Instytut Anglistyki
Wydział Neofilologii

James Dale

Incognitos: Shakespeare's Uses of Disguise in the Light of New Historicism and Its Legacy

Praca doktorska
napisana pod kierunkiem
prof. ucz. dr hab. Anny Cetery-Włodarczyk

Warszawa 2021

Postaci incognito:
Konwencja przebrania scenicznego w dramatach Shakespeare'a
w perspektywie nowego historycyzmu i jego dziedzictwa

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Rozprawa poświęcona jest konwencji przebrania scenicznego w sztukach Szekspira, intepretowanej w szerszym kontekście kulturowym epoki elżbietańskiej i jakubińskiej. W proponowanej analizie przebranie sceniczne rozumiane jest jako efekt połączenia zapożyczonego dyskursu i kostiumu, silne zaburzenie porządku rzeczywistości z licznymi konsekwencjami w wymiarze psychologicznym, społecznym i politycznym. Metodologiczne podstawy pracy stanowi nowy historycyzm, a zwłaszcza kluczowa koncepcja renesansowej autokreacji Stephana Greenblatta (1980), rozwijana i przedefiniowywana przez krytykę szekspirowską kolejnych dekad. Studium składa się z analiz postaci szekspirowskich w przebraniu scenicznym, postrzeganych jako postaci dokonujące autokreacji, których strategie maskowania dowodzą uprzedniego kryzysu tożsamości, stanu dezorientacji (*incognito*), spowodowanego lękiem, presją polityczną lub społeczną. Konieczne w tej sytuacji zapożyczenie dyskursu (lub dyskursów) zaciera tożsamość, lecz rzuca też światło na wewnętrzne motywacje i predyspozycje postaci. W tym sensie konwencja przebrania scenicznego staje się unikatową przestrzenią dla konstruowania modeli wczesnonowożytnej podmiotowości i fascynującą cechą dramaturgii szekspirowskiej.

Rozdział I („Konwencja przebrania scenicznego u Szekspira: oszukany wzrok, zaburzona rzeczywistość, zatarta tożsamość") zawiera chronologiczny przegląd krytyki szekspirowskiej, skupionej na konwencji przebrania scenicznego, oraz obszerne omówienie nowego historycyzmy i jego dziedzictwa, ze szczególnym naciskiem na podobieństwo konwencji przebrania i metafory pojęciowej Greenblatta o renesansowej autokreacji. Rozdział kończy propozycja modelu analitycznego oraz objaśnienia zasad zgrupowania postaci w partiach interpretacyjnych.

Rozdział II („Bohaterowie w przebraniu, sprawcy i iluzja autopoznania: Edgar w *Królu Learze* i Książę Vincention w *Miarce za miarkę*") poświęcony jest psychologicznym aspektom przebrania, a zwłaszcza stanom napięcia, powstającym we wnętrzu i wokół postaci działających w przebraniu. Rozdział III („Etyka i polityka (przebranego) króla: analiza drugiej tetralogii Szekspira") rozważa implikacje polityczne przebrania, podkreślając kruchość, a zarazem

sugestywność królewskich rytuałów, postrzeganych jako monarszy kamuflaż. Rozdział IV („Zgorzknienie, ironia i refleksja społeczna: Feste w *Wieczorze Trzech Króli* i Autolycus w *Opowieści zimowej*) zestawia postaci dotknięte lękiem przed odrzuceniem, nudą oraz uwięzieniem i modyfikujące swą tożsamość w odpowiedzi na zmieniające się otoczenie.

Nowa analiza szekspirowskich postaci w przebraniu rzuca ciekawe światło na styl dramaturgiczny Szekspira. Przebranie sceniczne jawi się jako kolejna konwencja, pozwalająca testować granice samopoznania postaci i ukazywać pułapki wczesnonowożytnej podmiotowości.

Słowa kluczowe: Szekspir, przebranie, nowy historycyzm, autokreacja, wczesnonowożytna podmiotowość, gra i udawanie

Incognitos: Shakespeare's Uses of Disguise in the Light of New Historicism and Its Legacy

S u m m a r y

The dissertation focuses on the interpretative significance of the convention of disguise in Shakespeare's plays viewed against a wider cultural background of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period. The analysis foregrounds the construction of stage disguise as a combination of controlled discourse and sartorial device, a powerful distortion of reality with multiple psychological, social, and political implications. The basic methodological framework derives from New Historicism, and revisits the seminal concept of renaissance self-fashioning by Stephen Greenblatt (1980), both elaborated and reshaped by Shakespeare criticism emergent in the following decades. The study consists in the analyses of Shakespeare's characters in disguise, viewed as self-fashioning individuals whose masking strategies testify to a pre-existent identity crisis, a truly *incognito* condition, propelled by anxiety, political reasons, or societal pressure. The necessary employment of borrowed discourse(s) serves to suppress identity but it nevertheless proves revealing as regards the character's inner motives and dispositions. In this sense the convention of disguise becomes a unique testing ground for the construction of the models of early modern subjectivity, and a fascinating feature of Shakespeare's dramatic style.

The first chapter ('Shakespeare's Uses of Disguise: Deluding the Eyes, Disrupting the World, Upsetting the Self') offers a chronological overview Shakespeare criticism centering on the convention of disguise, followed by an extensive discussion of the contribution of New Historicism and its legacy, foregrounding the inherent affinity of disguise and Greenblatt's conceptual metaphor of self-fashioning. The chapter concludes with a proposal of an analytical model and the rationale for character grouping in the following studies of the plays.

The second chapter ('Disguisers, Perpetrators and the Illusion of Self-knowledge: Edgar in *King Lear* and Duke Vincentio from *Measure for Measure'*) deals with the psychological dimension of disguise, exposing mental tensions arising within and around figures in disguise. The third chapter ('The Ethics and Politics of (Disguised) Kingship: An Examination of Shakespeare's Second Tetralogy') focuses on the political implications of disguise, stressing the fragility and suggestive power of the rites of kingship understood as monarchical camouflage. The fourth

chapter ('Bitterness, Irony and Social Commentary: Feste in *Twelfth Night* and Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale'*) presents characters facing the fears of redundancy, boredom and entrapment, and therefore trying to remodel their identities within the changing social context.

The renewed analysis of Shakespeare's incognito figures offers a fresh insight into Shakespeare's dramatic style, showing disguise as yet another convention which tests the limits of the character's self-knowledge and exposes the traps of the early modern subjectivity.

Keywords: Shakespeare, disguise, New Historicism, self-fashioning, early modern subjectivity, role-playing

Table of contents i - iii

List of abbreviations iv

Preface v - vii

Chapter One: Shakespeare's Uses of Disguise: Deluding the Eyes, Disrupting the World, Upsetting the Self 1

1.1 Problematizing the Convention of Disguise in Shakespeare's Plays: Approaches Prior or Parallel to New Historicism 1

1.1.1 The Mechanistic Approach 2

1.1.2 The Recognition of Identity Metamorphosis 4

1.1.3 Appearance, Reality and Role-playing 5

1.1.4 New Definitions 9

1.1.5 The Twenty First Century and a Return to Lingualism 12

1.2 Disguise in the Light of New Historicism 15

1.2.1 New Historicism: The Fundamental Assumptions 15

1.2.2 Stephen Greenblatt and Renaissance Self-Fashioning 18

1.2.3 The Concept of Disguise vs. the Three Modes of Self-fashioning Behaviour 19

The Mode of Rhetoric 20

The Mode of Nonsense 22

The Mode of Loss and Improvisation 23

1.2.4 In Search of the Inner Motivations: Desire and Fear 23

1.2.5 Stephen Greenblatt and a Theory of Disguise 29

Disguise and the Relations of Power 31

1.3 The Evolution of New Historicism and Its Impact on Shakespeare Studies 32

1.3.1 Some Remarks on the Early New Historicist Circles 33

1.3.2 The Concept of Cultural Poetics and the Development of Greenblatt's Thought after 1990 34

1.3.3 Sceptics from Within, Methodological Affinities and Revisionist Approaches 38

Lee Patterson 38

Patricia Parker 39

Jerome McGann 40

Louis Montrose 41

1.3.4 Studies on Disguise / Individual Plays Inspired by New Historicism and Greenblatt 42

1.3.5 The (In)distinctiveness of Cultural Materialism 44

Subversion, Containment and Ideology 45

The Subject of History 46

Departures from Cultural Materialism 48

1.4 The Self-fashioning of Incognito Figures: An Analytical Model 52

Chapter Two: Disguisers, Perpetrators and the Illusion of Self-knowledge: Edgar in *King Lear* and Duke Vincentio from *Measure for Measure* 56

2.1 Edgar in Greenblattian Criticism 57

2.2 Other Critical Approaches to Edgar 61

2.2.1 The Continuing Textual Crisis of *King Lear* 65

2.2.2 The Ethical Authority of Edgar 68

2.2.3 Edgar's Use of Disguise 70

2.3 Edgar and Radical Self-fashioning 71

2.4 *Measure for Measure* in Greenblattian Criticism 98

2.5 A Disguised Ruler: Other Critical Perspectives 101

2.6 Duke Vincentio: The Great Improviser and Manipulator 102

Chapter Three: The Ethics and Politics of (Disguised) Kingship: An Examination of Shakespeare's Second Tetralogy 126

3.1 The Second Tetralogy in Greenblattian Criticism 130

3.2 The Critical Response to Greenblatt on the Second Tetralogy 133

3.3 *Richard II* – The Monarchical Self in (Un)disguised Crises 136

3.4 *Henry IV*– A Testing Ground for Princely Disguise(s) 151
3.4.1 The Presence of Disguise in the Plays and its Rationale for Hal, Prince of Wales 151
3.4.2 Hal's Use of Sartorial Disguises: Testing Subversion and Exercising Containment 153
3.4.3 Hal's Disguising of a True "fully mature" Royal Self 156
3.5 *Henry V* – The (Re)institution of Royal Disguise 170
3.5.1 A Return to Sartorial Disguise – Testing and Recording of the King's Subjects 171
3.5.2 The Augmentation of the Disguise of a Monarch Divinely Sanctioned 174
3.5.3 Arming Divine Protection: The Disguise of the Warrior 179

Chapter Four: Bitterness, Irony and Social Commentary: Feste in *Twelfth Night* and Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale* 187
4.1 Feste in Greenblattian Criticism 188
4.2 Feste: A Fool Coloured by Experience 190
4.2.1 'Thou mightst have done this without thy beard and gown'. Feste's Disguise of Sir Topas 191
4.2.2 Disguising Fears of Redundancy 199
4.2.3 Disguising Fears of Boredom 206
4.2.4 Disguising Fears of Entrapment 210
4.3 Autolycus in Greenblattian Criticism 220
4.4 Autolycus: The Rogue as a Lynchpin of Society and a Reformulator of Artistic Truth 220
4.4.1 Disguising Fears of Destitution, Capture, Punishment and Execution 222
4.4.2 Disguising Sexual Frustration and the Conflict of Self-Identity 230
4.4.3 Disguising Fears of Entrapment 235

Conclusion 242

Bibliography 252

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HIV1	*Henry the Fourth Part One*	*Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2002. ed. D. Kastan, London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
HIV2	*Henry the Fourth Part Two*	*Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2016. ed. J. Bulman. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
HV	*King Henry the Fifth*	*Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 1995. ed. T. Craik. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
KL	*King Lear*	*Arden Shakespeare Third Edition. 2005.* ed. R.A. Foakes. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
MM	*Measure for Measure*	*Arden Shakespeare Second Edition.* 1967. ed. J.W. Lever. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
RII	*Richard the Second*	*Arden Shakespeare Third Edition,* 2002. ed. C. Forker. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
TN	*Twelfth Night*	*Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2008. ed. K. Elam. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
WT	*The Winter's Tale*	*Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2010. ed. J. Pitcher. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Preface

The Italian noun *incognito*[1] (borrowed from the Latin *incognitus*, meaning "unknown, not investigated"*)* is capable of generating two meanings and in doing so, establishes an intriguing ambiguity. Firstly, it denotes a person who is unknown, concealed, in disguise. Examples from the history of literature abound in such figures; we are reminded of Odysseus and his adoption of a beggar's disguise marking his return to Ithaca in *The Odyssey*. Subsequently, it is only his dog, Argus, who recognises his master, and being so overjoyed, dies on the spot. Centuries later, Elizabethan theatre was seen to incorporate a great many disguised figures into its repertoires[2] and it is one of the playwrights from this era, William Shakespeare, with whom I intend to examine his uses of disguise within this dissertation.

The second meaning of 'incognito' refers to the idea that someone assumes the character of somebody else. Ultimately, we are therefore exposed to a juggling of identities within the term 'incognito.' On the one hand, the word may serve some pragmatic purpose when it comes to the employment of sartorial disguise, such as deceit, and remind us of the deceptive motives to disguise. On the other hand, the word may also be a sign of much deeper or subconscious identity crises within those not necessarily employing sartorial disguise, where, interestingly enough, a new identity is desired to be adopted and constructed in the attempt to mask a continuing dialectic with the anxieties of the inner-self. Furthermore, disguise may also reveal the hitherto suppressed aspects of the self.

The matter concerning the construction of (public) identity is felt within the methodology I wish to employ in my own investigations of incognito figures in Shakespeare. Subsequently, I have selected New Historicism, due to its devoted and unparalleled attention to this issue of identity construction[3], particularly during the Renaissance period, some of which additionally and specifically lends itself to Shakespeare Studies. As a result, there has emerged a series of disputes and eventual fissures debating, among other issues, the cultural and political forces which help

---

[1] The OED Online notes the original usage of the phrase 'in incognito,' referring to someone "in concealment, in an anonymous character." Elsewhere, 'incognito' can be used also as an adjective, for example, you can refer to someone as 'an *incognito* figure.' Furthermore, the word can be used as an adverb, for example, 'he liked travelling *incognito*.' *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, March 2021. Web. 23 May 2021.

[2] Peter Hyland's *Disguise on the Early Modern English Stage* (2011) provides a detailed account of this phenomenon.

[3] Evelyn Gajowski acknowledges that due to New Historicism's focus on identity construction, it "developed into the dominant theoretical and critical approach" for interpreting Shakespeare in the latter part of the twentieth century. (2016, 1783).

shape the construction of identity. I refer here to scholars aligning themselves to Cultural Materialism, and in my first chapter I will explore the differences between these two methodologies to see how far these critics seek to embrace or distance themselves from New Historicist ideas and to assess whether there can be any extended definition in the eventual assessment of disguise of Shakespearean characters that I wish to investigate in this study. The Cultural Materialists' main bone of contention regarding the constructing of (public) identity rested with Stephen Greenblatt's treatment of the topic, outlined in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*: *From More to Shakespeare* (1980). Hugh Grady notes the compelling resonance of Greenblatt's book, concluding that "his writing possesses unique qualities of style, insight and depth that announce a major critical intervention" (2020, 88). His theory of self-fashioning within that work is seen to lay predominantly within the language that we speak. The intriguing and fascinating speculation of what it means to be incognito, is used by Greenblatt to then focus on the individual's use of specific, linguistic aspects. In the first chapter, I will seek to outline and then look to expand on Greenblatt's concept of self-fashioning in establishing what I believe to be a New Historicist theory of disguise, one that focuses on how disguise is constructed through controlled discourse. When it comes to viewing disguise within Shakespeare, viewed through the methodological interpretation of Greenblatt and New Historicism, I will then utilise this interpretation to focus on the psychological, social and political implications of disguise in a chosen range of plays. In analysing these implications, I intend to focus on those incognitos who are not only characters bedecked in sartorial disguise but also, and often quite playfully, willing to assume a multitude of other fictive identities.

With this intention to focus on those three implications of disguise, it is important to mention certain types of inquiries that I wish to omit in this dissertation. One of these, is the uses of disguise (and the convention of cross-dressing) which has been particularly attractive to feminist criticism. Here, the critics concerned have employed a range of examples to address the tensions stemming from the ever contentious understating of gender roles. One such collection of essays is to be found in *Shakespeare Re-Dressed: Cross-Gender Casting in Contemporary Performance* (2009). The volume gives rise to a multiplicity of critical voices, some enraptured, others cynical, which are versed through aspects such as queer theory, gender politics, and historical performance. All of the contributors go onto emphasise the extent to which the meaning of any stage production is undoubtedly a localized concern that defies any attribution to it of a dominant theory.

Another line of inquiry that I wish to exclude in my investigation is the considerable interest shown in the materiality of performance in Shakespeare Studies which entailed the studies of disguise as a stage convention, for example, the interest in the non-verbal sphere of performance. In acknowledging the important contribution of theorists such as Robert Weimann[4]and critics such as Andrew Gurr, Tiffany Stern, Stephen Booth and Alan Dessen, it is my intention to explore my preferred interest in the linguistic aspects of disguise, focusing on how disguise is constructed through controlled discourse.

Before I can begin to outline a theory of disguise from the viewpoint of New Historicism and the work of Stephen Greenblatt, there is a need to account for the chronological development of the interpretative and methodological approaches to the convention of disguise used in Shakespeare's plays. The rationale behind this is to show the essential transition, over the course of history, to a more inclusive interpretation of the convention which emphasises the social, political and psychological implications of variously understood distortions of reality. In doing so, I believe that the critical milieu eventually embraces a recognition that disguise should also pay attention to the individual's use of linguistic aspects in the manner which Greenblatt is also clearly seen to do.

[4] Weimann's theory relating to the materiality of performance in Shakespeare is outlined in 'Textual Authority and Performative Agency: The Uses of Disguise in Shakespeare's Theater,' *New Literary History*. Autumn 1994, Vol. 25, No. 4, *25th Anniversary Issue* (Part 2): 789-808.

CHAPTER I

Shakespeare's Uses of Disguise: Deluding the Eyes, Disrupting the World, Upsetting the Self

1.1 Problematizing the Convention of Disguise in Shakespeare's Plays: Approaches Prior or Parallel to New Historicism

In this particular section, it is my intention to chronologically account for the development of the interpretative and methodological approaches to the convention of disguise used in Shakespeare's plays, showing a key transition from a mere, mechanistic to a more comprehensive interpretation of the convention which foregrounds the social, political and psychological implications of variously understood distortions of identity.[1] Therefore, I wish to pay attention to

---

[1] My analysis will not therefore investigate disguise from the point of view of the materiality of performance. Such views, however, are important to acknowledge as they have established new and important insights into disguise. Firstly, Stephen Booth and Alan C. Dessen have argued for a reassessment of the importance of the "doubling" of roles in theatre companies, challenging previous assumptions that leading actors resisted doubling roles which were assumed by less important actors. There is a close relationship between doubling and disguise, as Peter Hyland notes. Such a relationship "provided the player with the opportunity to expand and vary his performance, thereby exhibiting his versatility" (1995, 43). Subsequently, in 'Speculations on Doubling in Shakespeare's Plays', *Shakespeare: The Theatrical Dimension*, eds. Philip C. McGuire and David. A. Samuelson, (New York: AMS, 1979), Booth argues that doubling should be understood as an opportunity for the player rather than a hindrance, and also for the playwright, to make use of "planned theatrical doubling" (107) where the spectators were intended to recognize the actor through disparate roles, gaining satisfaction from that recognition. As Hyland argues, the satisfaction felt by both audience and actor in this process also suggests that disguise "opened up a similar multiplicity", which "was popular not only with spectators but also with performers, especially in leading roles" (Hyland 1995, 43). Dessen, in *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) concurs with Booths' ideas on such a casting strategy, focusing on the idea of:

> conceptual doubling [which] could have served as one signifier in a theatrical vocabulary shared by Elizabethan playwrights, players and playgoers, a strategy therefore available to an experienced dramatist who knew well his actor-colleagues, his audience, and his craft in the playhouse. (28)

Dessen is also renowned for his extensive categorisation of "disguise(d)" within Shakespearean and other contemporary texts, outlined amongst others in *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Tiffany Stern and Simon Palfrey in *Shakespeare's Theatres and the Effects of Performance* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013) also recognise the necessities of doubling by a theatre company: "there were no understudies at the time . . . Thus if a player were ill . . . another member of the company had to stand in, learning the new lines hastily" (51). Elsewhere, they remain somewhat sceptical regarding Booth and Dessen's claims for conceptual doubling (55) while nevertheless stating that: "There would have been something alien or cross-fertilizing, an engagement with new possibilities, about characters whose clothes were transformed – as we again find with Kent, Edgar" (55). As these characters enter into sartorial disguise in *King Lear,* there therefore immediately exists, in my opinion, cross-fertilization between doubling and disguise, and hence my exploration of psychological transformation in disguised characters within the transformation of their professional garments. On a different topic, Andrew Gurr in *Staging in Shakespeare's Theatres* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), assesses disguise within the wider uses of costume in contemporary Elizabethan / Jacobean society, highlighting the anxieties engendered through the wearing of clothes of a higher status. Here, "[d]ress signified social status, and

those critics who specifically seek to not only assess disguise within the plays of Shakespeare but who additionally strive to problematize and theorize the use of disguise in early modern theatre at large.[2]

1.1.1. The Mechanistic Approach

It is of particular importance to highlight what is regarded as the first contemporary study of disguise in Shakespeare, Victor Freeburg's *Disguise Plots in Elizabethan Drama* (1915). As I will show with those critics who follow, Freeburg is criticised for his technical, mechanistic view of disguise, seemingly confirmed in this extract:

> Disguise is an effective dramatic contrivance because the deception which produces action and the recognition which ends it are fundamentally dramatic transactions; and because the change of costume together with the mimetic action of body and dissimulation of voice involve the essence of theatricality. For dramaturgic effectiveness there are few better mechanical devices. Yet it must be understood from the beginning that disguise is only a mechanical and external cause of action. (5)

Freeburg continues his assessment in similar tones, praising Shakespeare's use of disguise in technical terms, concluding that Shakespeare's approach to disguise was largely formulaic:

> Shakespeare's technic might be called traditional technic raised to the highest power of efficiency. The weaving of his disguise plot was simple and direct; from that he never varied. A disguise was assumed, deception produced, and final revelation made in a traditional way which amounted almost to a formula. (79)

---

for the players it signified with equal weight their professional habit of disguising and counterfeiting. Robes and furred gowns hid the low status of the player beneath" (53). In *Shakespeare's Workplace: Essays on Shakespearean Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), Gurr comments on the "transparency" of disguise, readily recognisable to spectators where "[s]uch a privileging helped to reduce the seriousness of the counterfeit" (158).

[2] There have been many incisive interpretations of disguise scattered over the 18th and 19th century studies of individual Shakespeare plays. These include Samuel Taylor Coleridge's nineteenth century assessment of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Lear, Hamlet* and *Macbeth* republished in *Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Shakespeare, The Drama and the Stage,* (Musaicum Books, OK Publishing, 2017). Also see William Hazlitt's *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (London: John Templeman, 1817) for his assessment of *Twelfth Night, Henry V* and *The Two Gentleman of Verona*. However, none of these studies appear to represent a comprehensive effort to define and scrutinize the convention as such. It is only the 20th century when disguise triggers significant schorarly interest. Subsequently, there have been excellent studies of disguise in relation to individual Shakespeare plays exploring the convention's non-material aspects. With regard to *King Lear*, see Hugh MacLean's 'Disguise in *King Lear*: Kent and Edgar', *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 11, No. 1 (Winter, 1960): 49-54. Also, Marcia Holly's '*King Lear*: The Disguised and Deceived', *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 24, No. 2 (Spring, 1973): 171-180. For *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, see Virgil Hutton, '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Tragedy in Comic Disguise', *Studies in English Literature*. Vol.25, No.2 (Spring, 1985): 289-305. For *Pericles* see Annette C. Flower, 'Disguise and Identity in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 26, No.1 (Winter, 1975): 30-41. For *Two Gentleman of Verona, Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet* see Harold C. Goddard, *The Meaning of Shakespeare, Volume 1* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1951). For a study of the disguises of Falstaff and Coriolanus, see James L. Calderwood, 'Disguise, Role-Playing and Honor', *Shakespeare and the Denial of Death* (Massachusetts, University of Massachusetts Press, 1987): 33-45.

However, there is in my opinion some recognition from Freeburg toward the language used in disguise, despite his continued insistence on its mechanistic, physical aspects:

> The dialog of a disguise situation is especially capable of theatrical effectiveness . . . This immediately gives an opportunity for double meanings or veiled allusions. Such subtlety of dialog is a valuable element of style, especially in Lyly and Shakespeare. Furthermore, these subtleties are not subtleties of speech merely; they permit pretty shadings in the physical language of pantomime, and are therefore peculiarly important in theatrical art. (15)

Unfortunately, Freeburg does not explore any subtleties of speech in disguise, exploring those double meanings and illusions that he refers to.

