatory way. His inability to counter the peers, his lack of political insight, and the emotional dependence on his friends are characteristics of Edward's reign that made him fail as a king.

4 Conclusion

While the plays present a wide array of male characters who act within varying circumstances, the kings usually fail to meet Philip Sidney's masculinity ideal[1352] – or any normative conception of masculinity. However, the blueprint of masculinity is always present like a shadow, and either the kings try to fulfil this ideal or they openly defy it; there is no action independent of the masculine ideal. Late Tudor drama negotiated the possibilities and the dangers of being and becoming a man and also highlighted the struggle between the human under the crown but without reaching a final conclusion or even definition of what men are. While there was an ideal of chivalric masculinity, the model seemed to be out of fashion and not applicable to the necessities of the 1590s anymore—the failure of the Earl of Essex is a telling example in real life.

The play *Henry V* discusses the questions of rule and the responsibility of a king at length; after Henry's talk with the soldiers on the eve of the battle of Agincourt, the tension between the demands of king and man become tangible, a problem that makes many kings experience their office as a burden. Struggling with the responsibility for their subjects and commonwealth, the image of the care-ridden sleepless king is recurrent in the history plays. However, kingship is a brittle construct that depends on ceremonial show and the acceptance of obedience. Henry V's famous ceremony speech dismantles kingship as an outward show that isolates the king from his fellow humans and burdens him with extra responsibility that makes him a slave of his subjects who delegate all their cares onto the king. Henry experiences the essence of kingship as hollow, as the king does not have real power over his subjects' lives; masqueraded obedience—flattery—is part of the game. The text suggests that Henry would wish himself in a subject's place, enjoying a good night's sleep after a hard day's work, while the privileges he derives from kingship do not compensate for the responsibility he has to bear.

Richard II portrays the shift from medieval kingship to early modern rule, from divine right to power, from Richard II to Bolingbroke. Richard derives his legitimacy from divine sanction of his reign; when he falls, his successor has to find a new basis for kingship. While Richard's claim is strong and unquestioned, his imprudent politics and his unshakable belief that his kingship is protected by metaphysical means are ineffective. Richard strongly identifies with his kingship he is unable to uphold; when his identity is separated from the throne, he finds his strength in language. The play starts out in the medieval world of chivalry and honour where the king distances himself from his subjects. His attempt to mediate a dispute between his cousin Bolingbroke and Mowbray proves ineffective; the two men prefer to die rather than live with their honour compromised. Richard then orders an ordeal by battle to let divine justice intervene, resorting to established chivalric rituals to solve the problem. Even though

[1352] Smith 2000: 138.

Richard poses as omnipotent deputy of God, he is rather powerless. When he breaks off the duel, Richard disrupts the rites that establish and maintain bonds between men. Officially he does so because he does not want bloodshed, but when he decides on banishment with his council, he does not seem satisfied, either. Despite his former claim to be impartial, Richard acts arbitrarily when he reduces Bolingbroke's verdict—and this image of the perfect ruler begins to crumble. Further, Richard has been monitoring Bolingbroke and apparently feels threatened by his popularity with the common people. While Richard believes that he has to keep his distance to the people, he observes that the population likes Bolingbroke; the common band of Englishness binds him closer to his compatriots than kingship binds Richard to his subjects—an essential problem Richard will later stumble over. His next major mistake is Bolingbroke's disinheritance in his absence; to fund his Irish expedition, Richard seizes his cousin's possessions to achieve a short-term gain, severing the line of succession from father to son that his kingship rests on. By this act of arbitrariness, Richard renders his own reign questionable; he is not politically prudent enough to take York's admonitions to heart who predicts that the king will lose his subjects' allegiance if he treats them thus and breaks the line of succession.

The resistance against Richard's disgraceful move already begins to stir, but his popularity further declines when he burdens his subjects with taxes to cater for his luxurious lifestyle. When Bolingbroke is on his way back to England to claim his inheritance, malcontent noblemen defect to his cause to free the country from shame and tyranny; it is never explicit, but it seems that Bolingbroke's invasion aims at Richard's deposition from the start. The king's party under York cannot put up any resistance while the duke feels torn between both his nephews: owing his king's allegiance, he understands that Bolingbroke was fundamentally wronged but does not approve of the means. When he finally defects to the rebels as well, Richard has no support left to speak of. Bolingbroke's innate qualities as a leader show up in his slyness to never openly declare his aims while playing the role of the subservient subject. Step by step, he displays more and more political competence until he eventually sits as judge over Richard's followers and sentences them to death—a royal prerogative. That Bolingbroke charges Bushy and Green with sexual relations with the king is an allegation that not only hints at Richard's moral depravity but also at the effeminate and weak state of the kingdom. But even more so, Henry acts like a conqueror taking revenge on his old enemies and aiming at more than simply his inheritance. When Richard returns from Ireland, he believes that his divine legitimacy will be reason enough for Bolingbroke and his party to submit to him. He feels an intrinsic relation between the king and his kingdom that is as natural as the one between a mother and a child. But his trust in his divine right proves to be a liability when he lacks courage and determination. Even when he meets Bolingbroke at Flint Castle, he still believes that kingship cannot be taken away, but as Richard's initial lack of political prudence strikes back more and more violently, he gives up the fight before it began. Taking on the role of lamenting king, he experiences his self in the expression of grief, especially after he is deposed and separated from the crown. He knows that he debased both himself and his kingship by giving in to his cousin but understands, now

unable to fight back, that he cannot afford to be proud anymore. As his situation is desperate, Richard surrenders everything to his cousin and installs him as his heir.

But Bolingbroke's new order is a poor and distorted copy of the old one based on divine right and chivalry; it does not work anymore as its basis has been shattered. Bolingbroke senses that he will need a new theoretical basis for his imminent kingship, which has become arbitrary. Richard is forced to officially surrender his kingship to Bolingbroke—and Richard dismantles his royal self and stages his deposition with powerful words. Now, bereft of kingship, Richard's political insight becomes more and more acute; he understands that he fell due to his lack of political care and prudence but is intrinsically tied to the crown; he does not want to sever these bonds and is unwilling to give up the throne. With his royal self gone, he does not know what or who he is and lacks a proper identity; tortured by his own faults, he wants to find his new self in the reflection of a mirror. But the mirror does not show any change, so shattering the mirror not only hints at the brittleness of royalty, but also destroys the last bit of Richard's regal self that lies shattered on the floor like the shards. The outer does not reflect the inner anymore—the microcosm has lost its connection to the macrocosm, the old world order is irreparably gone. As a person without a social identity, Richard resorts to his grief as his last domain of sovereignty. Forced to separate from his wife, he has severed the last social bond that tied him to another person; like in the abdication scene, he confirms and undoes his marriage vow at once, releasing his wife with a kiss. Now, he is deported to Pomfret Castle—socially isolated, unpopular with the masses, and thrown back upon his shattered self.

Henry IV—crowned Bolingbroke—is not very happy on the throne; he feels isolated and forsaken, fearing that Richard might threaten his rule. While Bolingbroke struggles to establish himself as king, Richard redefines his self within the bounds of grief. The deposition marks a shift from divine right of kings to power politics—a change from medieval to early modern kingship that demands a different kind of active, determined masculinity. Richard failed in maintaining bonds between men, a deficit that eventually leads to his fall; Henry IV likewise struggles with this until his son Henry V can effectively bind men to his own cause. Deprived of all range of action, Richard faces his death at the hands of Exton, a courtier who wants to rid Henry of his fear of Richard. The new king, however, knows that the murder will further sully his already brittle reign with a mortal sin. Threatened by the Percy rebellion, Henry pursues a realpolitik approach and has the murderer Exton banished despite profiting from the deed. Nevertheless, he feels the need to atone for the deed and promises to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, an empty vow that will never be realised.

Edward IV's rule is the antithesis of ideal Renaissance kingship; instead of establishing law and order, he preys on his subjects' possessions, breaks divine law as his oaths, and uses women for his own pleasure, disregarding any social barriers like marriage. Instead of caring for the safety of the city of London, Edward feasts; his politically problematic marriage to a widowed subject shows that he does not care for decorum or social order—an imprudent decision not to himself but to his yet-unborn sons, who will die. Besides, he neglects his duties and molests a subject's wife in disguise; these deficiencies in both masculine as well as regal virtues are a telling

criticism of royal arbitrariness, even more so in the contrast to the endeavours of the citizens of London. Edward feels that he has to apologise for his absence during the rebel threat but effectively lies. When he rewards the aldermen with knighthood, he thinks that he did what he had to do but cannot come up with an alternative reward when Matthew Shore refuses this honour. Rather, he promises a reward that will never come to be; instead, Edward begins an affair with Matthew's wife Jane, evading his responsibility and destroying Matthew's marriage and life eventually. His royal word cannot be relied on, and the question of honour is apparently not important to Edward.