It took some time before Freeburg's theory on disguise in Shakespeare was properly scrutinised and challenged. P.V. Kreider's 1934 study, 'The Mechanics of Disguise in Shakespeare's Plays,' as the title suggests, did not do so and largely transpired in a homage to Freeburg. Kreider concurs in the formulaic approach to disguise, "in general the devices follow a pattern" (1934, 167). Furthermore, develops a theory regarding how Shakespeare proceeds to identify the disguised character (Kreider uses the term "mummer") for the audience:

> the dramatist guides the spectators by making use of four devices: he shows the mummer changing his costume upon the stage; he relies upon the correspondence between the disguise as foretold and the disguise as seen, plus what is already known concerning the circumstances and plans of the masquerader, to prevent confusion of identity; he makes the concealed personage speak so as to disclose his secret; and he resorts to the direct naming of maskers. (170)

And yet again, like Freeburg, there is a strong feeling that in formulating a theory of disguise, something else needs to be accounted for:

> it is not alone through costume and action, but also through dialog, that the minutiae of the disguised character's predicament are so reviewed and so emphasized in the initial masquerade scene that is left to the imagination. (171)

In demonstrating his own example, Kreider turns to the disguise used by Hal and Poins in *Henry IV Part One* when they plan to rob Falstaff after the events at Gadshill. Here, Kreider claims, their conversation "repeating details of the scheme, identifies them in terms of the hoax" (172). Like Freeburg, Kreider again recognises that there is clearly more to be explored within a disguised character, apart from the physicality of the disguise, and yet again, there is a subsequent refusal to explore such a conversation (that we see between Hal and Poins) from a linguistic point of view.

1.1.2 The Recognition of Identity Metamorphosis

We have to wait until 1952 and the work of Muriel Bradbrook, to find a vigorous reappraisal of disguise in Shakespeare. In her seminal essay, ‘Shakespeare and the Use of Disguise in Elizabethan Drama,’ Bradbrook broadens Freeburg's conception of disguise. She acknowledges that Freeburg's work has not been superseded, but that his concentration was on disguise as a dramatic device, conceiving of it only as a change of personal appearance, limiting disguise as a plot device. Bradbrook’s extension of disguise’s definition instead foregrounds the moral, ethical and psychological dimension of disguise:

> I should prefer to define disguise as the substitution, overlaying or metamorphosis of dramatic identity, whereby one character sustains two roles. This may involve deliberate or involuntary masquerade, mistaken or concealed identity, madness or possession. (1952, 160)

What follows is a perceptive study exploring the interconnections between disguise and identity. While looking at Kent in *King Lear* and his acceptance of his disguise as Lear’s “protector”, Caius, Bradbrook comments on its implications describing Kent as “the father who pities his children, like the husband who pities and succours his erring wife” (163). Such implications, she continues, “must have had a Biblical origin, and Shakespeare recalled this old tradition to its first significance” (163). Later, Bradbrook’s analysis takes on a rather Platonistic view, insisting that:

> Apparel was not thought of as concealing but as revealing the personality of the wearer . . . Hence there could be no such thing as mere physical transformation. As the body revealed the soul, so appearance should reveal the truth of identity. A character could be really changed by the assumption of a disguise. (166)

It is seen that Kent therefore (as well as Edgar) becomes transcendent and in harmony with himself when he dons the disguise.

Bradbrook explores disguise in Shakespeare once more in *The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy* (1955). Her analysis focuses, initially, on the materiality of the convention, but what makes this particular essay important in terms of my analysis, however, is her focus on the role of language within disguise. Bradbrook notes a paradoxical quality of disguise in the parts of fools and pages in Shakespeare: “it enlarges the original role, and also discovers its latent possibilities” (88). She uses as an example the exchange between Jessica and Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice* to support her claim.

JESSICA: Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love.
And I should be obscured.
LORENZO: So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy. (2.6.43-45)

Not only do we see the use of paradox at the heart of a language of disguise here, Bradbrook adds, but there is additionally a lecture on the disguising strategy which calls for an eye-catching cover to conceal the truth.[3] This becomes clear as she juxtaposes the "*garnish* . . . used of stars and jewels" from Lorenzo, to the image of another character in the play whose identity is obscured by the opulence of professional clothes i.e. "Portia in her doctor's scarlet" (89).

Where Freeburg and Kreider only alluded to it, Bradbrook offers us, for the first time, a glimpse into disguise and its relationship to the language that the characters use. It is a crucial insight that, as I will show later, anticipated the work of critics practising today.

1.1.3 Appearance, Reality and Role-playing

Wolfgang Clemen, in *Shakespeare's Dramatic Art* (1972), finds a key affiliation with Bradbrook when assessing disguise in Shakespeare, the view that in choosing a disguised character in his comedies, Shakespeare was quite selective, often choosing, as Bradbrook had herself noted, one particular role:

> The thing he usually does at first is to reduce the number of disguised characters in each play so that our attention is entirely directed towards one person, who is usually the heroine in the disguise of a page. (1972, 166)

What underpins Clemen's work, marking his departure from Bradbrook, is the following conviction on Shakespeare's dramatic art, its relationship to disguise and the recognition of this relationship by the audience:

> The drama is thus a reflection of man's actions in actual life, and the deceptive appearance of the action on the stage is by no means so far removed from the deceptive appearance of our own role-playing in real life. We can see how this contrast between reality and appearance reveals itself in more far-reaching and fundamental relationships. (169)

[3] In the same publication, Bradbrook speculates on Hamlet's use of the pun and his "ironic quibbles" in relation to the psychology of the character. In Hamlet's case, she sees "a development of Shakespeare's own interest, but [it] is peculiarly suited to the display of an unbalanced mind" (240). However, she concludes, "it may be that the quite new and startling capacity to depict imbalance which several of the dramatists possessed was due to their linguistic inheritance, rather than a psychological interest" (240).

Furthermore, to ensure that the appearance of a play can become recognisable to the reality of its audience:

> the task of the playwright . . . is to enthral us by the illusion of the play so that at least for the duration of the performance we accept it as some kind of reality. All art requires illusion so as to demonstrate reality to the spectator. (169)

Clemen then contends that as we, the audience and actors, are role-players ourselves, "is not disguise within a stage role really a double disguise? For every actor who portrays a person in the drama . . . is really someone in disguise" (169). Coupled with cases of mistaken identity, evidenced in *Twelfth Night* and *A Comedy of Errors*, Clemen believes that such situations give "rise to such confusion that no one knows quite what is happening nor what is illusion and what reality" (170). He then goes onto provide further examples from Shakespeare's plays to show:

> the juxtaposition of reality and appearance in the contrast between mask and genuine character, in man's readiness to deceive and his addiction to false appearances, and in the sham and deceptive nature of particular situations. (183)

Furthermore, he adds, it is only with the passing of Shakespeare's final Romances that the audience begins to have the impression that illusion has become reality. So plays such as *The Tempest* and *Cymbeline* represent:

> A dream world, in which fantasy and magic hold sway, begins to drive out reality, which in comparison appears constant, merely relative and unreal, whereas the dream-world itself signifies genuine reality. (183)

Clemen's assessment of disguise in Shakespeare clearly had a great influence on those critics in the 1970s (and beyond) revisiting the topic. James Siemon's 'Disguise in Marston and Shakespeare' (1975) returns to Clemen's idea of reality and appearance. Elizabethan drama, he contends, possesses a rewarding feature, "its keen sense of the ambiguous relation role as a mode of behavior and role as a means by which the player creates an independent reality on the stage" (1975, 123). Focusing on those critics before his time, he views it as a mistake to "dismiss all Renaissance disguise roles as so many variations on a Plautine device" (123). He clearly feels that there are other disguise roles which "bring . . . a sharpened sense of the power of the role to create its own reality" (123). He cites the example of *Measure for Measure* in this case, a play invested with the power to "pursue the implications of this ambiguous conflation of art and reality, investing the disguise role with a self-sustaining reality, and moving, therefore, very near to metamorphosis"

(123). In demonstrating this belief of such metamorphosis within disguise, he turns to Duke Vincentio's disguise as the Friar and contends that the Duke:

> displays a more than adequate grasp of pastoral theology which he employs to indubitably pastoral ends, behaving as though he were indeed a Friar. Elsewhere he explores the fullest possibilities of the role, apparently committed to its function. (121)

Anthony Dawson's *Indirections: Shakespeare and the Art of Illusion* (1978), is another work focusing, once more under the influence of Clemen, on Shakespeare's use of illusion, deceit and disguise. These uses, Dawson adds, emphasise the nature and function of the interaction between the character and the audience, "an image of grace together with an enriched sense of reality . . . a model or focus for what we call real life" (1978, 171). In the Romantic comedies, Shakespeare uses disguise, he adds, to draw the characters into an illusion that becomes therapeutic for the audience, and cites an example from *The Merchant of Venice*, where Portia uses disguise to pass from "romantic" Belmont to "realistic" Venice. In the tragedies, Dawson believes that disguise, an essentially comic device, is applied to morally ambivalent stage worlds. Looking at Hamlet's "antic disposition", Dawson views this as a disguise through which he intends to set the world to right, both politically and ethically. Hamlet is a stage manager, part author of a play-within-a-play, and he counters Claudius' determination to gauge his motives. With the killing of Polonius, Dawson believes that Hamlet's "'comic' efforts are finally and irrevocably deflected" (48).

At this point it is worth mentioning the work of Thomas Van Laan, in *Role-Playing in Shakespeare* (1978), an influential work which appears to discuss and evaluate disguise as an aspect of role-playing. This book opens with four introductory chapters defining notions of role-playing in terms of character, structure, and theme by focusing primarily on the early plays. Then follow chapters on the major plays, rapidly developing every conceivable aspect - explicit and implicit - of shifting identities and theatricality in general. Each type of drama is discovered to have its own pattern of role-playing (the comedies emphasize losing oneself to find oneself; the histories oppose player-kings and would-be kings while tracing the former's loss of role; the early tragedies develop complexities of action and reaction while the later ones stress the loss of identity and the problematic creation of substitutes; the romances detail the recovery of lost identities, or roles), and each play falls into an appropriate slot. Central to Van Laan's theory are his four definitions of types of role-playing: (1) "a part in a play"; (2) "a role temporarily assumed" (traditionally regarded

as the convention of disguise); (3) "the dramatic role . . . [w]here established dramatic practice, literary convention, or the Renaissance doctrine of decorum have been particularly influential" (9-10); and (4) the role "which a character possesses by virtue of his position in a mimetic social structure" (11). Edward Berry in *Shakespeare's Comic Rites* (1984) helps us to see how Van Laan's insights are integral to a reassessment of disguise in Shakespeare. Berry wishes to focus on Van Laan's examination of Rosalind in *As You Like It*:

> Rosalind . . . emerges as the pageant of love's ideal figure because she possesses the two attributes required for all successful role-playing, both onstage and off: the insight to pick the right role and the ability to play it with creative detachment. (1984, 40)

Berry argues that because such heroines can play their roles so gracefully and sophisticatedly "critics too often overlook the fact that disguise marks for them, as unconscious role-playing does for their lovers, a temporary loss or confusion of identity, a period of disorientation" (84). Therefore, Berry sees the convention of disguise as "dynamic process. To put on a mask is to lose oneself; to take it off is to "discover" oneself – in both senses of the world" (84).

Clemen's ideas linking disguise to metamorphosis can be felt again in William Carroll's *The Metamorphoses of Shakespearean Comedy* (1985). Under the general topic of metamorphosis, Carroll applies a wide range of material to an equally wide range of critical methods: New Critical, literary historical, psychoanalytic, anthropological, and deconstructionist. This approach allows Carroll to explore many topics in recent Shakespeare criticism, including twins and doubling, role-playing, the volatility of selfhood and of course, disguise:

> The most graphic way of representing metamorphosis on the stage is through masking and disguise. This strategy dramatizes how identities can shift, collapse, and re-form: to put on a mask is to become someone else. Whatever the degree of intention, whatever the presumed distance between man and mask, disguise always constitutes an encounter with the metaphoric. (26)

Furthermore, Carroll argues that "masquerade does not merely represent metamorphosis: it *is* metamorphosis" (26). The actor in disguise therefore, temporarily, loses its identity and character to the disguised character. Subsequently, Carroll argues that there is an abundance of evidence in Shakespeare of characters whose disguises provide "at least partially transformational" experiences:

> from Viola's recognition of the moral implications in disguise . . . through Rosalind's growing boldness as Ganymede and Hamlet's increasing distress over his "antic disposition," to Perdita's sense that her costume as Flora has altered her own nature until she is becoming Flora. (26)

As I now wish to show, the effects of disguise on the character's self-perception will generate increasingly more attention in the following decades.

1.1.4 New Definitions

At about the same time as Carroll, Peter Hyland, in 'Disguise and Renaissance Tragedy' (1985) was assessing the above-mentioned critical approach towards disguise in Shakespeare and his contemporaries.[4] He finds fault with Bradbrook, whose definition of disguise:

> blurs an important distinction . . . She allows for example, the feigned madness of Hamlet and the real madness of Lear to be called 'disguise' – thereby falsifying the specific meaning of the word. (1985, 161)

For Hyland, there has to be a distinction between "disguise" and "role-playing" - Hamlet's feigned madness, he points out, "does not involve a change in appearance" (161). In targeting Bradbrook there is inevitably criticism of Van Laan, who Hyland believes:

> treats physical disguise as merely one of many forms of role-playing, and goes on to define role-playing in such a way as to involve virtually every Shakespearean character, major or minor – that is, he means by role-playing what Bradbrook means by disguise. (161)

Hyland then contends, against Freeburg and Bradbrook in particular, that the number of disguises in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama is not as plentiful as they claim (162). This is particularly exemplified, he feels, in Shakespeare, "who in his comedies loved to put characters into disguise, avoided doing so in his tragedies; of his major tragedies only *King Lear* contains the disguise motif" (162). From this point on, Hyland wishes to challenge the theory that disguise "was seen to be a device appropriate for comedy rather than tragedy" (162-170). One of his case studies is *King Lear,* and I shall include his comments and conclusions, particularly regarding Edgar, in my next chapter.

The year 1992 saw the arrival of Susan Baker's 'Personating Persons: Rethinking Shakespearean Disguises.' As the title suggests, Baker does indeed propose a fresh approach to disguise in Shakespeare while looking favourably at Hyland's interpretation:

---

[4] Hyland later published and extended his analysis in *Disguise on the Early English Stage* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2011).

> No doubt influenced by Muriel Bradbrook . . . most critics have defined *disguise* broadly to include all sorts of illusion and deception. I agree with Peter Hyland, however, that a narrower definition is more useful. (304)

Baker feels it imperative to distinguish between disguise and what she calls "personation", which indicates:

> an activity frequently undertaken by characters in Shakespearean drama, the activity of personating someone else. That is, I shall use personation to refer to onstage figures behaving as actors (rather than to actors carrying out their profession). (303)

She subsequently argues that "personation requires disguise, but not all disguises are personations, at least not to the same degree" (303). In seeking the narrower definition of disguise that I mentioned, Baker wishes to look beyond the previously held views of disguise that I have outlined to:

> look at what the plays tell Shakespearean disguisers personate. By asking what Shakespearean characters don disguises, I want to ask how personators insert themselves (their alternate, invented selves) into a (putatively) pre-existing social order. (304)

Baker goes on to outline what she believes are four categories of disguise that appear in Shakespearean drama. The first is "to hide their own identities without asserting any other" (305). The action of cloaking, for example, (we see this in allowing for Hal to commit crimes in *Henry IV Part One*, or for movement into enemy territory by Edgar) is seen to equate to an evasion of responsibility. The second disguise category is "substitute another, already existing identity for their own" (305). This time, the disguise is rather imitative, requiring the disguiser to employ "already established status, attributes, history, behavioural quirks and so on" (306). With one or two exceptions, Baker believes that this type of disguise usually involves "illegitimate sexuality" evidenced by "the bed tricks of *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well*" (307). The third category is "invent a specific role or persona for a specific and limited purpose" (305). So, we are made to think of Feste and his disguise as Sir Topas, or Jessica as she becomes a page to escape from Venice. The fourth category is to "adopt a role – personate an invented, particular identity – to be played in multiple circumstances and for multiple audiences" (305). This last type Baker admits she is most interested in as it equates to what it means to be human, what we need to know about ourselves to formulate social relations. Most of all, this "allows us to track interactions through which a "self-conscious" personator maintains a fiction of identity" but Baker is keen to stress that "although personation involves disguisings, not all disguises are personations in the sense that they

make up a new person" (305). As examples of this last type, Baker points to figures such as Caius in *King Lear* and Cesario in *Twelfth Night*.

Further to these categories, Baker goes on to examine notions of "rank and power" which she feels are evident throughout all Shakespearean disguises. Such a focus must begin, she feels, when the disguiser dresses in new clothes. She notes, through the sumptuary laws[5] of the time, how Renaissance clothing participated in a sophisticated system for signifying rank, gender, occupation and allegiance, to signify one's place in the social order. This, in turn, generated an "anxiety about stability in the social hierarchy, particularly about a disjunction between rank and income, about the possibility of social mobility" (313). Subsequently, this is reflected in Shakespeare when characters change their clothes and rank but: "they never of their own (represented) volition disguise *up* the social scale" (313). As a result, this marks "a potent taboo, all the more powerful in that it seems to have operated tacitly rather than through direct censorship" (314).[6]

Keeping to the belief that Shakespeare was exploring and playing with the ideas of taboo in society, Baker extends her opinion to conclude:

> the Shakespearean stage seems to have been free to imitate people exercising legitimated power but not to imitate the successful usurpation of power through any sort of disguise or impersonation. And I would stress that this taboo seems to have applied not simply to royal power but also to the more dispersed relations of power that accompany various ranks and degrees. Indeed, rather considerable care seems to have been taken to protect against representing personation as permitting any appropriation of power. (314)

Furthermore, Baker perceives there to be some resistance towards the associations with downward mobility: "[t]he plays frequently represent disguised characters, despite the downward direction of their personations, either as relatively powerful or as compensated for their loss of status" (315). This means that despite the demotion of rank and in "automatic power, Shakespearean personae in disguise nonetheless seem to preserve power and status relative to those around them" (316). We

---

[5] Baker points to Frances Elizabeth Baldwin, *Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1926) as a useful background text on these laws. The sumptuary laws regulating clothing had a long history in England; such laws were enacted at least as early as 1362, it is claimed. The number of acts and proclamations regulating clothing increased during the reign of Elizabeth, and Baldwin offers three kinds of evidence for her view that sumptuary laws were largely unenforced (54, 82, 86, 117, 167).

[6] Additional anxieties about social rank and clothing were contained within the internal regulations of theatre companies in Shakespeare's lifetime. Actors were fined for all sorts of violations but the biggest fine was imposed on those who would refuse to change clothes and walk into the streets in a stage costume which meant both violating the law and wasting the company's property. Andrew Gurr in *The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) cites as an example the case of Philip Henslowe and the company at the Fortune theatre, "Apparel and playbooks were the company's two vital resources. . . No wonder Henslowe had a rule against players leaving the playhouse wearing his apparel" (194).

need to consider, Baker continues, that the plays are representative of the sophisticated system for signifying rank, gender, occupation and allegiance that she had earlier mentioned. Such a system, "is constitutive of persons" and finds its definition within "a range of discourses pertinent to early modern subjectivity [including] [b]onds, reciprocal obligations, sexual positionings, dwelling-places, regional and paternal origins . . . the distribution of power" (316).

In other words, it is by re-configuring this network of spatial and emotional connections that a dramatic figure may be revealed and disguised.

1.1.5 The Twenty First Century and a Return to Lingualism

Two recent studies conclude this section as I believe they are the most significant additions to the debate on Shakespeare and disguise in the last few years. The first is Kevin Quarmby's *The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (2012). In the early seventeenth century, he contends, the London stage often portrayed a ruler secretly spying on his subjects. Traditionally deemed "Jacobean disguised ruler plays", he adds, these works include Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* among others (3) which is commonly dated to the arrival of James I.[7] Quarmby demonstrates that the disguised ruler motif evolved in the 1580s [8] emerging from medieval folklore and balladry, Tudor Chronicle history and European tragicomedy (20). Familiar on the Elizabethan stage, these incognito rulers initially offered light-hearted, romantic entertainment, portraying a "royal 'comical history,'" exemplified in *Fair Em, the Miller's Daughter of Manchester*, so influential on Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (20-22, 108-111). Throughout the 1590s, as the Queen's health declined, these "comical" disguise episodes of the ruler became:

> subtly conflated with 'Chronicle History' fact-based narratives from the Tudor Chronicles, resulting in a far darker expression of disguised ruler intent. Royal subterfuge was now tainted by a less sympathetic expression of social unease. This blending of intrigue, observation and infiltration, evident in *Richard III* and echoed in the physical and personality disguises of Prince Hal in *Henry IV, Parts 1 & 2* and the Heywood attributed *1 Edward IV*, finds its fullest expression in the disguised ruler stratagem of *Henry V*. (20-21)

[7] See in particular the views of Thomas A. Pendleton and Stephen Mullaney (Quarmby 2012, 18).

[8] Quarmby believed that the work of Freeburg had already acknowledged such a belief: "Seventy years earlier, Victor O. Freeburg demonstrated a far broader heritage for disguised rulers than their Jacobean print or performance histories might suggest" (2012, 5).

By the time James assumed the throne, Quarmby believes that the disguised ruler had become a dangerously voyeuristic political entity: “The . . . ‘climate of surveillance’ also allowed these disguised rulers to reap and purvey personal and collective benefits by exposing wrongdoers to public justice” (2).

Traditional critical perspectives had also disregarded contemporary theatrical competition (8-9), and it is important to consider, Quarmby adds, the demands of the market which, in turn, shaped the repertories:

> Indeed, sixteenth and seventeenth-century playwrights regularly adopted and adapted the motif, recognizing the romantic and/or political potential of royal disguise. So popular did it become that, in the opening decade of the seventeenth century, Londoners saw a number of plays performed that portrayed disguised rulers as principal protagonists travelling unknown among their subjects. These men observed, encouraged and commented upon the political, social and sexual desires of those who, to use Frank Whigham’s words, filled the ‘opportunity – vacuum’ their absence created. (2)

Rivalry among playing companies guaranteed the disguised ruler motif's ongoing vitality, particularly evident in the theatrical output of:

> three adult companies – Lord Strange’s and (later) the Admiral’s Men at the Rose/Fortune and the Chamberlain’s Men (later renamed the King’s Men) at the Theatre/Curtain/Globe – [which] appear regularly to have staged disguised rulers. (8)

In explaining its continued appeal, Quarmby contends that the disguised ruler's presence in a play not only reassured audiences but also facilitated a subversive exploration of contemporary social and political issues. Regarding Shakespeare and a study of *Measure for Measure*, Quarmby conjectures on the possibility that the subversive presence of the Duke may have served as a commentary on the accession of King James I. Quarmby notes:

> The tantalizing reference to a performance of *Measure for Measure* so early in James’s reign supports an occasionalist reading of the play, since it could gauge public reaction to unfolding political events. (105)

However, Quarmby is reluctant to attribute this association any further due to a study of the play in the 1623 Folio; its “uncertain textual integrity, however, means that apparently topical comments might represent later, post-compositional interpolations” (105).

My final examination of disguise in Shakespeare centres on Ton Hoenselaars and Dirk Delabastita’s essay ‘“If but as well I other accents borrow, that can my speech diffuse’: Multilingual perspectives on English Renaissance Drama” (2015). Their approach to disguise, as I

shall shortly explicate, operates within the perception that Shakespeare and his contemporaries were far more than just "English" authors, and their very "Englishness" can only be understood in a broader international and multilingual context. Thus, Shakespeare's characters speak in foreign languages and accents, but they also imitate foreign speech to conceal their identity. One example comes from *All's Well That Ends Well*:

> where the Lords pose as enemy soldiers to expose the cowardice of Parolles; they add linguistic to sartorial disguise and challenge him in the most outlandish gibberish (e.g. "*Boskos thromuldo boskos*" – "*Manka revania dulche* ?" – " *Oscorbidulchos volivorco*", 4.1.69-81). (2015, 3)

Hoensalaars and Delabastita then continue to show how a definition of linguistic disguise extends beyond e.g. the identification of nonsense languages. *Henry VI*, they add, uses "clever emphasis on linguistic difference in terms of nation and class" (3) to ensure that La Pucelle and her soldiers "are not only disguised in sartorial terms as corn suppliers . . . but they also make sure to speak a substandard dialect that is considered inappropriate to the profession" (3). Such passages in Shakespeare signify an "unusual linguistic-cum-class consciousness' although "it is very likely that this play in performance . . . would have conveyed greater linguistic diversity than the surviving text in print" (4).

While examining dialect in Renaissance tragedy, the authors turn to *King Lear*, and reveal the importance of the play to their project. Dialect within Renaissance tragedy "may be rare, but the few occurrences there are yield an unusual insight into the early modern psychology of multilingualism" (5). Kent's disguise as Caius, they contend, uses vocal as well as physical disguise:

> KENT: If but as well I other accents borrow
> That can my speech diffuse, my good intent
> May carry through itself to that full issue
> For which I razed my likeness. (*KL* 1.4. 1-4)

Here, Kent's banishment and its associations with "physical displacement and social mobility …speaks of verbal and other forms of assimilation; and it highlights the role of 'accents' and other processes of linguistic 'borrow[ing]' (5). So, when Kent wants to "diffuse" his speech, "he really feels the need to 'confuse', 'defuse' or 'disguise' his 'voice' so as to avoid being recognised" (5).

Kent's case prompts the authors to state the aims of their own work within Multilingualism and uphold the view that "our identity – as individual persons and as members of social groups (in terms of e.g. social class, gender, nation) – is defined through our discursive positions and choices,

and not merely expressed by them" (6) which makes disguise inextricably bound up in the language we speak, the discourses that we adopt. For Hoensalaars and Delabastita, the reality, appearance, illusion, psychology and role-playing within disguise is solely dependent on the very words we speak.

1.2 Disguise in the Light of New Historicism

Before I begin to assess disguise within the context of New Historicism, it is important to outline how New Historicism emerged within the field of literary criticism and to outline an overall definition of its methodological practises. This will help to see the specificity of individual contributions, the overall diversification of the field, and the conceptual authority of Stephen Greenblatt's studies.

1.2.1 New Historicism: The Fundamental Assumptions

As New Historicists do not concur on a theory of literature[9], it is nonetheless possible to ascertain some of their key assumptions. Subsequently, we see that these centre on the beliefs that a work of literature must be viewed with regard to the time it was written and therefore reflect the cultural and historical contingencies that govern its writing.[10] While rejecting the notions of literature as a self-referential, self-contained art work (so central to New Criticism), New Historicism, clearly evident by its title, naturally sought to distance itself from older Historicism.[11] In contrast to critics such as E.M.W. Tillyard, New Historicism strived to dismantle the

[9] Michael Payne and Jessica Rae Barbera in *A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory: Second Edition* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013) comment on the fact that New Historicism has, overall, been unable to clearly define its aims. Subsequently, it "cannot . . . be described as a unified approach or position, more a cluster of concerns which have been developed and elaborated in diverse ways" (484).

[10] Ian Buchanan in *A Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) comments that: "Where [New Historicism] is different from its precursors is in its conviction that literary texts can in fact tell us something about the world outside of the text" (341). Peter Childs and Roger Fowler in *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006) interpret a similar view, where "New historicism acknowledges both the radical difference of the past and the impossibility of accessing it free from the critic's own historical moment" (109).

[11] Stephen Greenblatt was the first to give "New Historicism" a name in his introduction to *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance* (Norman, Oklahoma: Pilgrim Books, 1982): "Yet diverse as they are, many of the present essays give voice, I think, to what we may call the new historicism, set apart from both the dominant historical scholarship of the past and the formalist criticism that partially displaced this scholarship in the decades after World War Two" (4).

"monological" concept of the world-view or world-picture.[12] As is often argued, in doing so it would aim to supersede the traditional foreground / background dialectic which had been the hallmark of Historicism's "socially-conscious" form of literary study. Instead, the New Historicist critic should be aware of the ideological ramifications of seemingly neutral concepts, whereas the model of the "background" should be replaced by a grasp of "the complex network of institutions, practices, and beliefs that constitute culture as a whole" (Greenblatt 1982, 6).[13]

New Historicism is seen to acknowledge influences from Frenchmen Jacques le Goff and Pierre Nora and the theory of *nouvelle histoire*, outlined in *Faire de l'histoire* (1974), later republished in English in 1985 as *Constructing the Past*: *Essays in Historical Methodology*. Within this publication, le Goff's essay 'Mentalities: a history of ambiguities' focuses on this "new history" and its divergence from previous practices of recording history, which must respect "the product of new attitudes towards work and money, of a mentality . . . which has become associated with the protestant ethic" (167). It is the purpose of this "mentality" to, in turn, "satisfy the historian's desire to 'go further', and it leads to a point of contact with the other human sciences" (167). Such a belief in history and its relationship to the attitude towards work and money is reflected in the Marxist influence so prevalent in New Historicism and Cultural Materialism, which I will deal with later in this section. In addition, the reference to a relationship between recording history and other human sciences is developed in Stephen Greenblatt's reading of Clifford Geertz.[14] Elsewhere, the remaining essays in le Goff and Nora's publication go onto expand and clarify the new historians' key beliefs. Of note is Pierre Chaunu's view that new historians must look to administrative documents as vital source materials, "which I shall here call a method for serial

[12] See E.M.W. Tillyard. *The Elizabethan World Picture: A Study of the Idea of Order in the Age of Shakespeare, Donne & Milton* (London: Vintage, 1959).

[13] To scholars such as R.C Murfin and S.M. May, it is sometimes clear that similarities nonetheless remain between the approach of Old and New Historicism. In *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms. Third Edition* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2008), the editors point out that New Historicists analyze text with an eye to history and with this in mind, New Historicism could be said to be not "new". Many of the Historicist critiques that existed between the 1920s and the 1950s also focused on literature's historical content. These critics based their assumptions of literature on the connection between texts and their historical contexts.

[14] H. Aram Veeser, in the introduction to *The New Historicism* (New York, London: Routledge, 1989), comments on the degree of contact that New Historicism has had with these other human sciences:

> Far from a single projectile hurled against Western civilization, New Historicism has a portmanteau quality. It brackets together literature, ethnography, anthropology, art history, and other disciplines and sciences, hard and soft. (xi)

administrative history" (39). This method was particularly adopted in the work of New Historicist scholars.

To reiterate what is key to New Historicism's assessment of a literary work, there is the insistence that attention must be given to the historical background that governs the works' composition and the resulting construction of human identity. Assuming that human nature cannot be seen as something which "rises above" history, New Historicism upholds, following Louis Montrose, the notion of "the textuality of history" i.e. an understanding that "we can have no access to a full and authentic past, a lived material existence, unmediated by the surviving textual traces of the society in question" (1989, 20). Aware of the limitations of our own "historicity", the most that a New Historicist analysis of literature can aspire to, as Catherine Belsey notes, is to "use the text as a basis for the reconstruction of an ideology" (1980, 144). This frequently quoted early declaration by Belsey aptly highlights the central aims and concerns of New Historicists, and indirectly points to Michel Foucault as source of considerable influence.[15]

In addition, New Historicism is indebted to Marxism, especially the writings of Louis Althusser who contended that ideology emerges in a number of ways within the discourses of an epoch's self-governing institutes, including literature, and also that ideology works clandestinely to then discursively subordinate the speakers of the language to the concerns of the ruling elite.[16] There are influences on New Historicism from developments in cultural anthropology, notably Clifford Geertz's view that a culture is constructed by a distinguishing series of signification structures, and his employment of what he entitles "thick descriptions" – the intense scrutiny, or "reading," of certain community situations in order to reclaim the meanings it has for its participants. In addition, these descriptions reclaim, within the cultural system, the overall arrangements of the codes, laws and forms of thinking that authorise the item with those meanings.[17] It is against this background that we may assess the significance of the "founding"

---

[15] See M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1973) and *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Random House, 1975). Stephen Greenblatt comments on the influence of Foucault and what it meant to him after attending one of his seminars at Berkeley University, USA. In the preface to the 2005 publication of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, he comments: "Foucault's whole intellectual performance was thrilling: I had never heard anyone speak as he did . . . I would rush away filled with almost evangelical excitement" (xiv).

[16] See L. Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses.' In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Trans. Brewster, Ben. (London: Monthly Review P, 1971): 127-86.

[17] See C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

studies of Stephen Greenblatt, and it is within his studies that I find the greatest relevance to my research.

1.2.2 Stephen Greenblatt and Renaissance Self-Fashioning

As we saw with my previous investigation into disguise in Shakespeare, I have tried to trace the development of disguise from a purely mechanistic analysis to ultimately a more inclusive definition encompassing its relation to psychology, role-playing and linguistics. Within the realm of New Historicist thought, it is imperative, I feel, to examine Stephen Greenblatt's highly influential concept of self-fashioning, outlined in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (1980). It is within this inherently theatrical notion of self-fashioning that we find a remarkably rich inspiration for the interpretation of Shakespeare's incognito figures, both with regard to their masking strategies and to the psychological conditions which make their disguises desirable, sustained or abandoned. As I will clarify, Greenblatt's somewhat indirect (or "instrumental") preoccupation with disguise can be understood from firstly examining the "modes of behaviour" which he meticulously anatomizes to expose the early modern strategies of self-fashioning. Accordingly, the shaping of one's identity appears inevitably tied to role-playing, and therefore, to disguising what seems spurious or contrary to the desired purpose. Needless to say, such a broad understanding of the operation of disguise casts new light on the complexity of stage designs, elucidating the psychological, social and political consequences of the camouflage. Disguise is always an anomaly based on the prolonged and deliberate distortion of reality. And yet, argues Greenblatt, self-fashioning cannot proceed without feigning roles. How did he come to believe it?

Greenblatt first assumed that writers of the Renaissance period were capable of making radical choices while representing themselves and designing their characters (1980, 256).[18]

---

[18] It is important to acknowledge the relevance, which Greenblatt himself refers to, of his earlier book, *Sir Walter Raleigh: The Renaissance Man and his Roles* (New Haven, Connecticut, USA: Yale University Press, 1973). In the preface to the 2005 of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* he quotes:

> For however unusual Raleigh was . . . his career only made sense as part of a much larger cultural phenomenon that allowed a personality such as his full scope to express itself. . . I kept coming back to the question of what forces were at work in sixteenth century England that enabled individuals to conceive of themselves as malleable roles in life itself as well as in writing. (xiii)

However, eventually he felt that cultural constraints somewhat belie individual freedom and therefore determine the “shapes” the self can take:

> But as my work progressed, I perceived that fashioning oneself and being fashioned by cultural institutions - family, religion, state - were inseparably intertwined. In all my texts and documents, there were, so far as I could tell, no moments of pure, unfettered subjectivity; indeed, the human subject itself began to seem remarkably unfree, the ideological product of the relations of power in a particular society. (256)

Specifically, the acts of self-fashioning within literature are related to the strategies of self-fashioning available in the extra-literary world that surrounds the writer, to the “interpretive constructions the members of a society apply to their experiences” (1980, 2). Such acts, Greenblatt argues, are always essentially triadic and always occur in relationship to the power structures of a given culture. In a culturally-determined dialectic between identification and rejection, the self takes form from its submission to an authority at least partially outside the self and from rejection of “a demonic and alien Other” (9). To demonstrate this theory, Greenblatt looks at six representative figures – Sir Thomas More, William Tyndale, Thomas Wyatt, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, and William Shakespeare - to show how their writing revealed some of the characteristic strategies for self-fashioning available in sixteenth-century culture.

1.2.3 The Concept of Disguise vs. the Three Modes of Self-Fashioning Behaviour

In his discussion of the construction of identity of the key literary figures of the age, Greenblatt sets aside the three modes of self-fashioning behaviour: the mode of rhetoric, the mode of nonsense, and the mode of loss and improvisation, all of them assuming a certain degree of disguise to test the effectiveness and consequences of the assumed roles. Significantly, these self-fashioning modes of behaviour cannot be linked to a character in physical or sartorial disguise exclusively. They are equally operable within those characters who do not choose to become sartorially incognito as those modes of behaviour still govern the subject outside of such a convention. And yet, it seems tempting to explore the operation of the modes of self-fashioning (as defined and exemplifed by Greenblatt) in the construction of stage disguise by Shakespeare. Even more so that the psychological conflicts deducible in the self-fashioning subject become much more radically enacted when a character decides to disguise in this way. This view, I believe, will

be borne out in my choice of Shakespearean self-fashioning subjects that I will commence looking at in Chapter Two.

The Mode of Rhetoric

Greenblatt outlines the importance of the mode of rhetoric within the education of Renaissance gentlemen:

> The chief intellectual and linguistic tool . . . which held the central place in the humanist education . . . Encouraging men to think of all forms of human discourse as argument, it conceived of poetry as a performing art, literature as a storehouse of models. It offered men the power to shape their worlds, calculate the probabilities, and master the contingent, and it implied that human character itself could be similarly fashioned, with an eye to audience and effect. *Rhetoric served to theatricalize culture, or rather it was the instrument of a society which was already deeply theatrical*. (my emphasis, 162)

In offering the power to shape the man of the Renaissance and his world, rhetoric can be seen not only as a mode of behavior but also as potentially the most powerful mode of disguise.[19] Significantly enough, this mode of disguise as I will now show, is characterized by a range of linguistic features.

In fashioning the self, Greenblatt argues that feigning is "an important part of the instruction given by almost every court manual" (163). In addition to this, the mode of rhetoric involves the self's need to borrow discourses to necessitate the process of self-fashioning. William Tyndale's *The Obedience of a Christian Man* is cited by Greenblatt as a work that initially borrows and then rejects the Church's conception of "interiority" to create "the fashioning of the Protestant discourse of self" (1980, 85). This self-fashioning arises, Greenblatt adds:

[19] Despite there being a difference from Greenblatt in a generally more conservative reading of Renaissance man, Rhodri Lewis's *Hamlet and the Vision of Darkness* (2017) is very much written in the spirit of New Historicism, proving to be a very insightful examination of the use of rhetoric within Ciceronian models. Like Greenblatt, the author looks at the correlation between the structure of a Shakespearean character and its social world (in creating *a persona*) and shows how Hamlet tries to reject Ciceronian discourse, borrowing an array of other discourses in the process. There are further parallels with Greenblatt as Lewis highlights how Ciceronian models involve the self's desire to attain 'self-knowledge' (22). More significantly, Lewis feels, quoting Thomas Hobbes' interpretation of the models, that Cicero's definition of *a persona* may also entail disguise (25). Subsequently, in *Hamlet*, Lewis feels that: "Within the play's Ciceronian field of reference, one's soul or essential self is something that can only fully exist when performed through a *persona"* (109-110). It can be seen from Lewis's perspective, therefore, that disguise is essential to understanding self-perception – one cannot exist independently of another. I will return to a discussion of Lewis in Chapter 4 as I believe his views lend themselves to an apposite investigation of the motives of Feste and Autolycus to disguise.

> out of conflicting impulses: rage against and identification with authority, hatred of the father and ardent longing for union with the father, confidence in oneself and in an anxious sense of weakness and sinfulness, justification and guilt. (85)

Clearly, this re-defined notion of "interiority" can only happen due to the stressful examination of some inherent ambiguities. Furthermore, it is this borrowing and rejection of discourses that is seen to create a discursive influence on the inner and outward self, forcing them to behave differently and so employ disguise. Such a discursive influence reminds us of the pressures that the self undergoes (while disguised) in its desire to restrain and prevent the self's inner motives for disguise becoming revealed. It also reminds us of the inner conflict within the self-fashioning subject during the act of disguise as there remains the condition to behave differently (both inwardly and outwardly) in the quest to "shape" its new identity.

By pointing to the similarity between Tyndale's defiance of Catholicism and that of Erasmus, Greenblatt strived to expose how borrowing another's discourse can assist in shaping the self we want to become; "Tyndale may indeed have conceived his project from this vision of Erasmus; have we not just witnessed the way a man's whole sense of himself may be shaped by another's words?" (106).

With reference to his writing against the Reformed Church[20], Greenblatt contends that Sir Thomas More exemplifies another characterization within rhetoric also essential to disguise, the varying use of dialect or voice:

> theatrical flexibility manifested by the writer of the hundreds upon hundreds of pages of polemics, in the ability to shift voices to suit the particular scene: patient with the perplexed, violent with the violent, solemnly intellectual, savagely mocking, coarsely popular, or gently funny. (66)

More exemplifies a dexterity in writing in the vernacular, targeting his native audience both in terms of mentality and language. Such flexibility, exhibited in the writing of More, conveys for Greenblatt "the odd sense of the disposability of More's discourse; his work longs to disappear, to cede place to multiple voices" (104). Greenblatt believes that More, in his desire to replace the texts of the Reformist church with such a heteroglossia, was committed to eliminating his own voice in the process. Regarding Shakespeare, Greenblatt also notes the playwright's commitment

[20] Greenblatt has in mind here More's *Responsio ad Lutherum* (1523), a work commissioned by King Henry VIII to function as a critical response to the teachings of Martin Luther.

to "the shifting voices and audiences, with their shifting aesthetic assumptions and historical imperatives, that govern a living theater" (254).

The final aspect of rhetoric as a mode of behavior linked to disguise is that of wordplay.[21] As much as a character can be veiled by costume so words can be veiled in the meanings they convey.

The Mode of Nonsense

Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, Greenblatt argues, is "at once the perfect expression of [More's] self-conscious role-playing and an intense meditation upon its limitations" (1980,33). Such instances of role-playing are evidenced in the characters of Raphael Hythlodaeus and the "More" character. Hythlodaeus, Greenblatt argues, is the antithesis of the author's own character, "the sign of More's awareness of his own self-creation, hence his own incompleteness" (33). Subsequently the "More" character is one alike the author, typified "in a hundred ways to his particular time and place, to his offices, responsibilities, family and friends" (33). Eventually More the author seeks to make Hythlodaeus a more fantastical creation but this involves More becoming "fictionalized" (33). So "More" becomes the character Morus in an imaginary dialogue with Hythlodaeus, that leads to the latter berating Morus for his "accommodations to fictions (*fabulae*) [being] tantamount to the telling of lies (*falsa*)" (36). In this dialogue Greenblatt feels that:

> More isolates, on the one hand, his public self and, on the other, all within him that is excluded from this carefully crafted identity, calls the former *Morus* and the latter *Hythlodaeus* and permits them to fight it out. (36)

What is important, Greenblatt later adds, is to realize that:

> "Hythlodaeus" means "Well learned in nonsense," that More deliberately introduces comic and ironic elements that distance his fantasy from himself and his readers, and that More remains ambivalent about many of his most intensely felt perceptions. (54)

Thus, in his struggle to accommodate his public and private persona, Morus first embraces disguise and then augments the appearance of comedy and irony to create a nonsensical, and therefore

[21] This is a definition I want to expand on later when I discuss the development of New Historicism as there is greater scope within the realm of wordplay and disguise that Greenblatt only alludes to and which other later critics focus on in more detail.

protective, construction of reality. Such nonsensical construction invariably blurs the edge of meanings and helps to disguise his real, innermost feelings.

The Modes of Loss and Improvisation

The desire to disguise inevitably engenders a departure from the previous identity in the quest to find another one. Therefore, any new identity, Greenblatt contends, "always contains within itself the signs of its … loss" (1980,9)[22] In the construction of a self-fashioned identity, the self-fashioning subject still exhibits to others the loss of its former identity, the signs of its submission to the processes of self-fashioning. This sense of loss coexists with some outbursts of improvisation, which Greenblatt defines as "the ability both to capitalize on the unforeseen and to transform given materials into one's own scenario" (227). It is the culture of disguise which invites and fosters improvisation:

> we may ask ourselves what conditions exist in Renaissance culture that make such an improvisation possible. It depends first upon the ability and willingness to play a role, to transform oneself, if only for a brief period and with mental reservations, into another. This necessitates the acceptance of disguise, the ability to effect a divorce in Ascham's phrase, between the tongue and the heart. (228)

Shakespeare's Iago is cited by Greenblatt as a key exemplar of improvisation and therefore disguise. Iago's improvisation "depends upon role-playing, which is allied to the capacity … 'to see oneself in the other fellow's situation'" (235). Hence Iago's improvisation and manipulating devices derive from his ability to design and imagine his own fictional role and, by way of consequence, to disguise himself. And yet, as Greenblatt insists, there is no faith shown in human autonomy while making such improvisations. "Even a hostile improvisation reproduces the relations of power that it hopes to displace and absorb" (253).

1.2.4 In Search of Inner Motivations: Desire and Fear

The modes of behaviour that operate within self-fashioning are very much outward manifestations of behaviour. What is important to acknowledge is how such outward

[22] Greenblatt later outlines the loss that Othello feels, the signs of his loss becoming impossible to articulate (producing the language of nonsense) in comprehending the distance between illusion and reality, "a loss depicted discursively in his incoherent ravings [which] arises not only from the fatal conjunction of Desdemona's love and Iago's hate, but from the nature of that identity" (244).

manifestations are linked to the inner motivations of the self-fashioning subject. Greenblatt first outlines the importance of inward pressures in his study of Christopher Marlowe: "the heart of Renaissance orthodoxy is a vast system of repetitions in which disciplinary paradigms are established and men gradually learn what to desire and what to fear" (1980, 209). Yet there is also evidence in the case of Thomas More of a conscious rejection of learning what to desire and what to fear, or, in other words, a "profound desire to escape from the identity so crafted" (13). The ultimate quest of this desire is to provide the self with what Greenblatt often feels is a deluded goal, which is to "take control of one's life by finding within oneself a sustaining center" (129).[23] More's self-fashioning "rests upon his perception of all that it excludes, all that lies in perpetual darkness, all that is known only as absence" (58). Later Greenblatt defines darkness in its association with a sense of guilt and the need for reconciliation with divine authority.[24] It is important to notice that as long as these deeply religious or mystical experiences shape the character's course of his actions, they remain also radically private and intimate, and are kept secret to the outside world. The self is torn between a desire for withdrawal and concealment of the inner self and the fearful struggle to play a more public tune in accepting religious authority and power. By its very nature, the inner darkness of the faithful remains a mystery, obscured by silence or guarded by self-restraint. Characteristically enough, Greenblatt sees also this darkness concealed in a variety of disguises or consciously crafted variants of identity. This view of Greenblatt's is again exemplified in the case of More in a return to the imaginary character More in *Utopia*:

> More is committed to asking himself at all times "What would 'More' say about this?" and to ask such a question implies the possibility of other identities unfulfilled by the particular role that he is in the act of projecting. From this, the peculiar shadows that hover about him throughout his career, not only the shadow of the designing consciousness manipulating the mask but the shadow of other selves, crouched in the darkness. (31)

So, the desires bound up in the need to disguise and to continually do so, is also wedded to the fear that those disguises embodied in those "other selves" will soon materialise and await confrontation.

---

[23] Greenblatt elsewhere refers to this as "self-knowledge" and "self-content" (125,131).

[24] The mode of darkness also appears to be linked with the need for absolution in the self's desire of reconciliation with God. Greenblatt illustrates this in his analysis of penitential psalms:

> As the Church's penitential system develops, this pattern becomes institutionalized, prescriptive. Thus in a canon from the monk Regina's *Ecclesiastical Discipline* (ca. 906), the bishop is instructed to lead the penitents into the church, where "prostrate upon the floor, he shall chant with tears, together with all the clergy, the seven penitential psalms, for their absolution" (117).

Greenblatt goes onto outline another, as if contradictory, reaction of the self to prolonged (or profound) disguise, the need to radically expose the truth and "undo" all false acts, a reaction which leads to "ritual expiation" (84). This seems to be a psychological response (Greenblatt does not decide whether this is conscious or unconscious) to the aggreviating sense of guilt and the resulting stress engendered by self-fashioning. Finally, there exists a mode of desire for the self-fashioning subject to plunge into the feared, forbidden taboo sphere or prohibited realm. Such a plunge is to find that mistaken "self-knowledge" or "'self-content' [which is] the key to a mastery over the accidents of existence, the answer to the restlessness, anxiety, and posing of court society" (128).

Outlined in this way, the self-fashioning modes of behaviour are triggered by the inner modes of desire and fear that make the self-fashioning subject seek a stable identity. In this quest we are reminded of Soren Kierkegaard's own examination of the inner self, firstly in its relation to the aesthetic and ethical sphere in *Either / Or: A Fragment of Life* (1843) and its later relation to the religious sphere, outlined in his *Fear and Trembling* (1843). It is within this religious sphere where Kierkegaard believes the self to find an identity divested of social, aesthetic and ethical roles, enabling a higher order of religious consciousness, an unfettered reflection on Christian faith.[25] This, as Kierkegaard claims, nonetheless results in the self's anxiety as it confronts its own nothingness, a realisation that consciousnesses' only place of rest is far from any illusory state of contentment as Greenblatt would also attest.

What now remains to be considered as one of the governing characteristics of self-fashioning is Greenblatt's belief that "self–fashioning is always, not exclusively, in language" (9). The modes of desire and fear often express themselves in language and, as I wish to show, are also typical of disguise.[26] I will now outline the connection between the modes of desire and fear and their verbal expressions, showing how they "erupt" within discourse in several ways, often becoming subversive. It is also important as Greenblatt states, to explore how these modes of desire and fear sometimes do not find obvious verbal expression and yet can be clearly sensed or identified by the surrounding. Two of these are the focus of my first examination, the mode of inwardness and the related mode of aggression.

---

[25] I am indebted here to Donald Palmer's article, 'Kierkegaard on the relation between selfhood and ethics,' *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*. Vol. 8, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 1981): 94-109.

[26] I will proceed to show from Chapter 2 how Greenblatt's insights into language and disguise are vital in helping us understand Shakespeare's characters in disguise.