The meeting with the tanner Hobs is a good textual strategy to criticise Edward's reign; while the tanner does not care about politics or the king who reigns over him, Edward uses the unsuspecting subject to gather intelligence about public opinion of his reign. At the expense of Hobs' honesty, the king even entertains himself. However, Hobs feels that the "courtnoles" are not necessarily true—and that the courtiers cannot be trusted; intrinsically, he questions the truth of Edward himself and kingship in general. And indeed, the king is not true to royalty, but betrays its virtues by neglect and insincerity, appearing in disguise and thus renouncing his kingship. It seems, however, that Edward is most true to his shadowy self when he eclipses his kingship and appears in disguise. Shore comments on the king as a "counterfeit"—a telling criticism of Edward's against whom Matthew cannot take action. His kingship is a role that is filled with a void: a usurper who does not act kinglike and is indeed a counterfeit of a king. He abuses his power mainly to chase women and force his will on others or to feel entertained by his subjects' innocence. Even though Hobs characterises the king as a likeable and simple creature with wit and courage quite similar to his subjects, it is a criticism of Edward's kingly qualities that he absolutely lacks. While Hobs both criticises and affirms Edward as king, he is merely interested in his private life and his business. He is a self-sufficient, simple man, the embodiment of a true and honest Englishman—and so very contrary to King Edward who interprets Hobs' pragmatism as wisdom. That Edward is not fully trustworthy is exposed when Hobs expresses doubts whether he will know him when he might come to court; besides, Edward plays a cruel game with Nell's and her father's expectations by effectively wooing and kissing her. Thus, he follows his desires unrestrainedly, a feature that disqualifies him as a good ruler. When Edward hears that the tanner arrived at court, he postpones matters of state to have a "little sport." The tanner, however, misinterprets the identities of the people present as his knowledge of kingship is restricted to his theatrical experiences of outward appearance. This mistake is a text-inherent criticism of identity; and indeed, the Lord Mayor in his red petticoat acts more regally than the king in disguise. The performativity at court is perverted, and Hobs unknowingly discovers the arbitrariness of the "courtnoles." Confronted with the "real" king, Hobs swoons and fears for his life because of his conduct; but in this case, Edward pardons the tanner and rewards him with money, a promise he keeps. It is striking that the consequences of his deeds never fall back on him and that he gets away with his irresponsible style of rule.

The case of Edward II is different; here, the lack of political prudence and the king's attempt to achieve private happiness make him fall in the end. His strategies against the opposition of the barons are strikingly ineffective as he never touches Mortimer. Like

Edward IV, he evades his political duties to enjoy his private life and the company of his favourite, Gaveston. But instead of countering the attacks of the barons, he freezes into speechlessness and paralysis and retracts into the quasi-action of words when he is on his own again. This tendency grows stronger until language is the only thing left to Edward in the fifth act.

Like Richard II, Edward uses his grief to build his self up after being deprived of power; the only incident where Edward becomes active without announcing his intentions is the attack on the Bishop of Coventry—a brutal, arbitrary, and unnecessary act of revenge that only provides more cause to the barons for their resistance. While Edward feels invincible, he only exposes his inability to keep his inferior impulses in check, unfit for rule. He is not only unable to rule his barons but fails to maintain bonds with the people around him, a flaw that isolates him. His treatment of Isabella just drives her into Mortimer's arms, and he throws out his brother Kent for criticising Edward. Forced to have Gaveston banished, Edward even offers his realm to the nobles to be left in peace, but the barons decline the offer and advise him to rule them better—an admonition to preserve the old order that Edward disturbed by promoting his favourite.