Greenblatt firstly attributes inwardness to Sir Thomas More and his desire for a "private inwardness" to maintain "a calculated distance between his public persona and his inner self" (45). Subsequently, "[h]is whole identity depended upon the existence of a private retreat; his silences were filled with unexpressed judgments, inner thoughts" (45). In believing the reason for More's retreat was a need for private confession to God, Greenblatt also cites other reasons for inwardness:

> As the public, civic world made increasing claims on men's lives, so, correspondingly, men turned in upon themselves, sought privacy, withdrew for privileged moments from urban pressures. This dialectic of engagement and detachment is among those forces that generated the intense individuality that since Burckhardt, has been recognized as one of the legacies of the Renaissance. Burckhardt to be sure, viewed such individuality as a largely secular phenomenon but it now seems clear that both secular and religious impulses contributed to the same psychic structure. (45)

Greenblatt later finds parallels to More's situation in Wyatt and the "inwardness of the penitential psalms" in which inwardness is to be found "embedded in the poems themselves, which are among the most influential expressions of soul-sickness in the Judeo-Christian tradition. They speak of stain and cleansing, guilt and redemption" (116). It is because Greenblatt believes that Wyatt's poetry is "able to engage in complex reflections upon the system of values that generated them" that it makes them "more convincing . . . than any [poetry] written not only in his generation but in the preceding century" (156). Wyatt's achievement is seen to be "dialectical":

> if, through the logic of its development, courtly self-fashioning seizes upon inwardness to heighten its histrionic power, inwardness turns upon self-fashioning and exposes its underlying motives, its origins in aggression, bad faith, self-interest, and frustrated longing. Wyatt's poetry originates in a kind of diplomacy, but the ambassadorial expression is given greater and greater power until it intimates a perception of its own situation that subverts its official purpose. Wyatt's great lyrics are the expression of this dialectic; they give voice to competing modes of self-presentation, one a manipulation of appearances to achieve a desired end, the other a rendering in language, an exposure, of that which is hidden within. (156)

Therefore, it is inwardness that contributes to the eventual subversion of the writer's original intentions. From the premise of the self's silent retreat, inwardness yet disguises the potential release of the self's frustrated desires and fears to erupt through language and subvert the discourse of court ideology.

Such eruptions of frustration are elsewhere evident in Wyatt's poetry, Greenblatt adds, and often appear within a form characterized by a mode of obscurity, where "the poems only make sense in a society of competing players" (137). Subsequently, we witness those frustrations erupt into discourse: "[t]he aggression, anxiety and vulgarity inherent in all such competitions are, on

occasion, undisguised" (137). Hence it is important to note that the situation of disguise often allows for the manifestations of the normally supressed feelings or behaviours kept under control.

I have already touched briefly on the mode of aggression and its relation to inwardness and elsewhere in Wyatt's poetry, we see aggression playing a major role in his "speaker's relation with women [which] are charged with that will to power, that dialectic of domination and submission" (151). Here, we see the relation to disguise for where there is evidence of passivity from the speaker, there "seems to be disguised aggression" (152). Wyatt's poetry follows a pattern, Greenblatt argues. "The man is sexually aggressive; his desire can only be satisfied through the transformation of aggression into passivity; this passivity – at once masked aggression . . . invites embrace and flight" (152).[27] And so a natural conclusion here is to assume that it is inwardness which signals the presence of the vast spaces of inner life whereas aggression erupts into discourse revealing the existence of the supressed emotions.

We have already learned of More's tendency to be "savagely mocking" of the Reformists in his writing and this mode I wish to return to here as another that characterizes a verbal expression of desire and fear. Mocking of course involves, as Greenblatt recognizes, "the authentic element of aggression in the jesting" (71). Hence the situation of disguise often allows for astonishing intense outbursts of aggresive behaviours, particurarly in the form of mocking. And yet it also involves a disguise of its own, a kind of defence mechanism, as the humour embodied in More's *De tristitia* and his mocking of the role of a martyr firstly involves a "response to fear" and to the anxiety of Christ's predicament in the Garden of Gethsemane "tortured by the fear that he may yield to despair" (72).[28]

In turn in his study of Wyatt, Greenblatt comments on Wyatt's power of mockery where language becomes an implement which enables Wyatt "to swear and speak more forcefully and persuasively than his mistress [which] is the heart of his power" (139). Furthermore, this ability to mock forms, for Greenblatt, is one of the vital modus operandi in ensuring "sexual and political survival" (139). If mockery forms part of such a calculated recklessness, it is therefore a disguise for such recklessness in seeking this sexual and political survival.

---

[27] In Greenblatt's analysis of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* he too finds acts of aggression although they cannot be considered truly subversive as "they are bound in by the orthodoxy against which they revolt" (211).

[28] This passage is taken from what Greenblatt describes as "[t]he most moving moments of the *Tower Works"* (43) (my italics). It is not a well-known text and the mocking of Reformists is a different thing than mocking the role of a martyr.

Closely related to the mode of aggression is the mode of violence, which is characterized in both verbal and non-verbal expression. Verbalised violence is particularly evident in the work of More with its occasional recourse to "rhetorical violence" becoming "the raw voice of hatred, hatred that would gladly kill what it perceives as demonic" (65). In Marlowe and *Tamburlaine the Great*, non-verbalised violence is seen to provide, Greenblatt claims, the belief in Tamburlaine that life has a purpose and coherence. This enables, he adds, the protagonist to assert his identity.

Aggression and violence are modes that we have seen arise from the mode of loathing or hatred which I have already referred to while discussing More's use of rhetorical violence.[29] Greenblatt also investigates the employment of the modes of loathing and hatred in the works of Tyndale and Wyatt and argues that in both authors, we witness a portrayal of hatred that is a disguise for, or wish for, its opposite. Within Tyndale's fashioning of the Protestant discourse of self, Greenblatt claims there simultaneously resides a despising of, and desire for reuniting with, the ecclesiastical authority (85). In Wyatt, and through the topic of disguise, Greenblatt perceives a hatred in the poet's work of a "doubleness," a situation where institutional corruption nonetheless guarantees "sexual and political success" (160). And yet, in Wyatt's desire to assert his "manliness" in his poetry, there actually resides the poets' own penchant for disguise. The writer, Greenblatt adds, becomes involved in "a theatrical manipulation of appearances," itself a false, if somewhat diplomatic and risky expression of honesty within the relationship of a writer to authority (160).

Finally, and by no means least is a mode, both verbally and non-verbally expressed, which underpins the condition of the self-fashioning subject expressing his fears and desires – anxiety. We see this in Greenblatt's views governing a "rebirth" of self-fashioning: "Thus separated from the imitation of Christ – a separation that can . . . give rise to considerable anxiety – self-fashioning acquires a new range of meanings" (3). We have already witnessed More's intense anxiety, and his efforts to disguise it, as he fears and contemplates Christ's fate in the Garden of Gethsemane. Wyatt's psalms as we have also seen provide a retreat and a means to disguise anxiety. Spenser also faces, Greenblatt argues, "deep anxiety about the impure claims of art" (190) as his "sensuous description" of the Bower of Bliss is an attempt to disguise the doubts and skepticism about his

---

[29] Greenblatt feels so compelled to get to the root of More's hatred as he wishes to "now turn to the identities of those he so much loathed" (76) to locate the particularly published sources that so enraged and provoked More.

'"famous antique history"' by reminding the reader of the recent discoveries in Peru, the Amazon and Virginia. (190-191).

1.2.5 Stephen Greenblatt and a Theory of Disguise

It is my belief that with *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* Greenblatt develops analyses which appear highly relevant to the study of disguise in the early modern social and literary context. Significantly enough, Stephen Greenblatt never offers a comprehensive theory of disguise, either on stage on in real life, though, of course, both settings would host similar strategies of concealment, outward masks and protective denial of true intentions. However, it is precisely this proximity of contemporary social practices and their stage imitations which makes Greenblatt's insights, the regularities he exposes and the motivations he unveils, of particular interest to drama interpreters. Following the inherent sartorial metaphor, Greenblatt's self-fashioning inevitably entails a change of clothes, be those new garments or diverse types of discourse or patterns of behaviors which help to shape, hide or protect, the vulnerable, hesitant self. Whether willingly or not, the strategies of stage disguise may only but mirror the maneuvers of the apprehensive, watchful self. The observations that I will shortly outline, correspond to my claims concerning Greenblatts' theory of disguise (which he did not write and yet can be credited with due to the key significance of disguise in his interpretation of Renaissance culture typified by, argues Greenblatt, the predominance of rhetoric and ever-present theatricality (compare *Self Fashioning* 162)).

Consequently, in Greenblatt's study of Renaissance self-fashioning, disguise appears to be an element or in fact an underlying strategy used in various modes of behaviour, those of rhetoric, nonsense, loss and improvisation. If all these modes serve to promote a certain version of the self, they also inevitably call for the opposite, for example, for hiding, masking, using camouflage and therefore ultimately disguising the competing identities.

Disguising rhetoric is characterized by the using of feigned language, borrowed discourses, dialect (or voices) and wordplay. Borrowing discourses creates a discursive influence on the inner and outward self, forcing them to behave differently and therefore employ disguise. In turn in the case of wordplay, the awareness of shifts in the meaning of words could be seen as a powerful tool in the realm of disguise, providing a means of manipulation to fashion an outcome as someone may see fit. With the mode of nonsense, we witness the struggle of the self-fashioning subject to accommodate a public and private persona, without revealing any dangerous traits of identity, or

revealing them in a manner which cannot be trusted. Finally, with the mode of loss and improvisation we witness the self-fashioning subject utilising a range of manipulating devices which derive from an ability to design and imagine its own fictional role and, consequently, to employ disguise.

Crucially from the interpretative point of view, these modes of behaviour are subject to the modes of desire and fear within the self-fashioning subject. The mode of darkness disguises the inner-self, in conflict with the outer-self trying to play its role in public, accepting religious authority and power. Secondly, the subject undergoes a radical concealment of identity where its desires are attached to the need to disguise, generating fear and anxiety that other disguises will soon appear and need to be confronted. With the need to liberate those desires and fears, to emancipate yourself from your identity, from disguise itself, we see that this is still attached to the discourse of the other that you seek to separate yourself from. Finally, there is the desire to plunge into the forbidden, prohibited realm where the subject radically seeks a reformation of the self. Therefore disguise, is linked to the quest of the self (and the self-fashioning subject) to achieve, in Greenblatt's view, a mistaken belief in the attainment of self-knowledge or as he puts it, a 'self-content'.

Lastly, I have shown how the modes of desire and fear are both verbally and non- verbally expressed by the self-fashioning subject, becoming subversive as they "erupt" into discourse. As I have noted there are implications, too, for disguise. The mode of inwardness can disguise the potential release of the self's frustrated desires and fears to erupt through language and subvert the discourse of court ideology, while the mode of aggression can be disguised by the cloak of passivity. In turn the mode of mockery can form part of a calculated recklessness, itself a disguise in seeking sexual and political survival. The mode of hatred or loathing is something that masks the self-fashioner's desire to wish the opposite, to seek reunion from conflict for example. The mode of slander or insult is seen to be another useful tool with the disguiser's tool kit, coupled with the abilities of someone who could perceive shifts in the meaning of language. Finally, the mode of anxiety is prevalent within disguise – it is the mode that drives self-fashioning itself, the desire to locate the self-fashioning subject within the domain of self-knowledge or self-content.

Disguise and the Relations of Power

The self's relation to its culture appears crucial in the interpretation of disguise. This relation produces tensions which encourage self-fashioning, and in consequence, unstable or transient self-identity. We have already observed how self-fashioning subjects like More employ disguise to both retreat to an inner self from the absolutist conception of the self and at the same time to disguise further in public acceptance of either absolutist, court or political ideology. As a result, we have seen the self-fashioning subject struggle to live with the demands of self-fashioning itself, the effects that it has on the psychology of the subject imposed by "the renewal of existence through repetition of the self-constituting act" (1980, 201). Therefore, the more rigorous the self-fashioning act and the act of disguising, the greater psychological pressure placed upon the self-fashioning subject.

Greenblatt contends that: "There is no such thing as a single 'history of the self' . . . except as the product of our need to reduce the intricacies of complex and creative beings to safe and controllable order" (8). Therefore, he believes that human nature is not seen to have developed through history and remains synchronically governed by the societal, cultural and political forces of the time. Furthermore, humans are subject to these forces, unable to possess the autonomy to assert their own identity beyond the discourses of authoritarian power. Greenblatt notices this relationship in Marlovian heroes, where "both the self and object so constituted are tragically bounded by the dominant ideology against which they vainly struggle" (214). However, Greenblatt's beliefs on the self and its relationship to authoritarian discourse have met with considerable criticism and I shall deal with it later in this chapter.

In his analysis of More and Tyndale, Greenblatt focuses more deeply on two writers bound up within such power relations. They both struggle to assert their convictions against the tide of authoritarian discourse which appears to be on the one hand "calm and benign" and yet, possessing and then delivering a potent "disclosure" of its force (76). Power is evidently disguised in authoritarian texts and Greenblatt goes onto provide examples of those discourses, possessing a "shaping" power, a controlling obedience of its subjects. One of these is the 1525 English New Testament, where Greenblatt notices "The rhetorical force [which] depends upon the reader's grasp of the *stories* in their full narrative power and upon the *presentness* of the language" (105). The more chronologically ordered and "openly English" work (less subject to the interpretations of

translation which could disguise intended meaning through the efforts of such interpretations), the more powerful the work became.

What is clear is that Greenblatt believes all these "shaping" powers, present in authoritarian discourses, are "fictions," becoming the supreme disguise mechanisms for justification of that authority. Greenblatt notes that the Church is content with this status quo "since its own essence is *fiction"* (112). As he later comments through the studies of Ernst Kantorowicz, the power of Elizabeth I was also connected to the use of fictions through "the King's Two Bodies", hence the immortal "body politic" and her mortal "body natural" (166). In turn, Shakespeare is believed by Greenblatt to continually explore, throughout his oeuvre, the relations of power with culture (254) and this is a topic that I frequently wish to address in my analysis of Shakespearean incognito figures.

So, the ultimate sense of appeal in the examination of this disguise effect is that there is no scope for subversion or dissidence in the self-fashioning subject. Any attempt to genuinely subvert the dominant ideological discourse(s) of those in power can only finally reproduce the modes and fears of a self-fashioning subject living in submission to that power. In 1981 (and through two subsequent revisions), Greenblatt goes on to develop his concept of subversion and containment and its governance by the dominant ideology in his essay 'Invisible Bullets'. It is important to mention this here due to the extensive influence it had on the development of New Historicist thought, the emergent Cultural Materialist methodology and the later developments in New Historicism. I will examine this essay in more detail in Chapter three as it has a direct bearing on the political implications of disguise that I wish to examine in Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays (from *Richard II* to *Henry IV Parts One* and *Two* and finally to *Henry V*).

1.3 The Evolution of New Historicism and Its Impact on Shakespeare Studies

As I have already shown with Greenblatt's publication, New Historicist analysis and interpretation became particularly noticeable in both literary and cultural studies of the Renaissance, particularly on seminal literary figures like Shakespeare. In New Historicist readings, Shakespeare is not a representative of a typical English/British cultural paradigm, nor as an unparalleled literary talent, but as a writer whose work is indivisible from its historical background. While examining the development of New Historicism in the last four decades, relating it

specifically to disguise in Shakespeare's plays, I will focus on how New Historicism has also developed our understanding of Shakespeare. Also, I will assess how these critics seek to embrace or distance themselves from Greenblatt's ideas (while firstly examining the development of his own ideas) and to whether there can be any extended definition in the eventual assessment of the verbal and sartorial disguises of Shakespearean characters that I wish to investigate in this study.

1.3.1 Some Remarks on the Early New Historicist Circles

In the 1970's, scholars such as Stephen Orgel, produced studies of Renaissance texts which were already beginning to show, before Greenblatt, a connection between cultural codes and political power[30], and as H. Aram Veeser contends such critics, "were doing New Historicism before anyone thought to give it a name" (Veeser, xiii). More prominently, New Historicism emerged and became identifiable within literary and cultural criticism through the publication of Greenblatt's own *The Improvisation of Power* (1980), *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980)[31] and the journal *Representations* founded by, among others, Catherine Gallagher, Walter Benn Michaels and Greenblatt. These events served to consolidate New Historicism not so much as a particularly defined literary theory but rather as a set of themes, preoccupations, and attitudes. Even the term "New Historicism", as it is frequently emphasized, came belatedly, coined in an aside in Greenblatt's introduction to a special issue of *Genre* in 1982.[32]

The publication that brought this particular group of New Historicists into the academic spotlight was undoubtedly Greenblatt's essay 'Invisible Bullets', first published in 1981[33] and revised twice more, eventually appearing in Greenblatt's own *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (1988).[34] As I have already said, I wish to

[30] See S. Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1975).
[31] As I previously mentioned, the influence of Greenblatt's earlier work, *Walter Raleigh: The Renaissance Man and his Roles* (New Haven, Connecticut, USA: Yale University Press, 1973) must be acknowledged as a source of inspiration for *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*.
[32] "Yet diverse as they are, many of the present essays give voice, I think, to what we may call the new historicism, set apart from both the dominant historical scholarship of the past and the formalist criticism that partially displaced this scholarship in the decades after World War Two," S. Greenblatt (1982, 4).
[33] Greenblatt's earlier views on Shakespeare and the relationship to state power is also contained in the introduction to 'The Forms of Power and the Power of Forms in the English Renaissance', *Genre* 15 (1982): 3-6.
[34] The first revision is published in *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materalism*. Ed. Dollimore, J. and A. Sinfield, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985): 18-47.

outline this essay in greater detail in my Chapter Three analysis. However, it is from an initial examination of Greenblatt's 1988 publication that I now wish to assess his own development of thought up to the present day and assess this in terms of its overall influence within New Historicism. While doing so, it becomes clear through his successive books that Greenblatt's veering interest in various aspects of culture and literature do not always affect his cornerstone assumptions about Renaissance self-fashioning. Nonetheless, there is also a remarkable consistency in this perception of human subjectivity, its dependence on outer forces, its struggle with inner fears and desires, and its tantalizing opacity. When relevant, I will report on the changes in Greenblatt's proceeding agenda which relate to his evolution on the point of view of a theory of disguise and will answer if such changes affect his core assumptions about the construction of early modern subjectivity. All these insights will find themselves reflected in Shakespeare's portrayals of incognito figures that I will commence in the next chapter.

1.3.2 The Concept of Cultural Poetics and the Development of Greenblatt's Thought after 1990

In *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988), Greenblatt examines Renaissance theatre as an early participant in an emerging discursive economy that is Capitalism. He offers a series of local studies of the ways in which particular Shakespearean plays grappled with and appropriated cultural materials, ideas and social practices from other discursive realms. How is it, he asks, that works of art acquire "compelling force" (5) a capacity to speak beyond a given cultural milieu and an apparent power to transcend historical contingency? He argues that there is no escape from contingency, but rather a full embracing of it, such as Shakespeare had. Furthermore, the more a given work is embedded in and engaged with other cultural discourses and social practices, the more "social energy"[35] it will embody, even if its negotiations with other discursive realms have

[35] "Social Energy" as Greenblatt outlines, is manifest mainly in its effects, "in the capacity of certain verbal, aural and visual traces to shape, and organize collective physical and mental experiences" (6). It is produced, however, by the processes of cultural negotiation and exchange, by displacing, appropriating, taking or making over objects, ideas and ceremonies, and other social practices, moving them from one "culturally demarcated zone" to another, giving them new affective resonance and meaning through this symbolic exchange and circulation (7). Catherine Gallagher, in 'Marxism and the New Historicism' (1989) adds her support to art being the product of negotiation and exchange and states that cultural and critical practices:

been effaced by time or the operations of cultural memory. It is the purpose of a "poetics of culture" (Greenblatt repeatedly prefers to use this term rather than New Historicism[36]) to recover and clarify this dynamic process of cultural negotiation, to gain "insight into the half-hidden cultural transactions through which great works of art are empowered" (4). What gives Greenblatt's own negotiations with Renaissance culture their own compelling force[37], is also their relevance to the early construction of modern subjectivity. Fellow New Historicist Steven Mullaney sees an interconnectivity between cultural negotiation and this construction, commenting on Greenblatt's "acute sense of the dynamic and unstable processes through which cultural meaning and values, power relations, *selves real and fictive* (emphasis added), are produced, modified, delimited and contested" (1989, 496). Mullaney has noted, therefore, that within such cultural negotiation lies the potential for disguise and self-fashioning to emerge.

Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture (1990), sees Greenblatt further examining cultural identity fashioned in and by (non-) literary texts (1990,9). Among his observations, Greenblatt wishes to defend the impermissibility of individual agency that he had first iterated in *Self-Fashioning* and had later attracted criticism from especially those Cultural Materialist critics that I wish to introduce shortly. Greenblatt believes that although each individual self is fashioned by the generative rules and conflicts of a given culture, it is also overpowered by (Althusserian) ideological apparatuses that relentlessly transform individuals into subjects (221). Despite the individual, subversive perceptions that remain, they are nonetheless "contained and indeed serve to heighten a power they would appear to question" (222). And yet Greenblatt does not suggest that all manifestations of subversion or "any apparent site of resistance" in all literature

---

> are seldom *intrinsically* either liberatory or oppressive, that they seldom contain their politics as an essence but rather occupy particular historical situations from which they enter into various exchanges, or negotiations, with practices designated "political" (1989, 37).

[36] Evelyn Gajowski notes that despite Greenblatt's preference for "poetics of culture," it is "the *new historicist* label [which] sticks" (2020, 5).

[37] Marcia Ann McDonald – 'Review of Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England by Stephen Greenblatt,' *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*. Vol. 22, No. 3 (Autumn, 1990): 480-483 - sees a connection between Greenblatt's analysis of "social energy" to something akin to disguise:

> The persistent thesis in Greenblatt's essays is theatrical doubleness: stage illusions intense yet fraudulent; fullness and emptiness; the theater's institutional stability and marginality; social appropriations of the aesthetic and aesthetic appropriations of the social. For Greenblatt, these are neither poles nor self-contained paradoxes, but rather the condition of the "circulation of social energy," or as his title frames it, the "negotiation" of theatre. (482).

or even in all Shakespearean plays are ultimately co-opted. For him, "some are, some aren't" (222). These remarks on subversion and containment are significant to my research as they recall his earlier views expressed in 'Invisible Bullets' which I will turn my attention to in Chapter Three.

Greenblatt's desire to focus further into the realm of human subjectivity, its dependence on outer forces and its struggle with inner fears and desires, is evidenced by the publication of *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2001).[38] What is important, as Kristen Poole recognises, is that Greenblatt is here presenting a "contrapuntal response to the questions of identity explored in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*" (2002, 557). So, the relatively autonomous self-fashioning subject, Greenblatt contends, is viewed in contrast to a purgatorial conception of subjectivity, characterised by its collectivity and absence of agency. Greenblatt argues that in the sixteenth century, Protestant reformers had begun to demolish the notion of Purgatory altogether. The emotion, grief and theatricality which Purgatory harboured were homeless; they needed "a local habitation and name" (2001, 86) as Greenblatt put it. What they needed, he contends, is *Hamlet,* a play that wrestles with, he adds, the aftermath of the end of Purgatory, freeing up an immense body of imaginative materials and emotions for the theatre. Ultimately, Greenblatt's book does not particularly affect his core assumptions about the construction of early modern subjectivity while it still upholds his earlier views about the inherent theatricality of life.

In 2010's *Shakespeare's Freedom*,[39] Greenblatt begins in an uncharacteristically humanist tone viewing Shakespeare as a writer who now epitomizes "human freedom" (1).[40] And so it seems that perhaps after many years, Greenblatt might well be offering a significant re-evaluation of his views, allowing for the abilities of a writer who could be seen to operate outside the realm of

---

[38] Seth Lerer sees this book very much as a response to Greenblatt's own inner struggle to those outer forces "that have been percolating just below the surface of the author's writing: his status as Jew; his responsibilities as a son and a student; his claims for a theoretically-informed critical practice in the face of his simple love of literature," 'Review Essay of *Hamlet in Purgatory*: Greenblatt in Purgatory,' *Huntington Library Quarterly*. Vol. 64, No. 1/2 (2001): 251-252.

[39] In my assessment of Greenblatt's oeuvre I have omitted Greenblatt's 1993 essay "Introduction: New World Encounters," the co-authored book *Practicing New Historicism* (2000), the Shakespearean biography of 2004, *Will in the World* and also his 2011 novel *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* which generally do not serve as a development and / or advancement of New Historicist methodology in itself. There is also no discussion of Greenblatt's *Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics* (2018) here – a work which is nonetheless illuminating for its discussion of the ways in which Shakespeare probes into the desires for absolute power and the subsequent calamities that ensued in the societies where these figures ruled.

[40] In 'Review of Shakespeare's Freedom,' *The Review of English Studies, New Series*. Vol. 62, No. 256 (September 2011), Johann Gregory comments on what seems to be a "complete *volte-face*" implied in these comments while highlighting that they might bring about objections from "[d]ie hard New Historicists" claiming Greenblatt to be sounding "more like Harold Bloom in *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*" (650).

public/cultural discourse. Shakespeare's freedom as a writer is attributable to an ability, he adds, to "fashion language to say anything he imagined, to conjure up any character, to express any emotion, to explore any idea" (1). Greenblatt goes on to argue is that even if Shakespeare seeks to have a remarkably free imagination, this is partially because "'Shakespeare' became [even] in his own lifetime what we would call a brand name" (97) and his agency has been mediated to us through the fictitious lives of his characters. Therefore, it is not the freedom of Shakespeare as a person that is the concern. Rather, it is of Shakespeare the artist.