While he has no control of his feelings, he is unable to develop an effective problem-solving strategy and simply hides behind big speeches. By offering the barons his kingdom and high offices, he unwittingly gives away his agenda: he wants to appease them with a bigger share of power; while they aim at the re-establishment of the old social order, Edward wishes to retreat into privacy with his friend. Only when Gaveston is killed does Edward take action and finally fight against the barons; he even wins in the beginning until the tide begins to turn. But when Gaveston's banishment is revoked, Edward showers the barons with titles and even promises his wife a second marriage. The reconciliation with his nobles is feckless, however; when it becomes clear that the barons do not appreciate Gaveston's return, the reconciliation has proved a sham.

Politically, he is a complete failure: The king is isolated, his coffers are empty; he has squandered money for lascivious entertainment and hated among the people; and he is militarily weak—and the barons suppose Gaveston to be behind all this, so they demand him removed for good. Like Edward IV, Edward II abuses his power and neglects his duties: when the barons expose his political failures, Edward feels personally attacked, frustrated that he cannot lead a private life with his friend nor escape his situation. Political pressures influence his personal life to an unbearable extent, so much so that he feels abused. Threatening the barons with cruelty and tyranny, he still does not get what rule is all about and merely feels bullied by his nobles. Whoever attacks Gaveston also attacks Edward, a dangerous reasoning that complicates the problems with the barons.

When the conflict finally escalates and the barons attack Tynemouth, the king takes to fleeing and declines to face his attackers so as to not risk Gaveston's safety; he does not believe that the barons would not touch their king. He sees threats and enemies everywhere and does not trust anyone any longer, so he eludes the barons with his hasty

departure. Spencer junior tries to invoke manly qualities in his king by linking him with his famous ancestors that should induce Edward to take action against the rebels and instil obedience in them; he promises that he will resist the barons should they not send him his captured friend. But immediately, he outsources political responsibility when he charges both his wife and son to sort out a major political crisis with France.

When he learns that Gaveston is killed, he is paralysed and struck with grief. Only after he has recovered from the shock does he channel his rage into action, defying the barons by embracing Spencer as his new favourite. Eventually, he has Lancaster and Warwick executed—but still he does not touch Mortimer's life. Meanwhile, Edward's party triumphs without control, indicating the excess that characterises both Edward as well as his executions in the wake of the victory. At the height of his power, letters from France inform him that the rebels gathered a force there and prepare for war. When the king's defeat is imminent in battle, Edward does not want to retreat, claiming that he was not born to flee—at Tynemouth, he had evaluated the situation differently. Eventually, he flees and shifts in his hiding from a warrior to a lamenting king who bewails his care-ridden existence; unlike Richard II, he does not understand what brought him to this situation. When he and his friends are finally discovered, his friends are executed; the farewell is akin to dying for him. He needs close friends to exist, and now, bereft of his associates, he already feels dead. Heartbroken, he imagines his life as a living death; he feels that he is not a king any longer but, bereft of his agency, the mere shadow of a king. However, his self-evaluation is mere wishful thinking and has nothing to do with facts—he never had a "dauntless mind," and his actions never met his rhetoric. Accusing his wife of adultery with Mortimer, he overlooks that he himself was the cause of this and even dallied with Gaveston first.

The concept of death pervades his whole decline; when forced to abdicate, Edward experiences his mind "murdered"; on the one hand, he accepts his destiny, but on the other hand he still hesitates to let go of his kingship, as he does not know why he will have to abdicate. As his life and crown are intrinsically connected to his essence, his self is built on his kingship in the way Richard II's is, so he does not want to resign while he is alive. When he learns that he would bar his son's succession if he does not abdicate, he becomes speechless again. After his abdication, Edward's self dissolves, and his grief renders him a "lunatic." He feels innocent and helplessly resorts to activism to channel his grief when he tears up a decree from the queen. Finally, he stoically accepts death as the end to his misery and surrenders.

In his prison, Edward is tortured by his keepers to prolong his suffering; unlike Richard II, he never really severed the ties to the crown and still identifies as the English king. Withstanding his abuse, he displays physical endurance. When he meets Lightborne, his body immediately knows that he meets his murderer; nevertheless, he reaches out to his fellow human creature and seeks company despite his fear. Edward's murder indicates the low moral and chaotic state the realm is in; eventually, Edward's son, Edward III, re-establishes order and justice. He seeks out the support of the council and immediately strikes against the head of the usurpers, not even sparing his own mother. Unlike his father, he can control his emotions and strike if the need arises—an indication that he will become a great king despite his young age.

There is no ideal king that is not undercut by the text. Even though Henry V seems to be closest to this ideal (by asserting his masculinity through both his ratio and aggression, forcing a princess to submit to him, winning a whole country through sheer martial prowess, and ruling diligently), the text undercuts his heroism either by juxtaposing scenes that show the exact opposite of what Henry's claims reveal, or he himself exposes contradictions between his speech and his actions or insecurities in his very self. The text thereby inherently implies that an ideal of masculine kingship is unattainable.

Henry V's father, Henry IV, struggles with the retention of power after a meteoric ascent to the throne. His active personality that seizes the moment for his own gain does not enable him to securely sit on the throne; rather, he becomes a nervous wreck that suspects treason everywhere, for his security is gone. However, his body and the kingdom are connected; it is symbolised in his physical decline—just as the kingdom is shaken by rebellion, the king's body is weakened and eventually breaks down when Henry swoons. The moral depravity of having deposed a legitimately anointed king haunts the usurper until he is reconciled with his son and, shortly before his death, promises to atone for Richard's death on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Edward II and Richard II have similar problems; they both fall because they assume their legitimacy and kingship is enough to rule but fail to assert their majesty. Besides, they are also both unable to either establish or maintain social bonds with men, especially with the nobles closest to them—an indicator of their political failure. Both abuse their power for their own gain, but their motivations are different. Richard so strongly believes in the metaphysical sacredness of his kingship that he does not take action against his cousin Bolingbroke; torn between defeat before he even begins to fight and his perceived invulnerability due to his anointment, he swings between pride and surrender. He feels entitled to disinherit his cousin but does not heed York's caution that in doing so he deprives his own reign of the basis of succession and primogeniture. Edward, in contrast, never feels unassailable but is constantly overruled; he is dependent on his barons and fails to assert his own will over them. He would rather have his private happiness with his friend, Gaveston, unmolested by the necessities of politics. Both Richard and Edward enter a dichotomy between their rule and an overmighty subject, Bolingbroke and Mortimer, respectively. Eventually, they both fall and cannot maintain their holds on power; however, Richard ritually undoes his majesty and strips himself bare of everything royal while Edward tries to cling to the crown as long as he can. Both find their sovereignty in words and language; but while Richard gains an acute political understanding in his grief, Edward never reaches this point.

Edward III rather struggles with his own personality; he is passionate but rashly so. Before he can conquer France, he first has to conquer his own desire and illegitimate lust for the Countess of Salisbury. He is a very visual person; on seeing the countess, he falls for her at first glance, just as he is reminded of his familial and political duties when he sees his son and notices his resemblance to his mother. Giving in to the countess' threats and his wife's admonitions before Calais, he is willing to be advised and tries to improve his character; the play reveals his journey from an irrational man with no self-control to a more diligent and wiser ruler who succeeds in his exploits. He

apparently knows that his character traits are not ideal, but the frustration of his passions eventually brings him to his senses.

Edward IV is the other extreme on the continuum—he does not care about anything, neither duty nor decorum. It is striking how the citizens of London and the king exchange places in this social re-evaluation: the citizens embody the royal virtues of bravery, responsibility, and morality while the king goes wild; his disguises transgress his majesty and enable him to wander around among his subjects to gather intelligence, have his fun, and force Jane Shore into concubinage. What is most striking is that the king himself is morally depraved but never feels the consequences himself; that his unborn sons will be killed at the hands of their uncle, Richard III, is not part of the play. He is deaf to admonitions, surrounding himself with flatterers, but is nevertheless never assailed and even wins France without any serious fighting. Divine agency no longer works in the play.

Richard III is extreme in another sense; while divine retribution has damned him mercilessly, he is physically handicapped—yet schemes his way to the throne via sheer cunning. Like Edward IV, he does not respect any social barriers, such as family or mercy; he does not spare his nephews and uses religious props to inculcate his desirability as king. His bloodthirstiness is inscribed in his deformed body that he also uses as a means to dispose of political adversaries. But just like Henry IV, he struggles once on the throne. His sharp mind loses its edge, and he also feels threatened from all sides. His lack of morality established a divide between himself and the others around him, so Richmond's strength is Richard's lack of moral legitimacy.