With *The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve* (2017), Greenblatt resumes a focus on subjectivity, the inner self and its surface representations. This is done through an outlining of the chronicled construction of Western Christianity's opinions regarding the birth of the human race while reintroducing the discussion regarding artistic creativity in response to prevailing ideological systems. The popularity of the story of Adam and Eve[41] is chiefly owing to, Greenblatt adds, its attractive narration containing profound central themes ranging from utopia, authority and disobedience, through to notions of paradise and exile. The force of this narrative helps justify its long-standing fascination for creators, artisans and philosophers alike (Greenblatt 2017, 5-6).[42] For Greenblatt, the poet John Milton is a representative example, the author who, in Greenblatt's phrase, made Adam and Eve "real" (163).

In conclusion here, there is no doubt that to the present day, Greenblatt is continuing to afford the artist a greater degree of sovereignty or creative freedom in the execution of his/her work in comparison with any other period in his written work. However, as he indicated in his most recent publication, Greenblatt is nonetheless still advocating (as he began to do in earnest with *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*) that this artistic freedom is no more than an illusion and that human subjectivity very much remains under the governance of historical, cultural and political forces. As

---

[41] An online review on www.representations.org/category/editorial-board/ comments on the importance of Greenblatt focusing on this "biblical origin story" which is to be seen as yet another vehicle for assessing the concerns of human subjectivity. Subsequently, the story is perceived as "a model for what the humanities still have to offer: not the scientific nature of things, but rather a deep encounter with problems that have gripped our species for as long as we can recall and that continue to fascinate and trouble us today" (October 4, 2017).

[42] A further online review by Tim Whitmarsh on https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/sep/28/rise-and-fall-adam-and-eve-by-stephen-greenblatt-review agrees that the book adheres to Greenblatt's philosophy:

> *The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve* is undoubtedly what scholars used to call a "whiggish" book: a study of western disenchantment, of intellectual progress, of the fading powers of the myths of a simpler age. But it is a more complex study than that. It is also an ode to human creativity and to the powerful grip of narrative. (September 28,2017)

Greenblatt shows, even Milton's determination to create a paradise free from any tyranny was eventually compromised by these three forces, evident in the onset of the Restoration period.

As I have shown, Greenblatt's early stance on self-fashioning has been evolving within his own criticism, where he, for example, augments the political dimension and elaborates on the concept of human subjectivity. I now wish to outline the response to this criticism, both constructive (where others seek to elaborate on Greenblatt's ideas) and polemical (those challenging his core assumptions). I will assess if any of the arguments invoked later by Greenblatt or his opponents have any direct bearing on the concept of disguise in Shakespeare's plays derived from Greenblatt's early writings. It will be my intention to analyse whether this legacy changes (the cumulative legacy of which is signalled in the title of my dissertation) and to assess any usefulness to my research. Furthermore, rather than try to portray a purely chronological development, it is better to show the development of New Historicism from some particular and interrelated perspectives within the movement as each has some variances regarding methodological principles.[43] In turn I will clarify how some of these perspectives seek to absorb and sometimes feel the need to reassess those effects of disguise that I have identified in Greenblatt.

1.3.3 Sceptics from Within, Methodological Affinities and Revisionist Approaches

Lee Patterson

In his 1987 work *Negotiating the Past: The Historical Understanding of Medieval Literature*, Patterson seeks to reinterpret New Historicism.[44] He looks at New Historicism's

[43] I am indebted here to Neema Parvini's analysis in *Shakespeare and Contemporary Theory: New Historicism and Cultural Materialism* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012): 97-121.

[44] I wish to mention here studies from other New Historicists, which do not elaborate on Greenblatt's position on disguise but nonetheless are worthy of note for their interesting response to Greenblatt's own views on modern subjectivity and the understating of power relations. Jonathan Goldberg's *James I and the Politics of Literature* (1983) is one such example where he examines the contradictions of rule under James I and the extent to which playwrights and poets sought to establish some autonomy over it. Writers employed, according to Goldberg, an equivocal style of Jacobean absolutism to situate themselves within and outside of the court patronage system. However, Goldberg believes that because of a system of power transmission (from God to the monarchy and then to literary discourse) that any ideology expressed in an author's work is merely "an instrument of royal power" (1983, 55). Leonard Tennenhouse's *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare's Genres* (1986) also went on to explore and describe those monarch-centric, state ideologies and discourses in early modern England and concluded that literature and theatre is inextricably connected to the forces of state power (72-73). Elsewhere around the same time there emerged another group of scholars who despite largely supporting New Historicist aims, nevertheless remain critical regarding the political and methodological reading of New Historicism, seeking a reassessment of the understating of power relations and subversion. Their views are outlined in 1987's *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and*

obsession with power and the construction of modern subjectivity, particularly its adoption of Foucault's vision of discursive and non-discursive institutions that are too powerful to escape. Patterson thinks this leads to a pessimistic, anti-humanist view where the only choice is between a state of despair and quiescence.

Four years later, Patterson, in advocating a renewal to a humanistic individualism in *Chaucer and the Subject of History*, goes onto develop a theory of the "improvisational self", differing greatly from Greenblatt's definition of improvisation and not, therefore, linked to role-playing within the self-fashioning subject. In Patterson's terms, the "improvisational self" is a realm where individuals are seen as separate from the "social totality" and are free to shape their own direction in life. (5-6). Furthermore, subjectivity and its relationship to this "social totality" was not, as New Historicism had previously claimed, invented by the Renaissance. This, Patterson adds, exists in Chaucer's time (and before) and it is simply arrogant to assume that subjectivity could not exist before then.

Patricia Parker

Parker's 1996 *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture and Context* contends its author's more devout allegiance to Cultural Materialism but Parker states that "the play of words in Shakespeare – is a different kind of 'thick description'" (1996, 9), a reference to Clifford Geertz's anthropology so heavily influential on the New Historicists.[45] Setting aside Parker's ambigious relation to the New Historicism of Stephen Greenblatt, what appears highly relevant from the point of view of the present dissertation is her study of wordplay in Shakespeare, that I will outline shortly, which can serve as a valuable revision of Greenblatt's attention to the same topic within rhetoric, one of the self-fashioning modes of behaviour and disguise. I believe that Parker's project builds on Greenblatt's insights in a substantial manner by identifying the "network" of meanings that emerge from terms which glide across unstable boundaries of

---

Ideology. What all these critics share is a commitment to adopting a greater belief than Greenblatt in the advocacy of individual agency and autonomous political engagement within culture and society. Alan Liu's 'The Power of Formalism: The New Historicism' (1989) also seeks a revision of New Historicism and Greenblatt's construction of modern subjectivity, contending that New Historicism has yet to account for a "power shift" that he feels was evident in the transition from monarchical / aristocratic power, evident in the sixteenth century, to the increasing centrality of the bourgeois in the eighteenth century and finally to the more contemporary, individualistic self (727).

[45] Neema Parvini (2012a, 161) also sees Parker's approach to culture, despite her own insistence, as being synchronic, in line with New Historicist thought. This "presupposes the inextricable relatedness of all discourses within the structural whole of culture – cultural poetics in its fully realized state."

contemporary reference, suggesting new contexts that bring together disparate discourses. The result is a historically situated study of culture through language.

For Parker, wordplay has to break free of its hitherto imposed reduction to the ornamental and its long-standing association with "the relegation of women and other marginal subjects to the status of secondary or accessory" (3). Furthermore, it is words, which in their usage operate in "not only language but institutions, practices and law . . . Discourse is inseparable from the social and political" (3). Therefore, the word becomes a discursive unit with which to unlock a wider discursive field and its cultural issues at stake in Shakespeare's plays, to understand the culture that produced those plays. Furthermore, in a view that Greenblatt would not adhere to, Parker finds scope for true subversion in wordplay: "Subversion in the period of the plays could operate at the verbal as well as the visual level, transmitted sotto voce in a wordplay that could be taken several ways at once" (13). Every utterance, she adds, is linked to a network of cultural assumptions, every word has an ideological charge.

As a result of Parker's research, it is useful to see how a self-fashioning subject can effectively use wordplay at the level of verbal disguise – harnessing the connotations of language to impart them to a desired set of recipients. Highlighting the ability of words to connote rather than focus on their poetic function or aesthetic effects, Parker's book looks at several Shakespeare plays, moving fluidly about them. In one example, she examines the word "preposterous", literally signifying "behind for before, back for front, second for first, end or sequel for beginning" (21). Thersites denunciation of Achilles and his "masculine whore" as "preposterous discoveries" (*Troilus and Cressida,* 5.1.23-24) therefore carries a special force, picturing Achilles' homosexuality and its inversion of the natural. The term resonates anew in Parker's account of Bottom's transformation into an Ass in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Not only is this translation a declination from the human but its reversal comprehends the hierarchical violation suggested in Bottom's "preposterous" joining with Titania (100).

Jerome McGann

Professor Paul Fry, *Lecture 19 - The New Historicism [March 31, 2009],* aptly summarises McGann's position within the New Historicist / Cultural Materialist field:

> it's not wholly clear that Jerome McGann has ever really thought of himself as a New Historicist. He has been so designated by others, but I think there is one rather important difference in emphasis, at least between what he's doing and what Greenblatt and his colleagues do in the Early Modern period.

> McGann doesn't really so much stress the reciprocity of history and discourse. He is interested in the presence of history, the presence of immediate social and also personal circumstances in the history of a text. His primary concern is with … textual scholarship. (2009, Lecture 19)

McGann takes his influences from Pierre Macherey who saw the importance of defining a text as something which is transformed into something more than "illusion" and in doing so, becomes part of the discourse of material "reality", for in Marxist terms, what is not illusion is not necessarily real (1978, 62). Furthermore, a text, Macherey claimed, functions in and affects ideology. Also, a text's illusions can be testament to an ideological existence which possesses a material reality. In spite of this material existence, Macherey says, "the components fused in the literary text can have no independent reality" from their social contexts (56).

Despite his maintaining the key importance of historical context to any reading, McGann finds his solution not in history but in the text itself. McGann's preoccupation with the texts (and its history) shows a great affinity to editorial revisionism in Shakespeare Studies which strive to unedit Shakespeare's texts and reveal its authentic original shapes.[46] Uncovering these successive layers of the text can be also helpful in reconstructing the logic and operation of stage disguise at different stages of the development of the playtext.

Louis Montrose

I have yet to mention one still significant New Historicist critic, Louis Montrose, who despite not adding to the New Historicist definition of disguise in Shakespeare, is important to mention because he provides an important link to another context within Shakespeare studies, one that Neema Parvini believes is able to anticipate "many of the criticisms that would be levelled against Tennenhouse, Goldberg and Greenblatt" (2012a, 112). In his 1996 work, *The Purpose of Playing: Shakespeare and the Cultural Politics of the Elizabethan Theatre,* Montrose proposes a refutation of Louis Althusser's "closed and static, monolithic and homogeneous" (1996, 12) view of ideology, claiming that more "heterogenous and unstable, permeable and professional" (12) structural frameworks can better explain social and political change. This solution, as Parvini notices, "is what a cultural materialist might do" (2012a, 112). I will later compare Cultural

[46] Cultural Materialism also put an emphasis on textual analysis, highlighting the importance of textual studies for the recovery of lost meanings of the text. Dollimore and Sinfield comment on these studies which "locates the critique of traditional approaches where it cannot be ignored" (Dollimore and Sinfield 1985, vii). In Chapter Two I intend to discuss the ever-present example of *King Lear* and the composition of Edgar from both Quarto and Folio variants of the play.

Materialism with New Historicism and examine more deeply those differences that began to emerge in literary and Renaissance / Shakespeare studies such as those we have seen indicated in Montrose's analysis. However, I will now wish to continue assessing the impact and relevance of New Historicism, to outline the major change/contribution that this field of enquiry had regarding the interpretation of Shakespeare's plays. It is my intention in this section, therefore, to look at studies on disguise or indeed, studies of individual Shakespeare plays inspired by both New Historicism and Greenblatt.

1.3.4 Studies on disguise / individual plays inspired by New Historicism and Greenblatt

Lloyd Davis' 1993 publication, *Guise and Disguise: Rhetoric and Characterization in the English Renaissance* is a comprehensive study of disguise with frequent reference to Shakespeare. The book explores textuality and the production of cultural identity in the English Renaissance while relating itself closely to New Historicist thinking. It also argues that drama and history are often central strategies both to attack opponents and to legitimate structures of power, as we saw with Greenblatt. Davis also seems to echo Greenblatt in the belief that a mode of rhetoric is to be found in disguise, functioning within a "participation in and representation of discourse" (11). Furthermore, as disguise is viewed as something which ensures "connections between the social and the personal" are "textually reproduced" (11) we see further acknowledgment of Greenblatt's exploration of the relationship between the individual and institutionalised discourse. However, Davis quickly distances himself from Greenblatt and my own research when he confronts the concept of selfhood and its relationship to disguise. Subsequently, Davis argues that selfhood is not, as Greenblatt viewed, an intrinsic essence which lies beneath disguise but is rather figured by the complex and ambiguous processes and conceptions of disguise (17-18). Therefore, there is no exploration in Davis' research of my own desire to examine the continuing psychological strains and effects on the self because of the need to disguise.

Robert Weimann, in "Textual authority and performative agency: the use of disguise in Shakespeare's theater" (1994) discusses the effect of performative agency on the interpretation of William Shakespeare's plays. The employment of disguise and cross-dressing in their original productions suggest that the performative agency, or staging, of the play often changed the meaning of the plain text. Weimann firstly praises Louis Montrose's reappropriation of what a literary text

is – “an open, changing, and contradictory discourse” - and then clearly references Greenblatt when he applies the usefulness of this definition to “the circulation of authority and the process of signification . . . in the interplay of verbal language and performance “ (791). Disguise has a key role, Weimann adds, as it functions as a location for both friction and reciprocity between text and performance.

Lynne Magnusson’s *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue: Dramatic Language and Elizabethan Letters* (1999) focuses on the use of language in *Henry VIII, King Lear, Much Ado About Nothing,* and *Othello* to formulate a process of examining works of literature and historical documentation. It is an approach that also connects the practices of both new historicists and linguistic critics. In *Henry IV Part 1* she references Greenblatt in the intention to explore “the verbal negotiation of social and power relations such as service or friendship” (i). Her work makes use of concepts from discourse analysis and linguistics, particularly "politeness theory," and applies them to important beliefs within letter writing directories of the age.

Sylvia Adamson, in ‘Questions of Identity in Renaissance Drama: New Historicism Meets Old Philology’ (2010) explores the etymology of ‘identity,’ examining its earlier definition through scenes from Shakespeare, John Webster and in extracts from a private family correspondence. She conducts her perusal via philology, focusing on uses of the interrogative pronoun, wherein questions of identity are typically situated. Her aim is to make philology and new historicist criticism enlighten each other to show how ambiguity, variation, and change in linguistic forms reflect and promote larger shifts in sociocultural awareness. She suggests that dialogue is the site for both language change and the construction of identity.

Rebeca Gualberto in ‘Unmasking Romance in *The Tempest*: Politics, Theatre and T.S. Eliot’ (2019), wishes to undertake a dialogue with other New Historicist readings of *The Tempest,* exploring the plays intertextuality. Concluding her investigation, she believes the play capably challenges the previously enshrined romance discourses within “the naturalness and universality of the social and power structures that had organised the communal life of the ruling classes from the Middle Ages” (111). Gualberto is therefore claiming, as Greenblatt had done with *Richard II’s* repeated performances on the Elizabethan stage, that the play(text) itself can be seen to be radically subversive in its challenges to received societal and cultural orthodoxy.

1.3.5 The (In)distinctiveness of Cultural Materialism

Cultural materialism (in the context of Shakespeare studies in particular) received its apotheosis with the publication of a collection of essays, *Political Shakespeare* (1985), edited by two UK professors of English Literature, Alan Sinfield and Jonathan Dollimore. What is striking from the introduction is Dollimore's reference to "the important and shared concerns of cultural materialism and the new historicism" (4). My first intention is to define Cultural Materialism as Dollimore and Sinfield see it, to assess their contribution to disguise in Shakespeare. Later, I intend to show the shared and differing tenets between New Historicism and Cultural Materialism (both old and new) while proceeding with my analysis into disguise.

Dollimore and Sinfield define cultural materialism as designating a critical method possessing four characteristics; historical context, theoretical method, political commitment and textual analysis[47], some of which are relevant in exploring disguise in Shakespeare. Historical context, according to the authors, "undermines the transcendent significance traditionally accorded to the literary text" (vii). So, the idea is that Shakespeare's enduring appeal and the reason why he is still read today can only be truly considered by allowing the text to "recover its histories" (vii), ignored by previous kinds of study. The type of history recovered would involve relating the plays to such occurrences as "enclosures and the oppression of the rural poor, state power and resistance to it . . . witchcraft, the challenge and containment of the carnivalesque" (3). The types of history recovered do not, prima facie, appear so different from those desired by Greenblatt. However, they nevertheless remind us why some characters in Shakespeare's plays seek disguise in their attempts to escape and transcend the social oppression that Dollimore and Sinfield discuss.[48] What is clear is that these characters are thwarted in their desire for social advancement by the containment of the ruling elite.

Regarding political commitment, Cultural Materialism seeks to outline the influence of Marxism and feminist perspectives and what it saw as a break from "the conservative-Christian framework which hitherto dominated Shakespeare criticism" (Barry 1995, 183). Although a belief in such commitment is not explicitly stated by Stephen Greenblatt, it could be beneficial to establish

[47] I have already commented on the usefulness of Dollimore and Sinfield's insights into textual analysis from the viewpoint of my research, on page 41.
[48] I refer to my analysis in Chapter 4 of Autolycus in *A Winter's Tale* and Feste in *Twelfth Night* in this respect.

whether Shakespeare's incognito figures are motivated to disguise because of a political commitment, a championing of a specific political cause, or to achieve a desired social change.

Largely though, there is no significant challenge to Greenblatt's vision of disguise (to be found in his earlier work such as *Renaissance Self-Fashioning)* from examining these essential characteristics of Cultural Materialism. However, Dollimore and Sinfield make some important observations regarding modern subjectivity and power relations which I feel is of especial relevance to my research.

Subversion, containment and ideology

With Cultural Materialism, there is evidence of a methodology that demonstrates a more radical nature than New Historicism, and nowhere is this difference exacerbated more than Cultural Materialism's examination of subversion that I looked at in Greenblatt's New Historicist framework. As we saw, Greenblatt concludes that while looking for subversion, we can only find it among the illusions and strategies deployed by the dominant ideology. In contrast, in another 1985 essay, Alan Sinfield outlines the view that the task of Cultural Materialism is to discover real subversion, finding the New Historicist model of power to be too simplistic, its belief in a "unified" model of ideology mistaken. Sinfield then proposes "a more complex model, one that envisages the operations of power and ideology as more disjunctive" (1985, 261). Later, he argues in *Faultlines*: *Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (1992) it is because of the inherent contradictions in ideologies that in turn engenders dissidence in individuals, which the state has to try to contain:

> The contradictions inscribed in ideology produce very many confused or dissident subjects, and control of them depends upon convincing enough of the rest that such control is desirable and proper. (1992, 32)

Furthermore, Sinfield argues that in a quest to attain "an ideological unity", state institutions are "not always successful" (13). Jonathan Dollimore, in seeking to provide his own re-definition of the subversion in *Political Shakespeare,* outlines a view of different from that of Sinfield's. For Dollimore, subversion can arise from an array of sources that compete with the dominant ideology for hegemony:

> To some extent the paradox [of authority producing subversion for its own end(s)] disappears when we speak not of a monolithic power structure producing its effects but one made up of different, competing elements. (1985, 12)

In addition, Dollimore contends that subversion can even take place within the dominant ideology itself, becoming what he calls a "counter-faction", one that directly opposes the ruling authority and yet retains that authority's form and structure (12).

In conclusion here, the re-definition of subversion that both Dollimore and Sinfield propose has implications if we are to re-examine Greenblatt's own convictions regarding the submission of the individual to public/cultural discourses. In the view of these authors' belief that there is more scope for dissidence in response to institutional ideology, the self-fashioning subject's discourse, his/her verbal disguises, may no longer be seen (if we apply these Cultural Materialist views of hegemony to a revision of Greenblatt's model) to be simply reproducing the discourse of the dominant ideology. In fact, as Dollimore and Sinfield claim, there can be no identifiable dominant ideology to reproduce in any discourse – the reference map is too fragmented.

The subject of history

Another aspect of difference between New Historicism and Cultural Materialism can be found in the treatment of history. The cultural materialists prefer not to remain so indifferent to history, rejecting the synchronic interpretation of New Historicism and would rather more happily engage with it. Such a view stems from a Marxist position, outlined by Fredric Jameson, where:

> [the past] radically calls into question the commodified daily life, the reified spectacles…it is the past that sees us, and judges us remorselessly, without any sympathy or complicity with the scraps of subjectivity we try to think as our own fragmentary and authentic life experience. (1979, 70-71)

Cultural materialism is therefore more prepared, as Neema Parvini sees it, to deal "head-on with the problems history might throw up in our own culture" and furthermore, "this judgement is the *aim* of cultural materialism" (2012a, 129). Howard Felperin in *The Uses of the Canon: Elizabethan Literature and Contemporary Theory* (1990), also identifies Jameson as the impetus behind the Cultural Materialists' strategy of ideology, which is "to legitimate inequality and exploitation by representing the social order that perpetuates these things as immutable and unalterable" while contending that this is evident in the received views, stereotyping and attitudes that continue today if not to a greater extent that it did in Shakespeare's time (1990, 161-2). The relationship of social order to disguise is itself important as I will later examine whether Shakespeare uses it to undermine

or reaffirm this order in my analysis of disguised characters. Ultimately here, it is significant that Cultural Materialism seems to ask such questions in a more radical and pressing manner.

As Cultural Materialism developed, the increasing majority of Cultural Materialist studies became more and more concerned with "dissident subcultures" with particular emphasis on homosexuality and the construction of female identity.[49] Their aim is not only to remain politically committed to the present time but to also attack the dominant culture from their marginalised perspective. This has however led one of the founders of Cultural Materialism, Alan Sinfield to believe that this has generated an "affirmative habit…[in which] the critic will indulge in whatever strenuous reading is necessary to get the Shakespearean text onto his or her side" (1992, 114). Elsewhere, Sinfield comments that Cultural Materialism should strategically "blow the whistle on the affirmative habit" (2006, 198).[50] The associations between Cultural Materialism and construction of female identity entail some interesting aspects of investigation into the realm of disguise as a stage convention (or cross-dressing) but are not specifically relevant to my own direction of research into disguise as I have previously outlined.

At the turn of this century, we saw the development of Cultural Materialism into a more globalized view of Shakespeare and the Renaissance, confirming another aspect of the perception of history. Subsequently, this view recognises the extent of cultural exchanges between the West and East in the Renaissance period. Daniel Vitkus' 'Turning the Turk in Othello' (1997) states "what has been forgotten is that while Spanish, Portuguese, English, and Dutch ships sailed to the New World and beyond … the Turks were rapidly colonizing European territory" (1997, 146). This recognition leads to Vitkus' central argument that:

> Shakespeare's *Othello* draws on early modern anxieties about Ottoman aggression and links them to a larger network of moral, sexual and religious uncertainty which touched English protestants directly. In part, the idea of conversion that terrified and titillated Shakespeare's audience was a fear of the loss of both essence and identity in a world of ontological, ecclesiastical, and political instability. (146)

So, with this reading it is Islamic and Ottoman imperialism which is feared rather than the racial "Otherness" of a black man.[51]

---

[49] See Parvini (2012a,130) for a list of key works on the Renaissance/Shakespeare studies in these particular areas.

[50] Jonathan Dollimore also rallies to the defence of Sinfield while discussing the treatment of homosexuality by such marginalised critics. See Dollimore in the revised edition of *Political Shakespeare* (1994: 129-153).

[51] Ania Loomba in 'Delicious Traffick' (2000), builds on the idea of this Christian, European fear of Islam. Here, she charts the development of the "biological understanding of race … the concept of purity of blood" that prefigures much of modern racism and Fascism as ideas that did not exist in Medieval Europe (2000, 207). She also argues that they

What this interpretation of history offers is a challenge to what could seem to be Greenblatt's rather insular conception of modern subjectivity. Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton in *Global Interests; Renaissance Art Between East and West* (2001), counteract what Brotton himself later described as "an ever-more narrow parochialism" in Shakespeare Studies. The reference here is particularly directly toward the New Historicists that "offer us a fascinating but ultimately provincial Shakespeare with little acknowledgment of the wider world around him" (2006). So, what these critics feel is that there is an urgent need to bridge that cultural divide by emphasizing our shared past and the fact that the histories of Eastern and Western powers are inextricably linked. These contentions are useful as they enable us to re-assess the perceptions and responses of the self-fashioning subject to the world around him/her, acutely aware of this growing awareness of Eastern and Western culture and its influence on that of his/her own society. The anxieties of the self-fashioning subject in disguise can be seen in response to a wider world view, looking beyond the seemingly more identifiable method of Greenblatt's in pinning the relationship of individual anxiety down to a specific, localised institutional and public discourse.