No king in the plays fulfils hegemonic masculinity or implements pure political orthodoxy; all plays have critical content and present characters who struggle with their kingship and their masculinities. However, they also do not present working alternative masculinities; rather, the audience themselves have to construct these images of masculinity in the struggling characters. However, there are recurring issues. Hierarchies are reinforced; if not, political chaos ensues. In *Edward IV*, this is not as obvious, but his conduct wreaks havoc on a smaller scale, destroying the Shores. Aggression and male self-assertion are recurrent issues, while some men like Henry V are successful, others like Edward II and Richard II fall because they are unable or unwilling to aggressively defend their status. Besides, blood creates bonds between men in the circle of chivalry; the first fight is a defloration as well as the spilling of someone else's blood, a self-referential and reciprocal process of establishing and asserting masculinity. While war seems to be a substitute for sex, men likewise spend their masculinity as in orgasm; affirming their maleness and martial prowess in battle, they either kill or die, creating a sterile void within their selves.

The rationality of men and their ability to control their passions is another important motive. Edward III and Edward IV are the characters most unable to control their passions while Richard III and Henry V actively use their self-controlled plots to their advantage. While rule generally should be based on the ability to govern one's own feelings and to act rationally, most kings fall short of this ideal. The relationships to others are as diverse as the characters of the kings themselves. While the maintenance

and establishment of ties between men is one of the main tools a king has for a successful reign, Richard II disavows such ties deliberately. The line of succession is a further strong bond between men, but the relationships between fathers and sons in the plays are cold and distanced at best; the relationship between the Talbots is an exception. John Talbot's emulation of his father, whom he apparently loves, ends in death—and the heartbroken father dies with his son in his arms. It is the rather distanced relationships between Hal and Henry IV and Edward III and the Black Prince that domineer and that survive. However, the promising, king-like Black Prince will not live to succeed his father, so his outstanding example is undercut by history.

Additionally, most love relationships do not work out. While Richard II seems to have a close and loving relationship with his wife, he dies childless and deposed; Edward II experiences love in the sodomitical relationship with Gaveston while his wife changes from doting and rejected woman to a malicious adulterer. No one ever hears anything about Henry V's mother, Henry IV's queen, and Henry V bullies Catherine of France into marriage. Richard III uses marriage as a means to further his cause while Edward IV uses women to satisfy his lust, whether they are married, an unsuitable match, or a mere tanner's daughter. It is Edward III who experiences extreme lust for a married subject but eventually embraces his queen as an ally at the end of an emotional odyssey that transformed his self. Interestingly, mothers seldom feature prominently in this patriarchal world; the Duchess of York, Richard III's and Edward IV's mother, are notable exceptions.

The matrix developed in chapter 2.7 tried to systematize the paradigms that underlie royal masculinity construction in the sixteenth century; however, in the course of the analysis, this model did not work out as a clear-cut blueprint for the construction of masculinity. The various paradigms intersected in so many ways that it proved difficult to neatly separate them in the discussion of the plays. Hierarchy and dominance for example are clearly intertwined, but both also influence love and sexuality, royalty and rule, as well as rationality and the passions. While it was not easy to provide a clear-cut matrix, the different paradigms worked as an underlying guideline to structure the analysis thematically, however.

This thesis only hints at how the kings of the history plays negotiated masculinity on the early modern stage; what masculinity eventually meant, what quality the ties between men had, how they initiated each other into masculinity, and how good rule featured in this process could not be analysed to the full in this thesis. Hopefully, further studies will reveal more specific methods of male self-construction in the early modern period; what it takes to be a man, however, has to be answered individually by each and every man enacting his own version of masculinity.

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5.2.3 Films

Henry V (UK 1944, D: Laurence Olivier, Sc: Laurence Olivier, Dallas Bower, Alan Dent based on the play by William Shakespeare), DVD, itv DVD.

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Versicherung (gem. § 7 Abs. 2 Buchst. g PromO):

Ich versichere hiermit,

- dass ich die Dissertation selbständig angefertigt, außer den im Schriftenverzeichnis sowie den Anmerkungen genannten Hilfsmitteln keine weiteren benützt und die Herkunft der Stellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus anderen Werken übernommen sind, bezeichnet habe,

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.....

(Unterschrift)