Departures from Cultural Materialism

The subsequent responses to Cultural Materialism, outlining their shifts of emphasis along with their own methodological proposals, can often appear meaningful from the point of view of disguise. Firstly, I feel it is important to acknowledge Catherine Belsey's view (which I shall shortly expand upon) that modern subjectivity only receives expression and signification within the realities of our everyday life, challenging the view of Greenblatt's that such an articulation is achieved within the notion of the "real". What I believe is useful to consider when assessing Belsey's position is that disguise is also signified and expressed within the culture and everyday realities of a life which both incognito characters and audience can relate to. In the desire of self-fashioning subjects to escape their identity, it is important to view their articulations as an

---

were born when the Spanish expelled the Jews and the Moors of 1492, and so, for Loomba, *Othello* becomes an English portrait of Spanish racism suggesting "an affinity between Othello the Moor and the English, an affinity that was evoked by several writers as Elizabethan England tried to establish trade with Barbary" (209). Race and religion, she adds, have also become conflated and this arose from Christian Protestant anxieties about the authentication of identity because, for perhaps the first time, faith and nationhood had become destabilized due to the dawning age of individualism, self-fashioning and "the fluidity of the self" (212).

expressive reaction to those real-life situations effected by the need to disguise. Furthermore, Shakespeare's incognito figures face and often try to avoid the responsibilites of everyday life through their disguising. The torments and their articulation within the act of disguise are / were desired to be equally felt and identified with by both spectators and readers coming to terms with the realities of their own lives.

I will also turn to the arguments of New Materialism which can also appear meaningful from the point of view of disguise. Firstly, the view that a materialism should be embodied in the nature of the subject reflects on how the human body is itself affected by disguise. In my view, this extends the definition of the subject within self-fashioning and takes into account the physical effects of disguise. Douglas Bruster's insistence, as I will also turn to again shortly, that physical "matter" plays a vital role in defining materialism is also useful to disguise. This definition makes us aware of the incognito figure struggling not only to comprehend the effects of self-fashioning but also the physical conditions engendered by the act of disguise which are quite often markedly different and less accommodating than accustomed to.

Finally, I wish to examine James Knapp's contribution to the debate which makes us aware, as Jerome McGann had done, of the preoccupation with the texts (and its history) which shows a great affinity to editorial revisionism in Shakespeare Studies, striving to unedit Shakespeare's texts and reveal its authentic original shapes. Uncovering these successive layers of the text can be also helpful in reconstructing the logic and operation of stage disguise at different stages of the development of the playtext.

Catherine Belsey's *Culture and the Real* (2005) signals a major departure from Cultural Materialism while also criticising some key New Historicist tenets. She particularly wishes to focus on the theme of the "real," the place where she believes genuine action takes place, representing the "real them" living in the world (eg. "real" teachers teaching "real" students). For Greenblatt, it is the place where anecdotes allude to, the site of the subject's reconstruction as language or culture-as-text. For Belsey, Greenblatt's views mean that nothing is "real" unless it is articulated. She takes her influences here from Jacques Lacan as she ratifies the Lacanian distinction between "reality" (what is known by culture) and the "real", which exists "undefined, unaccountable", inaccessible to the human subject who is caught in the web of language, a web that blankets all things and from which there is no escape (2005, 4-5).

Against this idea of the "real", Belsey's view of culture "consists of a society's entire range of signifying practices" (2005,9). Neema Parvini believes that, ultimately, her concerns are "essentially . . . humanist" (2012a,163) and sees Belsey betraying a principle of the Cultural Materialism she believes she belongs to. This humanist tone is evident in Belsey's further comments on the relationship of subjectivity to culture:

> If subjectivity is an effect of culture, of the inscription of culture in signifying practice, there is no place for human beings outside culture. Culture, therefore, *is* all we know, in that sense we are always in culture – always in the game. (2005, 9)

Therefore, the articulation of culture and our modern subjectivity, in Belsey's view, can only receive expression and signification within the realities of our everyday life. Such an articulation cannot be achieved within the notion of the "real" that Greenblatt, amongst others, have argued for.

In recent years there has emerged a 'new materialism', one that largely takes the form of what Rosi Braidotti sees as:

> feminist theory that situates the embodied nature of the subject, and consequently the question of alternatively sexual difference or gender, at the heart of matter. …This leads to a radical re-reading of materialism, away from its strictly Marxist definition. (1991, 263–6)

In the field of Shakespearean studies, Dympna Callaghan, in *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing Gender and Race on the Renaissance Stage* (2000), has emerged as a leading proponent of new materialism emphasising that "the material" be "considered as the way the social and cultural always exceed the discursive" (2000, 29). So, she sees physical matter (i.e. the female body) as not just material but also having social and cultural inscriptions. Callaghan maintains that such a view has important political ramifications which are:

> pertinent to feminist struggle because the politics of the body are exacerbated and more urgent there: as the object of patriarchal subjugation, women are uniquely identified with their anatomy, which has been simultaneously and problematically marked as the ground of feminist resistance. (30)

When we return to New Historicism, we are reminded that the New Materialists are still advocating an opposing belief on resistance similar to their forebears. We also see that there are differences expressed when it comes to the role of discourse analysis. As we remember, Greenblatt claims discourse analysis to be at the heart of "cultural poetics", while the New Materialists see this as something less significant.

In 2003, Douglas Bruster published *Shakespeare and the Question of Culture: Early Modern Literature and the Cultural Turn* containing his slightly different definition of New Materialism from that offered by Callaghan:

> By "materialism," this critical genre understands an attention to physical things – "matter," that is, interpreted literally. In place of class struggle, hegemony, or ideology, the new materialism attends to objects in the world: clothing, crockery, sugar. (2003, 192)

Agreeing with Callaghan that a critical genre pay attention to "matter", overlooking the New Historicist and Cultural Materialist preoccupations with ideology and politics, we see that this time, the interpretation of 'matter' is interpreted literally, to mean and imply the physical objects that surround us, not only the physical object in which we inhabit. Bruster's own redefinition of materialism, incorporating the importance of this physical "matter," is when analysing how the incognito figure comes to terms with the effects of self-fashioning as well as the physical conditions brought about by the act of disguise.

While evaluating Bruster's theories in 2014, James Knapp in his essay 'Beyond Materiality in Shakespeare Studies,' delivers a well-rehearsed criticism of New Historicism's reliance on the anecdote. This reliance, Knapp states, "became emblematic of [New Historicism's] lack of historical depth. The new materialism emerged in response" (2014, 678).[52]

So, in connection with Shakespeare studies, Knapp views the 1996 publication *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* as representing a ground-breaking, new materialist reading of the Renaissance and Shakespeare, containing critical developments which:

> have explicit links to the so-called new materialism in early modern studies; these include the emergence of book history with its attention to the material features of books rather than the disembodied meaning conveyed by their linguistic texts. (678)

As with Jerome McGann, Knapp's own views concord to his belief that the key importance of historical context to any reading is not to be found in history but in the text itself. Also, we are reminded of the importance of uncovering these successive layers of the text, as Cultural

---

[52] Knapp is also keen to point out, by quoting J. Hillis Miller, what he believes to be New Historicism's actual abandonment of deconstruction, rather than its perceived adoption. Miller saw the emergence of New Historicism as "an abandonment of deconstruction's methodological advances" (679). Subsequently, Knapp feels that:

> In Shakespeare studies, there is no doubt that deconstruction gave way to the New Historicism, a fact that is evident in the subsequent emergence of the new materialism, which constituted a critical doubling down on material "facts" over theoretical "abstraction" (679).

Materialists had advocated, which can be helpful in reconstructing the logic and operation of stage disguise at different stages of the development of the playtext.

1.4 The Self-fashioning of Incognito Figures: An Analytical Project

The chapter has surveyed a variety of approaches to disguise, starting with individual studies of disguise as a convention to some broader methodological concepts, centred on Greenblattian thought or related to New Historicism/ Cultural Materialism, which may be used to elucidate the construction and interpretative potential of Shakespeare's figures in disguise. The two central assumptions pertain to Shakespeare as a playwright vividly interested in disguise as a mode of operation, and to Greenblatt as a critic focused on the intricacies of the presentation of human subjectivity in the early modern period. Greenblatt's initial, indeed founding, preoccupation with self-fashioning naturally brings disguise into focus as self-fashioning implies a deliberate effort to determine a specific perception of an individual by concealing/ disguising unwanted features.

It is therefore my main intention to conduct an analysis of the self-fashioning of incognito figures in Shakespeare, particularly those characters who are or become sartorially disguised, using the conceptual notions and tools proposed in Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*. Disguise appears to be an underlying strategy used in various modes of self-fashioning behaviour typified by Greenblatt as the modes of rhetoric, nonsense, and lastly, loss and improvisation. Within those categories, I will look to see how disguising rhetoric is characterized through feigned language, borrowed discourses, dialect (or voices) and wordplay. Edgar in *King Lear* is seen to be proficient at this, particularly as we will see in the disguise as Poor Tom. With the mode of nonsense, I will investigate the struggle of the self-fashioning subject to accommodate a public and private persona. Again, we see this with Edgar's disguising and with the jester, Feste, in *Twelfth Night*, frustrated with the typecasting that a servile life has given him. Finally, with the mode of loss and improvisation I will examine the self-fashioning character's use of manipulating devices, derived from an ability to design and imagine a fictional role and, by way of consequence, to disguise him/herself. With these modes I will look at two regal figures, King Richard II and Prince Hal/Henry V, the former struggling to accept the relinquishing of his crown and the latter, an errant young man, crafting his own return into the favour of the ruling establishment.

My analysis also seeks to investigate the relation of the outer manifestations of self-fashioning (and therefore disguising) behaviour to the inner modes which govern the actions of the

self-fashioning subject, these being the modes of desire and fear. These strong emotions and intensifying pressures produce repetitive psychological patterns such as, for example, the subject's fall into darkness (when he or she undergoes a radical concealment of identity) or the desire to plunge into the forbidden, prohibited realm when the excessive or prolonged pressure calls for disclosure or radical reformation of the self. What is equally important is to look at how the modes of desire and fear are both verbally and non-verbally expressed by the self-fashioning subject, becoming subversive as they "erupt" into discourse. This itself is subject to a range of modes ranging from inwardness to anxiety.

I will also consider some insights from other scholars from within those parallel and revisionist forms of New Historicism and from Cultural (and new) Materialism. In particular, I will investigate, as Jerome McGann and James Knapp have advocated, a focus on the preoccupation with the texts (and its history) acknowledging editorial revisionism in Shakespeare Studies, striving to unedit Shakespeare's texts and revealing its authentic original shapes. Uncovering these successive layers of the text can be also helpful in reconstructing the logic and operation of stage disguise at different stages of the development of the playtext. I also feel that New Materialism's re-definition of what "materiality" constitutes is useful in assessing the impact of the physical effects of disguise on the self-fashioning subject. Finally, Catherine Belsey's views on culture and subjectivity are useful in assessing disguise and its articulation in language as a product of the reality that we all share – actors, audience and readers.

A close examination of the relationship of literary theory to Shakespeare studies during the last four decades appears to show that there are few theories which can be credited with so much impact as that of New Historicism. This approach brought to the discipline a wealth of valuable studies and irrevocably altered the historical sensitivity of all Shakespearean scholars, including those working with alternative methodological frameworks. Nevertheless, New Historicism (and even more so, New Historicists) have provoked vehement criticism, which however, has only served to deepen our understanding of the complexity of literature read against its (new) historical context. Furthermore, it is with the passing of time that has enabled us to better see the historical positioning of New Historicism itself, for example, its ideological debts to earlier approaches or doctrines (Marxism in particular) and its relationship to Cultural Materialism (as I depicted in my previous analysis). Consequently, viewed through the lenses of the twenty-first century, New Historicism appears to be a "complete" methodology when it comes to defining its aims, methods

and ultimate results. This is also why the contribution of New Historicism to contemporary understanding of some specific aspects of Shakespeare's ouevre can be better seen and more accurately assessed.

At this stage I wish to outline my intended division and grouping of those characters in Shakespeare which I will analyse in detail within the New Historicist approach to disguise. Chapter Two will feature the analysis of Edgar from *King Lear* and Duke Vincentio from *Measure for Measure*. The reasons for this pairing are manifold. First, both plays were written around the same time, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and are seen to represent (from the viewpoint of many critics) a response to and a reflection on the accession of King James I. Furthermore, these two plays mark a mature period in Shakespeare's writing career when he had not only fully mastered the use of disguise as a stage convention but also developed an increasing interest in the stage representation of the shifting subjectivity of dramatic figures. Consequently, another rationale for my choice of case studies in this chapter is the emphasis on the psychological dimension of disguise in all stages of the characters' struggle to conceal their identity. Here I will follow the interpretative hints derived from the New Historicist discussion of self-fashioning effects, both regarding the choice and type of masking strategies as well as to the mental and emotional condition of the self-fashioned character. Additionally, it is my belief that both Edgar and the Duke learn something about their self-identity from their disguise, and in Edgar's case from his multiple uses of disguise.

In Chapter Three I wish to focus on the grouping of Shakespeare's kings in the second tetralogy of history plays - *Richard II, Henry IV* and *Henry V*. My intention here is to explore the political implications of disguise and, specifically, the effect of subversion so central to the New Historicist readings of early modern literature. In doing so, I will reference this analysis closely to the earlier views encapsulated within Greenblatt's earlier essay 'Invisible Bullets' and to his later views, continuing up to the publication of *Shakespeare's Freedom* in recent years.

In Chapter Four I wish to focus on the grouping of Autolycus from *The Winter's Tale* and Feste from *Twelfth Night*. Despite emanating from two distinct periods in Shakespeare's career, both characters appear within comedies as comedians that portray similar attitudes of irony and bitterness towards their roles in society. Ultimately, both characters express themselves provocatively in their disguise and are seen to be social commentators within the plays themselves. Therefore, it is my intention to explore the social implications of disguise in these plays,

harmonizing my analyses with the New Historicist discussions of self-fashioning practices and power relations.

Finally, as I have previously indicated, I will not be including discussion of cross-dressing in my analysis.

CHAPTER 2

Disguisers, Perpetrators and the Illusion of Self-Knowledge: Edgar in *King Lear* and Duke Vincentio from *Measure for Measure*

Since the basis of the methodological framework of this dissertation is derived from Stephen Greenblatt's studies of the Renaissance culture and literature, each of my analytical chapters opens with a brief survey of his views on the play in question and specifically on the character(s) in disguise. The introductory section is particularly elaborate in the case of the opening analysis of Edgar. This stems from the fact that Greenblatt's reading of *King Lear* was a corner stone of his influential monograph *Shakespeare's Negotiations*. Greenblatt's analysis (including, as I will show, his preoccupation with the writing of Samuel Harsnett) clearly privileges the character Edgar as a daring dramatic exponent of conflicting ideological forces. However, it must be also emphasized that despite such an extensive and seemingly multifocal treatment of Edgar, Greenblatt does not analyse Edgar strictly within the framework of his own concept of self-fashioning (the aim of my dissertation) though his overall perception of Edgar remains in line with his major assumptions concerning the relations of stage and culture of the time.

The second part of my analysis consists in the brief overview of other critical voices commenting on the play and the character(s) in disguise. Most of these opinions have originated in recent decades, with only limited recourse to some earlier approaches. Consequently, the invoked studies reflect – in various ways and to a varying degree – the contemporary awareness of the power relations underlying both Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Needless to say, the increased sensitivity to various manipulation practices has been brought into the discipline by New Historicists mainly, and therefore these interpretations can be viewed as a cumulative legacy of the respective methodology.

Within this context of other critical approaches, Edgar's case appears exceptional as *King Lear* became the famous vehicle of the textual revolution of the 1980s and continues to generate controversy till these days (see the subsequent discussion of Brian Vickers' stance). The textual crisis affects in a special way Edgar's part, an editorial and interpretative dilemma described in detail further in the text.

2.1 Edgar in Greenblattian Criticism

Edgar is the only literary character who becomes the subject of Greenblatt's direct and extensive analysis within his 1988 essay 'Shakespeare and the Exorcists', published within his own *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Central to Greenblatt's analysis of Edgar is his own prior analysis of Shakespeare's play in conjunction with one of its widely claimed sources, Samuel Harsnett's *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603).[1]

Not only is Greenblatt's reading of Harsnett's pamphlet and *King Lear* crucial for foregrounding the role of Edgar, it is also pertinent within my research aims. This is because I feel that it significantly exemplifies and illustrates the psychological conditions imposed on the self-fashioning subject's identity, which I previously outlined in my analysis of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*. Within this assessment, I have shown how these conditions are seen to make a character's disguises more desirable and in Edgar's case, they do appear to become more radically enacted. Considering the wide range of psychological conflicts that Edgar undergoes in *King Lear*, it is useful to assess Greenblatt's own assumption within his earlier work that the more rigorous the self-fashioning act and act of disguising, the greater the psychological pressures (often producing repetitive psychological patterns) are placed on the subject. Also, I will examine how insightful Greenblatt's identification of Harsnett's borrowed discourse is to Edgar's own mode of rhetoric as it characterizes, in particular, his role as the beggar Poor Tom.

Greenblatt's rationale in comparing *King Lear* to Harnsett's *Declaration* lies within their ability to pinpoint the institutionalised "negotiation and exchange of social energy" (1988, 94). Furthermore, it is his task to investigate the "institutional strategies" which are to be located within both texts (95). Defining these strategies, Greenblatt sees them to be integral to the fierce and continuing attempts within "late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England" to reevaluate society's fundamental principles (95). Greenblatt views Harsnett's work as a kind of "weapon", used by the Church of England to eradicate rival religious authorities, each containing "pockets of rivalrious Charisma" (96). Within such charisma were the acts of exorcism and Greenblatt focuses

[1] Greenblatt refers to accounts of Harsnett's relation to Lear in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*. 8 vols. Ed. Bullough, G. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958-75) 7: 299-302; Kenneth Muir, 'Samuel Harsnett and *King Lear,' Review of English Studies 2* (1951): 11-21, and Muir's edition of *Lear*, New Arden text (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1952): 253-256.

on how Harsnett's mission in the *Declaration* is to expose exorcism as a fraudulent practice, targeting in particular the Catholic church (97).

In his desires to expose the fraudulence of exorcist practices, Greenblatt argues that the studies of Harsnett's "possessed" victims and their verbal reactions during exorcism articulated "the rage, anxiety, and sexual frustration" that effortlessly accumulated in "early modern England" (99). Subsequently, as Greenblatt notes, these reactions and experiences which formulate the onlooker's perception encapsulate, he feels, Harsnett's belief in the true significance of exorcism, that the audience were being held sway with an "illusion" (101). And so Harsnett intended to demystify these exorcist practices, Greenblatt adds, by demonstrating the emptiness of them as well as their effectiveness (106).

Greenblatt states that Harsnett found an explanation for this apparent contradiction by looking at theatre:

> Exorcisms, Harsnett argues, are stage plays, most often tragic-comedies, that cunningly conceal their theatrical inauthenticity and hence deprive the spectators of the rational disenchantment that frames the experience of a play. The audience in a theater knows that its misrecognition of reality is temporary, deliberate and playful; the exorcist seeks to make the misrecognition permanent and invisible. Harsnett is determined to make the spectators see the theater around them, to make them understand that what seems spontaneous is rehearsed, what seems involuntary carefully crafted, what seems unpredictable scripted. (106)

Pinpointing Harsnett's beliefs, Greenblatt compares the exorcists to actors, with the priests themselves disguising the carefully, strategically planned basis of the exorcism in the transformation of "terrifying supernatural events" (107). As a result, Greenblatt contends that Harsnett himself is believing in demonic possession becoming theatre and its "[p]erformance kills belief; or rather acknowledging theatricality kills the credibility of the supernatural" (109). Furthermore, the theatricality of demonic possession is not in essence tragedy but is more representative of a genre marking its "inauthenticity," namely "farce" (111). This for Harsnett "demolishes exorcism" while locating theatrical "seduction" of the church itself (112).

It seems as though Harsnett's "momentum", Greenblatt adds, "carried *him* into the theater along with the fraud he hotly pursues, Shakespeare in *King Lear* stages not only exorcism, but Harsnett *on* exorcism" (116). Greenblatt is eager to assign an extract from Edgar's disguise[2] as Poor Tom as being allusive to the exorcisms of two "chambermaids, Sara and Friswood Williams,

---

[2] This refers to the following passage: "EDGAR: Five Fields have been in poor Tom at once: of lust, as Obidcut; Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chambermaids and waiting women." (*KL*, 4.1.58-63)

and the waiting woman, Ann Smith, principal actors in Father Edmunds's 'devil Theater'" (116). It is in Edgar 's "wit" that he shows a clear awareness to "deliberately violate the historical setting to remind the audience of the play's conspicuous doubleness, its simultaneous distance and contemporaneity" (117). And so, in the disguise and the borrowed discourses of Poor Tom, we get a glimpse of Edgar, in Greenblatt's eyes, as a commentator of current affairs, attuned to the social world around him.

Indeed, for Greenblatt, it is Harsnett's *Declaration* that provides Shakespeare not only with a familiar anachronism but also with the template for Edgar's "histrionic disguise" (117). Furthermore, Edgar represents the finding in Harsnett of the "inauthenticity of a theatrical role," and we see Shakespeare using Edgar for "a documented fraud' (117) complete with the array of devils' names that have been conjured up to seem exotic, implying a degree of unbelievability, Greenblatt adds.

It is Shakespeare, Greenblatt continues, that not only wants to highlight Edgar's perilous fall from grace but also "his marginalization . . . Edgar becomes the possessed Poor Tom, the outcast with no possibility of working his way back toward the center" (117). Also, it is the force behind Harsnett's argument that contributes to the psychological burden placed on Edgar in his disguise, making it seem even more marginal and desperate than it really is, Greenblatt continues. This is evidenced, Greenblatt believes, in "I cannot daub it further" (*KL*, 4.1.52). At this point Greenblatt conjectures as to why Edgar does not reveal himself to his father and all he says, Greenblatt adds, is "And yet I must" (4.1.60) continuing his disguise while planning to lead his father to Dover.

Greenblatt gives a similar impression of the psychological torment within Edgar's disguising when examining his scene with Gloucester at Dover cliff. It is a scene regarded by Greenblatt as one that "deepens the play's brooding upon spurious exorcism" (1988, 118) and provides the audience with another impromptu new role from Edgar, replete with its own borrowed discourses. Within Edgar's rhetoric we are again reminded of Harsnett and the theatricality of the priests' "power of theatrical suggestion" on:

> the anxious subjects on whom [they] work their charms [who] come to believe that they too have witnessed the devil depart in grotesque form from their own bodies, whereupon the priests turn their eyes heavenward and give thanks to the Blessed Virgin. (117)

It is in much the same manner that Edgar persuades Gloucester to stand at the cliff top, Greenblatt argues, and then suddenly change roles, pretending to be an innocent bystander after his father's "fall", claiming to have seen a devil depart from him. In turn, Edgar attempts to form in his father "an experience of awe and wonder so intense that it can shatter his suicidal despair and restore his faith in the benevolence of the gods" (118). Greenblatt desires, I feel, to emphasise that Edgar is here at the margins of his own sanity, a figure seeing his own father at the height of despair and yet, continuing his disguise and remaining bound to the seeming addiction of his own self-fashioning which continues to wreak havoc on his self-identity.

If Greenblatt is asking the audience to accept Edgar's "exorcism" as fictive, then what must we accept in our belief in the character(s) of Edgar himself? The impression is created from Greenblatt's reading that Edgar's roles, his disguises, the accents and discourses borrowed are nothing more than fictions themselves. However, what is clear that in their employment, a product of Edgar's rigorous devotion to self-fashioning, is that the psychological scarring which results, seems to overwhelm him.

Greenblatt shortly refers to this joining together of exorcism and theatre to explore "the difference that enables *King Lear* to borrow comfortably from Harsnett" (119). This is encapsulated in the "complicity" that the theatre elicits from the audience rather than the belief in exorcist practices. As a consequence, demonic possession is designed for the audience to be a "theatrical fraud" (119). We need to be reminded, Greenblatt adds, that the characters do not appeal to devils but constantly to Pagan gods and that Edgar is not possessed by devils due to the fictitious nature of his disguise(s) (120). However, there remains the impression from Greenblatt's reading that Edgar is possessed, as I have said, with this nature of disguising. Edgar's own tenuous grasp of sanity is further emphasized, I feel, in Greenblatt drawing an analogy here to Lear's madness which "has no supernatural origin" while Lear's cure comes, he claims, not from an exorcist but from someone in the medical profession (1988, 119).

While investigating the final scene of *King Lear*, Greenblatt explores Edgar's response "Or image of that horror?" to Kent's "Is this the promis'd end?" (*KL*, 5.3.278-279). What we see here, Greenblatt adds, is that the "end" is indeed the end of the world, "the Last Judgement, here experienced not as a 'promise' – the punishment of the wicked, the reward of the good – but as a 'horror'" (124). Like Kent, Edgar is uncertain about what appears before him and his question

suggests, Greenblatt continues, that he might not be paying witness to the end itself but the “image” of the end of the world.

Greenblatt’s reading of Edgar does, I feel, both exemplify and illustrate the psychological conditions imposed on the character’s self-identity while in disguise. Greenblatt shows how these conditions are seen to make a character’s disguises more desirable, particularly in Edgar’s desire to help his own father, where a series of masks appear to become more radically enacted. Greenblatt’s own assumption within *Renaissance Self Fashioning* is realized in this character; namely, that the more rigorous the self-fashioning act and act of disguising, the greater the psychological pressures placed on the subject. So great are these pressures that at the end of the play, as Greenblatt himself seems to recognize, Edgar is consumed by the “horror” confronting him as a self-fashioning subject without a stage, without any more roles to play. Finally, we are reminded by Greenblatt that in the act of disguise that he is a great mimic, able to employ those borrowed discourses with great effect. The survival instinct that Greenblatt perceives within Edgar from the beginning of the play is realized when it is Edgar (along with Albany) who is left to lead Lear’s kingdom to an uncertain future that is mirrored in the mind of Edgar himself.

2.2 Other Critical Approaches to Edgar

It is my intention to establish the importance of Edgar from the point of view of the structure of *King Lear* by focusing on three criteria, these being the title of the play, the assignment of final lines, and the “ethical” authority ascribed to the character. Firstly, I will briefly contend the importance of Edgar from his appearance within the Quarto subtitle. The second is to focus on the ongoing probe into the assignment of the final lines of the play. In the Quarto these are attributed to Albany and the Folio attributes them to Edgar. I wish to show how this investigation, despite its different viewpoints, nevertheless concurs in upholding the importance of Edgar which I believe is also connected to understanding Edgar’s “ethical” authority in the play. Thirdly, I wish to outline further critical viewpoints which make the case for Edgar’s ethical authority, including those opinions which link such an authority to the multifarious range of disguises that Edgar employs throughout the play. Once I have concluded this section, I then wish to demonstrate, through a New Historicist reading of disguise that I outlined in my analysis of Greenblatt and self-fashioning, how Edgar’s importance from the point of view of the plot of *King Lear* is indeed to be viewed through

the multifarious disguises that he undergoes. While doing so, I will pay attention to the psychological dimension of disguise that I showed is bound up within the disguise effect of the cultural construction of the self within New Historicism.

Before I investigate and establish Edgar's importance to the plot of *King Lear*, it is crucial to outline views of those earlier critics have been less tolerant than Greenblatt in acknowledging the importance of Edgar from the point of view of the structure of the plot of *King Lear*. A.C. Bradley states that it is Edgar which "excites the least enthusiasm' (1904, 244). He also dismisses the whole subplot with Edmund as a pointless distraction that "fails to excite a tithe of . . . interest" (206). George Orwell's sympathies towards Edgar are somewhat similar in commenting that "Edgar is a superfluous character: indeed it would probably be a better play if Gloucester and both his sons were eliminated" (1947, Bloom 2008, 196). Northrop Frye views Edgar's role as having no consequence whatsoever, his function merely to assist Lear when it was important to do so:

> No one can study *King Lear* without wondering why Edgar puts on this Poor Tom act for Lear's benefit. He has to go into disguise, of course, but none of Cornwall's spies are likely to be listening, and elsewhere on the heath open conspiracy is discussed under the storm's cover . . . Poor Tom is the providence or guardian spirit that shows Lear the end of his journey to find his own nature. (1967, 106)

It has not only been such criticism which has impeded Edgar's importance within *King Lear*. The 1623 Folio of the play in comparison with the 1608 Quarto sees a reduction in Edgar's role of forty-one lines. Five scenes in the Quarto attributed to Edgar are missing in the Folio. Within these Folio cuts, the complete omission of the "mock" trial scene results in a fourteen- line omission of Edgar's blank verse soliloquy (*KL*, 3.6.102-115) and the narrative of his reunion with Kent (5.3.205-222).

The role of Edgar and the heteroglossia witnessed in Shakespeare's original Quarto and Folio versions, has also been seen to progressively decline within stage productions and reworkings of *King Lear*. Nahum Tate's 1681 version[3] was to form the basis of a majority of theatrical productions until the nineteenth century. Tate's reworking of Edgar was to romanticize the role, introducing a love affair with Cordelia. Subsequently, the Poor Tom disguise is rewritten considering Edgar's service to Cordelia and as a result, only serves to generalize his dilemma, stripping away the complex multiplicity of voices in Shakespeare's character. The role is also given

---

[3] Naham Tate, *The History of King Lear*. *Acted at the Duke's Theatre. Reviv'd with Alterations* (London: Printed for E. Flesher, and are to be sold by R. Bentley, and M. Magnes in Russel Street near Covent Garden, 1681).

a greater religious emphasis which is evidenced in a greater affection of filial piety toward not only his father, but to Lear too.[4] The French playwright, Jean-François Ducis in *Le Roi Lear* (1783), also subjected Edgar's role to substantial revisions, adapting the plot to cater to contemporary French tastes and sensibilities.[5] Likewise, Friedrich Schröder sought to reconcile the play with Neoclassical principles, again truncating Edgar's lines in his 1778 German production.[6]

Even since the restoration of Shakespeare's text from 1838, it has often remained apparent, as Simon Palfrey notices, that this has not always included a complete reprisal of Edgar's role, which often:

> grotesquely exceeds the modes or styles expected for a subsidiary "noble" character – one that, for all its changes and explosiveness, must remain in the shadow of the Lear-tale. Every acting choice . . . has meant the sacrifice of numerous incompatible (or simply unnoticed) alternatives, and often, inevitably, the sacrifice of many of the part's lines. (2014, 23)

Reflecting on how Edgar has been subjected to so many editorial revisions, it is not surprising that this process has helped to diminish and indeed, disguise, the importance of Edgar from the critical point of view.

Interestingly enough, we encounter critical views of those who wish to diminish Edgar's ethical significance.[7] One such advocate is Stanley Cavell, who looks to the delayed revealing of his disguise to Gloucester, or as the critic frames it, Edgar's "avoiding recognition" (1969, 283). This avoidance, Cavell adds, "links him . . . to Cornwall and the sphere of open evil" (283). Cavell sees Lear's own label of Edgar as "unaccommodated man" as a false one. He is not to be seen as the somewhat innocent aid and counsellor to Lear's plight but rather Edgar views his disguise as a calculated one, reminding us of Greenblatt's perception of Sir Thomas More in the "need to do more than remove their clothes for they can cover up their embarrassment by nakedness. Men have their accommodations, their inventions" (285) Any claim to an "ethical" authority is simply

[4] Tate tries to ensure that as a figure of piety, Edgar continuously demonstrates his religious strength and Christian values throughout the play. In Tate's Act V, Edgar believes that Lear's kingdom will be restored as "The gods have weighed our sufferings; / W'are past the fire, and now must shine to ages" (*The History*, V. vi 40-41).

[5] A full analysis of this adaptation is to be found in J. Golder, *Shakespeare for the Age of Reason; the earliest stage adaptations of Jean-François Ducis, 1769-1792* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992): 112-153.

[6] Simon Williams, *Shakespeare on the German Stage, Volume 1: 1586-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) observes from Schröders production that: "Edgar's speeches as Poor Tom were severely pruned, no doubt to cater to the audience's sense of decency" (84).

[7]A representative negative view of Edgar may be found in Marvin Rosenberg in *The Masks of King Lear* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1972); Rosenberg questions Edgar's stated motives throughout while arguing for the presence of "motives of revenge and punishment" (266); "Edgar," he says, "hates well" (245).

dismissed by Cavell as he points to his increasing "self-assurance" in Act Five which "mocks his Christian thoroughness" (285).

Northrop Frye also sees little evidence of Edgar's "ethical" authority in his attribution of the final lines of the play, the focal point which I will explore shortly. Here, he feels that Edmund has somewhat undermined the philosophy within Edgar's final lines in "saying what he feels, and certainly not what he ought to say" (1986, Bloom 2008, 300). Overall, Frye believes that this "points to the fact that language is just about the only thing that fights for genuine humanity in this blinded world" (300).

Despite these radical formulations, some critics believe that Edgar's importance within *King Lear* is to be established by his mentioning on the 1608 Quarto title page[8] which provides, in William Carroll's words, an "equal billing" for Edgar (1987, 427) as it reads: "M. William Shak-speare: His True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King LEAR and his three Daughters. *With the unfortunate life of* EDGAR, *sonne* and heire to the Earle of Gloster, and his sullen and assumed humor of TOM of Bedlam."[9] Carroll concludes that even if Shakespeare himself had not thought of this title, "at least whoever composed it recognized the importance, and the notorious appeal, of Edgar" (427).[10] Furthermore, in the attributes ascribed to Edgar within the title – "the sonne and heire" and "sullen and assumed humor of Tom of Bedlam" – Carroll believes that they represent "the boundaries of cultural possibility for Edgar" (427).

Robert Clare also believes that the double title of the Quarto "stresses [Edgar's] multiple role playing" (1997, 130). In the latter part of this section, I will show how Edgar's penchant for

[8] In the 1623 Folio the double title has been changed to simply read 'The Tragedie of King Lear'.
[9] *King Lear* 1608 (Pied Bull Quarto), ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1939).
[10] The recognition of the Quarto's subtitle and its significance in highlighting the importance of Edgar's role has also been discussed by T. M. Parrott, *Shakespearean Comedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), 297, Leo Kirschbaum, 'Banquo and Edgar: Character or Function?,' *EIC*, Vol. VII, No.2 (January 1957): 1–21, and R.A. Peck, 'Edgar's Pilgrimage: High Comedy in King Lear,' *Studies in English Literature. 1500-1900*. Vol. 7, No. 2, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama* (Spring, 1967): 219-237. Brian Vickers in *The One King Lear* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2016) also points to Edgar's witnessing of Lear's suffering in the Quarto "He childed as I fathered" (*King Lear* 3.6.112) as a comment "explicitly linking the main and subplot" (283). Stanley Wells in his essay 'The History of King Lear' believes that "The prominence accorded to the role of Edgar on the title-page of the Quarto may mean that the actor of this virtuoso role scored a hit." *The Oxford Shakespeare: King Lear* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2008). Cyndia Clegg, in '*King Lear* and Early Seventeenth Century Print Culture' published in *King Lear: New Critical Essays* (New York and Oxford: Routledge, 2008) Ed. Kahan, J., contends that the double title is intended to distinguish Shakespeare's play from the 1605 play *The true chronicle history of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan,and Cordella As it hath bene diuers and sundry times lately acted*, a play that had been performed in the 1590s, printed by Simon Stafford.

disguise very much contributes towards understanding his importance from the point of view of the plot in *King Lear*.

Significantly enough, even Harold Bloom (usually less concerned with purely textual inquires) notices that the Quarto's double title "assigns a prominence to Edgar rarely afforded him in our critical studies" (1998, 480). Bloom later contends that audiences and readers are mistaken in apportioning greater significance to either the Fool or Edmund and should look "to Edgar, who will inherit the ruined kingdom" (481).

Similarly, Simon Palfrey, in his extensive study on Edgar's disguise in *Poor Tom: Living King Lear*, notices the importance of Edgar towards the double title of the play, commenting that "The stories are symmetrically advertised, as though they are modular blocs of narrative interest" (2014, 18). Moreover, it is this equal billing, that:

> immediately suggests a puzzling modal plurality: this play is at once a history, a tragedy, a picaresque ("unfortunate life"), a prince-and-pauper tale of noble privation, and something else besides—some tantalizing phantom quality bound up in the nonfigure who closes the title. (18-19)

Furthermore, Palfrey concludes, the quarto title page "announces, as its plot and purpose . . . an equipoise of catastrophe and continuance . . . the figure who concludes the description must be in some way decisive: Tom of Bedlam" (19). This to me seems a fitting description that encapsulates the essence of Edgar's disguise, the struggle to maintain a sense of identity in the face of continual self-fashioning that I wish to elaborate on later in this chapter.

2.2.1 The Continuing Textual Crisis of *King Lear*

King Lear became the very vehicle of the textual revolution which has come to be labelled as editorial revisionism. This editorial trend (developing in the last decades of the 20th century) puts into question and ultimately seeks to revert or "unedit" many emanations habitually introduced into successive editions of Shakespeare's works, including conflations of various extant versions of the play. Needless to say, *King Lear* became the chief case in point. In my own belief that the final lines do actually confer an "ethical" authority on Edgar from the point of view of the structure of the plot of *King Lear*, I firstly wish to provide the context for examining Edgar's "ethical" authority by outlining the ethos behind two fundamentally different approaches as to which text of the play best represents Shakespeare's conception. The two authoritative texts of Shakespeare's play published are, firstly, the 1608 Quarto (Q) printed by Nicholas Okes for Nathanial Butter, and,

the 1623 Folio (F), printed by Isaac Jaggard for a consortium of publishers which collects thirty-six plays. These two texts are different in their composition; Q lacks 102 lines not found in F, whereas F lacks 285 lines not found in Q.

The theory of authorial revision as explanation for the textual problems of *King Lear* was set in motion by Michael Warren in his 1978 essay 'Quarto and Folio in *King Lear* and the Interpretation of Albany and Edgar.' Here, he postulates that a comparison of the differences in the speeches between these characters in Q and F reveals that a revision has taken place. The role played by Edgar has been magnified in F at the expense of Albany's importance in Q. Furthermore, the cuts in F are regarded as part of a conscious strategy to diminish Albany's stature. In 1980, Gary Taylor's 'The war in *King Lear*,' identifies another strategy of revision in the differences between Q and F: some of the cuts and variants of F aim to accelerate the momentum of the action towards the war (1980, 28). In another book of the same year, Steven Urkowitz's *Shakespeare's Revision of King Lear,* concludes that Shakespeare revised Q to produce a new version, F, which would be more effective on stage. Urkowitz identifies theatrical economy, practicality and theatrical inventiveness as the underlying approach of revision lying behind the new version. Still in the same year, a seminar of the Shakespeare Association discussed the differences between the Quarto and the Folio texts and the essays presented in that seminar have been collected in a volume entitled *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare's Two Versions of King Lear*, edited by Gary Taylor and Michael Warren, and published in 1983.[11]

It is the opinion of a group of critics, however, recently given voice through Sir Brian Vickers, that these missing sections in Q and F are not attributable to authorial revision but are instead:

> different and complimentary. If you were to complete either version by adding passages preserved by the other, you would have, in terms of characters and events, two identical plays. The texts would still differ in many textual variants . . . but they would contain the same play. (2016, ix)

---

[11] Most of the essays in *The Division of the Kingdoms* dedicate themselves to the study of F and to the identification of strategies of revision. Almost all the contributors regard that a majority of differences between Q and F as part of Shakespeare's strategy of revision in order to diminish the importance of Kent, re-shape the character of Goneril, revise the role of the King and re-cast the Fool from a natural or idiot into a wise, sarcastic jester. In 1986, the publication of the *Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works* put into practice the assumptions of the authorial revision theory. The editors, Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, decided to publish the Q and F texts of *King Lear* independently as two separate plays, giving the authorial revision theory the status of a new orthodox editorial practice.

Such "conflationist" views as they have been called, therefore argue that the conflation of the Q and F is the only way to proceed if we want to retrieve an approximation of what Shakespeare really wrote.

These views espoused by Vickers and others[12] are met with criticism by critics proposing a theory of authorial revision. Its first assumption is that Shakespeare wrote two versions of *King Lear*. The second is that the original lost *King Lear* is an archetypal construct, an invention of previous Shakespearean scholarship. The third is that the practice of "conflation" rests on "bardolatry," being based "upon the principle that not a line which appears to have been written by Shakespeare ought to be lost."[13] The fourth assumption is that Q and F are autonomous texts which should be edited, published, read, interpreted and performed separately. The final assumption states that Q offers Shakespeare's initial thoughts and a more literary version whereas F offers Shakespeare's second thoughts and probably represents actual theatrical practice.

Despite approaching the construction of *King Lear* from two opposing interpretative viewpoints, I believe that both factions I have outlined do find some degree of concordance in their views about the importance of Edgar, and express views agreeing on the "ethical authority" borne out in Edgar's role. No more is this exemplified in their examination of the final lines of the play (5.3.322-325) where Q attributes these to Albany and F attributes them to Edgar.[14] Sir Brian Vickers, contending that the Folio was not revised by Shakespeare but by compositors who had clearer access to Shakespeare's manuscripts than before, describes the attribution of the final lines in F to Edgar as giving him "more presence onstage" (2016, 295). Furthermore, Vickers contends that Edgar's lines are not only emotionally charged but also convey an "ethical" authority, akin to a commentarial role on the suffering endured in the play, through "summing up the feelings of the survivors of this tragedy and memoralizing Lear's stature and the extent of his suffering" (296). For Vickers, Q is flawed in denying this speech to Edgar while "the Folio got it right" (296). Robert Clare, another advocate of the "conflationist" group, presses the claims for Edgar's "ethical"

[12] See also Robert Clare's 'Quarto and Folio: A Case for Conflation' published in *Lear from Study to Stage: Essays in Criticism*, Ed. Ogden, J. and A.H. Scouten (Madison, USA and London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Presses, 1997): 79-108.

[13] Charles Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*. Vol. 6, 1843, 392, cited by S. Wells in Taylor and Warren (1983, 8).

[14] In F these are: EDGAR The weight of this sad time we must obey,
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most; we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long. (*KL* 5.3.322-325).

authority at the end of the play, stating that the final lines attributed to Edgar in F "underline Edgar's final dominance" particularly as Albany has just "abdicated" from the crown (1997, 130).

For the revisionist Michael Warren, Edgar's claims in Q to the crown and an "ethical authority" are otherwise unconvincing because he "remains an immature young man and ends the play devastated by his experience" (1978,105). It is only by attributing the last lines of F to Edgar that we see a character who "comes forward as a future ruler when he enables Albany to achieve his objective of not ruling" (105). By the end of F, Edgar has grown into "a potential ruler, a well-intentioned, resolute man in a harsh world" although he remains "inexperienced in rule, fac[ing] the future with little support" (105). A fellow revisionist, Gary Taylor, believes that the plays final lines in F are quite explicit in delivering for Edgar an "ethical" authority. Here, Taylor adds, we are witness to the "fact that Edgar fills the role of chief moral survivor much more comfortably than either Albany or Kent" (1983, 425). Steven Urkowitz does not go so far as Warren and Taylor have done in specifically claiming Edgar's "ethical" authority at the end of the play, rather, it is more implied in Urkowitz's reading of the diminution of Albany in F: "This scene resolves the issue of Albany's suitability as a ruler at the end of the play, and it provides important clues for understanding Albany's two acts of abdication" (1980, 104).

2.2.2 The Ethical Authority of Edgar

Aside from the support for Edgar's "ethical authority" by both revisionists and conflationists debating the final lines of the play, there has been other, widespread critical backing attesting to Edgar's virtues. Edgar's often long-held association with the idea that he represents an "ethical authority" in *King Lear*[15], could date back to the sentiments expressed by critics such as Edward Dowden, who commented, "Edgar's nobility of nature, is not disguised by the beggar's rag; he is the skilful resister of evil, the champion of right to the utterance" (1875, Bloom 2008 128-129). Later he qualifies this notion further, seeing Edgar as:

[15] Simon Palfrey provides an interesting insight into the name of Edgar that derives from the source of Holinshed's Chronicles and his description of King Edgar of England, which Shakespeare may have read. It is a description that could intrinsically attest to the "ethical" authority inscribed within the name itself, for the portrayal of King Edgar is "a suggestive case. A small, neatly made man; a lover of peace, protective of his people, sleeplessly warding off invaders; a stickler for rules, fiercely punitive to robbers and malefactors; a favorer of monks and establisher of abbey." *Poor Tom: Living King Lear* (London and Chicago, The University of Chicago Press Ltd., 2014), 23.

> the champion of right, ever active in opposing evil and advancing the good cause, discovers that the gods are upon the side of right, are unceasingly at work in the vindication of truth, and the execution of justice. His faith lives through trial and disaster, a flame which will not be quenched. (129)

G. Wilson Knight clearly sees Edgar as an important representative of an "ethical" authority. During the later parts of *King Lear*, Edgar:

> acts the appropriate forms which the *Lear* vision as a whole expresses. His words and actions are therefore most important. So, later, he becomes the high-priest of the *Lear* religion: a voice, a choric moralizer. (1930, Bloom 2008, 174)

Later, Wilson Knight comments on the end of the play, viewing Edgar again as a powerful symbolic, moralising force within the play: "It is Edgar's trumpet, symbol of natural judgement, that summons Edmund to account at the end, sounding through the *Lear* mist from which right and wrong at this moment emerge distinct" (185).

Maynard Mack believes that in Edgar "we see a character whose possible Morality backgrounds are still more various" (1965, 61). It is in Edgar's "unblinking attitude toward his father's transgressions and his strict code of retribution" that we see "the necessities of his role as presenter of legitimacy and polar opposite to his brother's Appetite" (61). It is also in the disguise of Poor Tom, Mack adds, where we can see that "many of his words and actions relate him to the hero figure of the Moralities after this figure has fallen on evil days and ways" (61). Mack speculates that the heath scenes in particular are "designed to keep before us the inner metaphysical and moral cost of Appetite while the intervening scenes are exhibiting its gross outer efficiencies in the successful plot of Edmund against his father" (61).

Quite recently, Tom Clayton comments on the "positive attention" paid by critics towards Edgar and in doing so focuses on the "ethical" authority of Edgar which Clayton believes centres:

> understandably on his best qualities: his endurance, his care of his father, his life as a make believe madman, his maturing with experience, his moral and philosophical observations (especially in Q), and his status at the end of the play. (2008, Bloom 2008,192)

Part of such a positive reception of Edgar, Clayton adds, is the perception that Edgar needs to perform "striking actions" in "cases of justified violence", first in the case of Oswald and later Edmund in the final act.

In conclusion here, it is noticeable that not only do all of these critics laud Edgar's moral proprieties but they also acknowledge, in particular, an ability to use the voice. What is missing

from this particular discussion, however, is a focus on the connection between this virtuosity in using language and the use of disguise.

2.2.3 Edgar's Use of Disguise

Hitherto I have tried to present both the opinions of revisionist, conflationist scholars and critics operating outside this field to demonstrate how Edgar's "ethical" authority is significant when assessing his importance from the point of the view of the plot in *King Lear*. It is important to also focus on, from the point of view of other scholars[16], how Edgar is perceived in the context of the far-reaching range of disguises that he employs. Sir Brian Vickers summaries these disguises which I shall elaborate on shortly:

> Edgar . . . makes his extraordinary transformation from victim to hero, from a hunted outcast and "horrible object" to the compassionate helper and righter of wrongs, who administers to two "Foes / The cup of their deseruings" by killing both Oswald and Edmund. (2016, 298)

As Alexander Blok contends, when we reflect upon the myriad uses of disguise that Edgar employs, it is important to refute the notion that disguising is not necessarily the act of a coward. Instead, he adds, we must:

> Look further and see how many arid masks Edgar must change, how much he has to dissemble, how laboriously and, I would say, how prosaically he makes his way forward. As the last victory is his, he appears as the avenger of ill deeds; but even here he is not bright and there is no radiance about him; he is just the unknown black knight. (1920, Bloom 2008, 166)

Michael Mooney sees Edgar's "ethical" authority as a key feature of Shakespeare's design but accounting for "the recognition that Edgar serves multiple functions" in the play via his disguises, "any one approach" that views Edgar as purely portraying a "'moral agent'…is . . . reductive" (1990, 130). For Mooney, "[e]ach of Edgar's personae, that is, requires a different awareness about the relation between a character, as the audience responds to him" (130).

[16] Despite his extensive and insightful study into Edgar's disguise of Poor Tom, William Carroll discusses those critics critical and supportive of Edgar's actions without committing to a defence of "Edgar's essential goodness." See 'The Base Shall Top Th'Legitimate,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 38, No. 4 (Winter, 1987): 430-431.

Finally, I will conclude this particular discussion by using the view of Stanley Wells. His comments here not only reference my previous discussion regarding Edgar's "ethical authority" but also the character's disguising. For Wells, Edgar:

> provides virtuoso opportunities for a young actor both in his protean shifts of identity and in his reflectiveness when he speaks in his own persona, which can make him a moral centre of the play. (2008, 38-39)

In the following section I intend to examine Edgar's virtuoso performance, evidenced in his range of disguises in *King Lear*, through a New Historicist reading that I outlined in Chapter One, aiming to establish Edgar's importance from the point of view of the plot.

2.3 Edgar and Radical Self-fashioning

In this section I would like to show how Edgar becomes an integral part of the structure of the plot of *King Lear*[17] through a radical self-fashioning, a mesmeric employment of disguise through its various (verbal and non-verbal) modes of behaviour. I will also expand on my belief that Edgar's self-identity is constructed, in accordance with Greenblatt's triadic model of the self, in the following way. Edgar's self-identity, I believe, is constructed firstly by its submission to something resembling a neo-Christianity. Simon Palfrey defines the authority behind Edgar's submission as a "spiritual purpose and eschatological risk: not orthodox, perhaps only erratically or residually Christian" (2014, 22). Secondly, as I will later show, Edgar is seen to reject not only those fraudulent exorcist practices targeted at the Catholic church by Harsnett but also other ideologies, bound up for example in the ideology of the court. Ultimately, as a result of Edgar's experiences through multiple disguises, I wish to contend that Edgar does not triumphantly emerge with his self reconciled. This has a significant bearing on how he will encounter the challenges needed to be overcome to become a successful and future ruler of his country.[18]

Prior to what is largely believed to be Edgar's first adoption of disguise in *King Lear*, the role of the Bedlam beggar Poor Tom, beginning in Act 2, it is my own belief that Edgar's casting

[17] As I have previously stated, I will consult the Arden 3rd Edition of *King Lear* as it preserves both Q and F variants of the play. Such variants, I believe, are vital when considering the importance of Edgar from the point of view of the structure of the plot as we can fully experience the heteroglossia within the roles/voices that Edgar assumes in disguise.
[18] The assumption that Edgar is to rule after Lear's death is of course borne in the switch of the final lines from Albany to Edgar (from Q to F) that I discussed earlier.

in the role of Tom actually begins in the minds of audience and reader prior to this point, as his self is virtually shaped and characterized by others prior to any physical appearance. Edgar's appearance, prior to his disguising as Tom, is marked somewhat by his absence, and I would agree with Simon Palfrey that what we witness here is an extraordinary "initial negativity of Edgar . . . [which] is an exercise in penumbral characterization, a figure whose substance is shade" (2014, 38). He does not appear on stage until Act 1 Scene 2 and before this appearance, his father is already in the process of defining and shaping Edgar's nobility, "a son . . . by order of law" (*King Lear*, 1.1.18). This is further enforced by Edmund's famous soliloquy in Act 1 Scene 2 with the bastard sibling holding the letter that would soon seal his brother's fate. Here the nobility of Edgar is crystallized through Edmund's emphasis on the word "legitimate".

However, in the same speech I believe that Edgar is already cast as an outsider. Despite his legitimacy, a man destined to rightful inheritance,[19] he may not be bound to the degree of love that could already exist between Gloucester and Edmund. We see this in:

EDMUND: Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund. (1.2.17)

If Edmund is trying to convince us who loves each other more, we are reminded that there may be an element of truth in his assumption when recalling Gloucester's earlier comparison of sons in his discussions with Kent.

GLOUCESTER: But I have a son sir
[…] who is yet no dearer in my account. (1.1.18-19)

When Gloucester reads the forged letter in Edmund's hand, I believe there is little doubt that Edgar is not held that highly in his father's esteem. Rather than ask Edgar himself to appear and immediately testify against the letter's contents, Gloucester continues to be led by the casuistry of Edmund to the point where Edgar is suddenly cast into the role of:

GLOUCESTER: Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish
villain – worse than brutish! (1.2.75-76)

[19] W.C. Carroll comments on these ideas of legitimacy and inheritance which "seem by turn incorporated in the natural body and arbitrarily empowered by the social order. The issue of legitimacy is most clearly articulated in the relationship between Edgar, the "sonne and heire to the Earle of Gloster," and Edmund, got "in the lusty stealth of nature." '"The Base Shall Top Th'Legitimate": The Bedlam Beggar and the Role of Edgar in *King Lear*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 38, No. 4 (Winter, 1987), 427.

Despite Gloucester's later attempt at reversal in belief, appearing to restore a sense of composure that Edgar "cannot be such a monster," (1.2.94) "the bond cracked 'twixt son and father" (1.2.108-109) that Gloucester soon refers to returns us to an image of Edgar as an outlaw, falling outside of the scope of human identity. It is Edmund that soon gives a name and substance to this shape. Upon his greeting to Edgar, marking the legitimate heir's first appearance, Edmund points to the eventual disguise that his brother will assume:

> EDMUND Pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy.
> My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom
> o'Bedlam. – O, these eclipses do portend these
> divisions. Fa, sol, la, mi. (1.2.134-137)

Edgar arrives on the stage, he has not uttered one single line and already Edmund, by first impersonating the beggar, is assigning the disguise that Edgar will eventually assume, complete with the idea of the self-fashioning subject retreating into darkness and his expressions of inwardness. As W.C. Carroll adds, "the change in epithets - from 'legitimate' to 'poor' - signals how Edgar falls from hierarchical privilege to marginality" (1987, 428) in our increased anticipation of Edgar's first disguise.

The utterances that Edgar produces at this stage[20]are in stark contrast to the loquaciousness of his brother but as Simon Palfrey reminds us, these remarks are not to be viewed as "insipid and inadequate" but rather point instead to the disguised characterizations that Edgar will eventually assume, with "the strain of tortured moral absolutism, and how it curdles into cruelty and loathing, if not of others then of self" (2014, 35).

Edgar is still denied the chance to present his case and deny the letter's contents to his father as Edmund stages a fight between the two, effecting Edgar's departure, his escape from the wrath of the avenging Gloucester. Soon afterwards, Edmund cuts his arm to convince Gloucester of Edgar's continuing designs:

> EDMUND Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion

[20] EDMUND Come, come, when saw you my father last?
EDGAR Why, the night gone by.
EDMUND Spake you with him?
EDGAR Ay, two hours together.
EDMUND Parted you in good terms? Found you no
Displeasure in him, by word nor countenance?
EDGAR None at all. (*KL*, 1.2.151-157)

Of my more fierce endeavour. [Cuts his arm] (2.1.33-34)

This act of self-mutilation is firstly significant as it highlights the depths to which Edmund will go in his desire to manipulate his achieved end, becoming the legitimate heir that Edgar himself represents. And yet, the act has great significance as we see the act of self-mutilation repeated again in the birth of Poor Tom.

Edgar reappears in Act 2 Scene 2 and the tone of what is about to follow seems to be in, as Joseph Sterrett argues, the form of a "seeming prayer" where Edgar "casts off old social values before he embraces his role as 'Poor Tom', as his defensive response to the new" (2012, 135-136). This prayer demonstrates in his defensive reply to the "new", a submissiveness of Edgar to a neo-Christian belief (which I will continually refer to during my analysis) which carries with it a rejection of religious and secular practices as well as court ideology. At first, we glimpse a brief insight into the character of Edgar as he sets out the "framework" of his banishment:

EDGAR I heard myself proclaimed,
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escaped the hunt. No port is free, no place
That guard and most unusual vigilance
Does not attend my taking. (2.2.172-176).

Then, we are led to the form of the disguise that we have been anticipating in Edgar for a while:

EDGAR While I may 'scape,
I will preserve myself, and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury in contempt of man
Brought near to beast. (2.2.176-180)

Here is Edgar expressing a key mode of desire and fear of the self-fashioning subject, the desire to plunge into the taboo sphere, to experience the apparent emotions and pain associated with the suffering of Bedlam beggars.[21]

What follows next is Edgar's precise description of his disguise in the self's quest to radically conceal its identity, responding to the pressure felt in being the hunted. It is important to

[21] W.C. Carroll emphasises the extent to which the Bedlam beggar was taboo to contemporary audiences. "For most of Shakespeare's audience, Tom o'Bedlam would not have been a figure to pity, but one to flee; not a Dickensian figure reduced in circumstances by an unjust social order, but something of a charlatan . . . on the surface. . . a figure of disturbing deformity" (1987, 431).

recall the enormous strain that such radical concealment can place on the subject as the reality of the disguise is contemplated:

> EDGAR My face I'll grime with filth,
> Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots,
> And with presented nakedness outface
> The winds and persecutions of the sky. (2.2.180-183)

However, it is in the following lines which reveal Edgar's further desires to plunge into the prohibited realm of Beddlam beggary, to liberate his suppressed desires and fears in the hope of eventually releasing him from the boundaries of self-fashioning, as notions of self-mutilation are explored:

> EDGAR The country gives me proof and precedent
> Of Bedlam beggars, who with roaring voices
> Strike in their numbed and mortified bare arms
> Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary (2.2.184-187)

In terms of expression, we see a desire for a non-verbalised violence coupled with a loathing of the body in seeking this escape from self-fashioning. More importantly, such desire for self-mutilation points to Edgar's own submission to his neo-Christian beliefs. As Giulio Pertile argues, it is difficult to ascertain how Edgar actually intends to perform this act, "Whether real or false, whether palpable or painless, whether mortifying or numbing" (2016, 321). However, in Edgar's desire to perform this we can see, Pertile adds, Edgar's submission to his particular religious views:

> Edgar's "numbed and mortified" expresses what would clearly be an ideal outcome for this process: a state in which the senses are neutralized altogether and can no longer let in vices to begin with. At the same time, the experience of vivid pain is crucial to arriving at such a state: such pain not only serves as penance for specific acts of sin and as sensory counterweight to pleasure but also allows for that intense participation in the somatic experience of Christ's passion known as *imitatio Christi*. (324)

Pertile draws us into a fascinating analogy, one that perhaps sees Edgar very briefly assuming the sartorial disguising of a Christ-like figure, replete with the discourse of the bedlam beggar.

The climax of Edgar's "seeming prayer" reinforces the idea of Edgar plunging into the taboo vision of the beggar while attesting to the mode of rhetoric in the Poor Tom disguise and its discourses and accents that Edgar will need to borrow and feign:

> EDGAR And with this horrible object from low farms,
> Poor pelting villages, sheepcotes, and mills,
> Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,

Enforce their charity. "Poor Turlygod!"[22] "Poor Tom!"—
That's something yet. Edgar I nothing am. (2.2.188-192)

The prayer ends as Edgar's self exhibits the mode of behaviour of loss, a withdrawal into darkness and the associated inwardness demanded in the process of self-fashioning. Edgar's disguise is not one, as Marcia Holly contends, where he "is temporarily negating himself" (1973, 175) but one which I will argue leaves a much more permanent and lasting impression on Edgar and his self-fashioning as the play progresses.

After his enunciation into the realm of self-fashioning, Edgar disappears again as we begin the long awaiting of the return of Poor Tom. It is not until Act 3 Scene 4 as we see Lear, Kent (himself disguised as Caius) and the Fool approach the hovel during the storm that we are triggered by the notion that Tom will soon appear. This moment arrives courtesy of Lear himself and his prayer, Simon Palfrey argues, "delivers the birth" of Tom (2014, 63).

LEAR . . . You houseless
poverty—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep. Exit [Fool]
Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your looped and windowed raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? Oh, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp.
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them
And show the heavens more just. (3.4.26-36)

Lear succeeds in bringing Tom to life, revealing to us the fruits of Edgar's labour in crafting his first conscious attempt at self-fashioning. From the distance Edgar cries:

EDGAR [within] Fathom and half, fathom and half: Poor
Tom! (3.4.37-38)

This may seem to document Edgar's descent into darkness, a personal hell where the beginning of the negation of his personal identity is marked.[23] It is equally too, a signal that Edgar is beginning

[22] R.A. Foakes can find no explanation for this other than "various ingenious possibilities [that] 'Tuelygod' . . . if closer to 'Truelygood' which makes a kind of sense." *King Lear*, Arden 3rd Edition, 218. The use of such language by Poor Tom later on sometimes falls with the mode of behaviour of nonsense, as I will later argue.
[23] There have been other interpretations of this line. Simon Palfrey views this as:

an oblique self-annunciation, defying clear purpose or referent. The 'spirit' is heard before it is seen, just as it is here before it is noticed (true in both texts but made more explicit in the Folio). In this

to plunge very deeply into the taboo sphere, ready to fully experience and engage with the intense emotions that will encompass his disguise, his self-fashioning.

As I will shortly elucidate, Poor Tom is designed to show Edgar's own rejection of those fraudulent Catholic exorcist practices documented by Harsnett and acknowledged by Greenblatt. In a cry that is meant to scare away passersby, Edgar reveals his feigned possession, borrowing the discourse of the Bedlam beggar in his rhetorical mode of behaviour:

> EDGAR Away, the foul fiend follows me. Through the
> sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind. Humh, go to
> thy cold bed and warm thee. (3.4.45-47)

The association with pain bound up in the image of the sharp hawthorn is married with the brutality of the cold wind. The verbalization of violence is providing Edgar's connection with his own self-identity with purpose and shape as he combats the harsh realities of the world in his first disguise.[24]

Lear himself is mystified at the sight of Poor Tom, wondering if he too had given all of his estate to his daughters and had ended up in the predicament he witnesses. Edgar's reply initially features continuing references to fraudulent exorcism:

> EDGAR Who gives anything to Poor Tom? Whom the foul
> fiend hath led through fire and through flame,
> through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire;
> that hath laid knives under his pillow and halters in his
> pew, set ratsbane by his porridge, made him proud of
> heart to ride on a bay trotting- horse over four-inched
> bridges to course his own shadow for a traitor? Bless
> thy five wits. Tom's a-cold. Oh, do-de, do-de, do-de.
> Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking.
> Do Poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes.
> There could I have him now, and there, and there
> again, and there. (3.4.50-61)

Here, we are reminded of Tom's mode of rhetoric, the discourse of Harsnett in evoking the "foul fiend." As R.A. Foakes contends the devil was also traditionally thought of as offering such knives

---

> world, common knowledge is not the imprimatur of life. That the voice precedes his visible appearance suggests mystery or ghostliness. Disconnected from body, it is also disconnected from source. Perhaps the exiles have stumbled upon some spring of nature's secrets; perhaps it speaks demonic automatism. Either way, it is not bound to a singular verifiable consciousness. (2014,72-73)

R.A. Foakes thinks that "Edgar calls as if he were taking soundings from a boat, or measuring the depth of water in the 'hovel'" (1997, 274).

[24] R.A. Foakes comments on "humh" In line 46, contending that it "could indicate Edgar's startled recognition of Lear, not unlike his father's *Hum* when he discovers conspiracy at 1.2.54" (1997, 274).

and halters "to suicide, encouraging them to kill themselves and bring their souls to damnation; hence suicide was regarded as a 'diabolical deed'" (1997, 275). Edgar is therefore through his mockery of these exorcist practices deepening his exploration of issues within the prohibited realm. At the same time Edgar is also affirming his own desire to experience and suffer the intensity of emotions in the refashioning of his self, alluding to the strange places he has been to (ford, bog, quagmire) and the methods he needs to employ to survive (ratsbane).

The line "Oh, do-de, do-de, do-de" confronts us with language which appears to us in the mode of nonsense, and we witness here Edgar's struggle in accommodating his new public persona of Poor Tom and the private persona, Edgar inside the disguise. Edgar is coming to terms with the appearance of the comedy and irony in Poor Tom and this is creating an illusion, a nonsensical construction of reality which enters and disrupts Edgar's innermost feelings. In creating such difficult, often unfathomable language[25], it may also serve as a useful weapon in Edgar's armour of disguise. Dirk Delabastita and Ton Hoensalaars view the employment of such language to be reflective of "the characters" ambition to excel at the deceptive art of obfuscation, or the playwright's wish to celebrate and enjoy a Babylonian chaos" (2015, 3). Edgar's employment of such language therefore forms an extra protective coating on his disguise, contributing to its eventual successful employment.

Edgar's mode of rhetoric and the borrowed discourses that comprise Tom are beginning to take shape and it is showing signs of what Simon Palfrey calls a "vocative superflux" with its "rhythms here are peculiarly strung between oral and textual: partly imitating the muttered catechisms of frightened or bowed obedience" (2014, 86-87) in the submission to and rejection of religious, secular and court ideologies and practices. However, we need to be reminded that Edgar is undergoing not just a self-fashioning but a rigorous self-fashioning in designing Tom, and this creates the great psychological pressure on the subject that Greenblatt mentioned. Such pressure causes Edgar to feel an immense discomfort as we see him struggling to be understood, straining an ability to hold onto the disguise. The pressure erupts in a sexual and vulgar mode of expression

[25] Germaine Greer comments (2007, cited in Palfrey 2014, 36) that such language does have a significance and deplores some theatrical interpretations which appear to overlook this as she argues:

> Edgar's language is our language, our most valuable inheritance. There is no point in our massively subsidised cultural institutions if they devalue our greatest asset by blandly assuming that Shakespeare's language is impenetrable. Edgar does talk fake visionary nonsense but it has a point.

as Edgar seeks to experience through Tom the intensity of the emotions bound up in plunging yet further into the taboo sphere or prohibited realm:

> EDGAR Pillicock sat on Pillicock hill,
> Alow, alow, loo, loo! (3.4.75-76) [26]

The end is marked, perhaps as R.A. Foakes argues, with cries to "incite dogs to the chase" or perhaps this "may be simply exclaiming" (1997, 276).

Tom then conducts a parody or mocking of the Ten Commandments and yet we feel emptiness in Edgar's voice as Lear himself expresses our collective failure to assign any recognisable mode of conversation in this beggar's role:

> EDGAR Take heed o'the foul fiend; obey thy parents, keep
> thy word justly, swear not, commit not with man's
> sworn spouse, set not thy sweet-heart on proud array.
> Tom's a cold.
>
> LEAR What hast thou been? (3.4.78-82)

What follows is Edgar delivering a rejection of his self, bound up in court ideology, particularly the revelling and corruption of the Jacobean court.[27]

> EDGAR A serving-man, proud in heart and mind, that
> curled my hair, wore gloves in my cap, served the lust
> of my mistress' heart and did the act of darkness with
> her, swore as many oaths as I spake words and broke
> them in the sweet face of heaven—one that slept in the
> contriving of lust and waked to do it. Wine loved I
> deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramoured
> the Turk. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand;
> hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in
> madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes
> nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to
> woman. Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of
> plackets, thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul
> fiend. (3.4.83-96)

---

[26] R.A. Foakes quotes Pillicock "slang for penis" and Pillicock Hill which "refers to the mount of Venus or female genitals" (1997, 276).

[27] Keith Linley outlines this view further in '*King Lear' in Context: The Cultural Background* (London and New York: Anthem Press, 2015), 253:

> Poor Tom's servingman may well be Edgar drawing upon his knowledge (personal or observed) of the court. It does not sound like the life of an ordinary domestic. Concern with appearance, recurrent lustful references, claims of swearing and breaking oaths, drinking too much, gambling, insincerity, violence, sloth, deviousness, greed, ready in malicious rumours, predatoriness and debt make this a recognizable litany of the sins of many young hangers-on at court.

Edgar concludes here with a reference we have encountered before, the pain of self-fashioning evidently tormenting its creator:

> EDGAR Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind,
> says suum, mun, nonny, Dauphin my boy, my boy,
> cessez ! Let him trot by. *Storm still.* (3.4.96-98)

Foakes assumes Edgar's discourse here to be "presumably deliberately mad nonsense" (278) and with such language we are reminded of this important mode of behaviour with self-fashioning, exemplifying Edgar's coming to terms with the appearance of the comedy and irony in Poor Tom, creating an illusion, a nonsensical construction of reality which enters and disrupts Edgar's innermost feelings.[28]

Edgar's "nonsense" here is also, as I have argued, his attempt to enforce his disguise and yet on closer examination we witness Edgar's struggle regarding the assertion of a stable identity. When Edgar parodies the Seven Deadly Sins in Act 3 Scene 4, the 'I' in "wine I loved deeply" (88-89) becomes the "thy" in "keep thy foot out of brothels" (94) and finally the "my" in "Dauphin my boy, my, boy" (97).

Whatever struggles Edgar faces in disguise, Lear begins to see himself reflected in the plight of Poor Tom, divested of his clothes and comforts, "Unaccommodated man" who is "no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art" (3.4.105-106). Giulio Pertile argues that although Edgar is "unaccommodated" of such comforts that Lear refers to, he is nonetheless "accommodated" by the wearing of a successful disguise and its necessary conditions of suffering to the self:

> Tom may be unaccommodated but Edgar is not; rather it is the seeming accommodation that provides him with accommodation in a hostile world, allowing him to elude recognition and death while also habituating him to pain and deprivation. (2016, 320)

---

[28] Edgar's 'nonsense' lines (they abound throughout the part of Poor Tom) remind me of Wittgenstein's discussion and refutation of private languages outlined in his *Philosophical Investigations:*

> Now, what about the language which describes my inner experiences and which only I myself can understand? How do I use words to stand for my sensations? — As we ordinarily do? Then are my words for sensations tied up with my natural expressions of sensation? In that case my language is not a 'private' one. Someone else might understand it as well as I. (1953, 91)

Gloucester approaches the characters on the heath and this marks the first appearance of Edgar (as Tom) and his father together. Edgar responds to the sight of his father who holds a torch against the darkened night:

> EDGAR This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet; he begins
> at curfew and walks till the first cock; he gives the web
> and the pin, squinies the eye and makes the harelip;
> mildews the white heat and haunts the poor creatures of
> earth. (3.4.112-115)

Edgar launches into the rhetorical mode of Tom, the feigned discourse of Harsnett, conjuring up devils' names and emphasising Edgar's rejection of fraudulent Catholic exorcisms. Shakespeare too is exchanging and employing the energies of the exorcist theatre with the theatre in the playhouse, which is in turn, activating the social energies of the audience. It could also be seen, as Simon Palfrey contends, as an expression of the feelings of loathing that Edgar may have had towards his father from childhood:

> at every moment we may hear the man crouching inside the Tom- body; hear the fury or misery of the abandoned child; hear the hateful memory of violence that even an Earl's legitimate child might suffer, as he bursts into accusation when his father appears, gruesomely haloed in his torch. (2014, 142)

Tom's mode of rhetoric soon features a discourse which R.A. Foakes terms "rhyming jingles [seeming] to take over something of the Fool's function" (1997, 280). As there is no source for this rhyme, we therefore see a further recourse to the mode of nonsense which we have often come to associate within Edgar's modes of behaviour:

> EDGAR Swithold footed thrice the wold.
> He met the nightmare and her nine foal,
> Bid her alight and her troth plight,
> And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee. (3.4.117-120)

Gloucester locates Edgar and the son defines himself in the following terms, plunging once more into the taboo world of the Bedlam beggar as he recoils at the thought of the pain and suffering engendered in his self-fashioning:

> GLOUCESTER What are you there? Your names?
> EDGAR Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the toad,
> the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water
> …
> swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog
> …

who is whipped from tithing to tithing and stocked, punished
and imprisoned - who hath had three suits to his
back, six shirts to his body. (3.4. 125-131)

Edgar's announcement as Tom to his father completes itself with another rhyming jingle.[29] Here, it seems that Edgar in disguise, a self forever fashioning and re-fashioning, is now assuming the rhetorical mode of the Fool:

EDGAR Horse to ride and weapon to wear.
But mice and rats and such small dear
Have been Tom's food for seven long year. (3.4.133-135)

It is clear that confronting Tom has jolted recollections of Edgar in Gloucester's mind. When hearing Tom recount further devils' names of 'Modo 'and 'Mahu' (3.4.139-140) the father firstly responds with:

GLOUCESTER Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile
That it doth hate what gets it. (3.4.141-142)

When speaking to Kent (himself disguised) he adds:

GLOUCESTER I am almost mad myself. I had a son,
Now outlawed from my blood. (3.4. 162-163)

These recollections of his son evidently threaten to unmask Edgar's disguise and as I will show, they return again later on.

Prior to Edgar entering the hovel, Tom emits the standard cry of the Bedlam beggar[30], "Tom's a cold" (3.4.169). Upon entering Edgar produces another recourse to what could be the mode of nonsense:

EDGAR Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still "Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man." (3.4.178-180)

Among the appearance of nonsense, however, lies some explanation. Simon Palfrey argues that the first line shows that Edgar "is possessed by love and hurt that are expressible only through apostrophe. For surely this is the key to Tom's parting chant, with its darkly poignant infantilism" (2014, 144). The recourse to infantilism in Tom's mode of rhetoric is further evidenced in the next

[29] This time R.A. Foakes offers an explanation of a source for this rhyme as he feels it is "adapted from a couplet found in the version of the medieval romance of *Sir Bevis of Hampton* published in 1503" (1997, 281).
[30] See Palfrey (2014, 88).

two lines, which we see allied to a version of Jack and the Beanstalk. Moreover, as R.A. Foakes explains, these lines "may also point to Edgar, who will turn into a hero and kill the "giant" Edmund" (1997, 284-285). Such an artistic strategy is not without foundation as we remember how Lear's words were to signal the first appearance of Poor Tom.

The mock trial scene, Act 3 Scene 6, omitted from the Folio[31] sees Edgar reusing his feigned discourse of Harsnett, a key feature of Edgar's behavioural mode of rhetoric within his self-fashioning, mocking the fraudulence of Catholic exorcism. References to new devils emerge ("Frateretto", "Hoppedance") not to mention the recurring motifs for Satan; the "foul fiend" and "black angel." What is also important about Edgar's rhetorical mode is the return to his adopting the rhetorical mode of the Fool in Tom's disguise. At first, the Fool himself completes Tom's first line to an old song:

EDGAR	Come o'er the bourn, Bessy to me.
FOOL	Her boat hath a leak,
And she must speak
Why she dares not come over to thee. (3.6.25-28).

Soon, Edgar assumes the mantle of the Fool entirely by himself, delivering what I referred to earlier as "rhyming jingles", followed by another reference to Harsnett's devils:

EDGAR	Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn.
And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.
Purr! The cat is grey. (3.6.41-45)

Edgar is again adopting the behavioural mode of nonsense and there is a feeling that he is enjoying the illusion he is creating of a reality which is disguising his innermost feelings.

Soon afterwards we are witness to the very moment when the strain of disguise, the great psychological pressure that has accumulated within Edgar because of this radical self-fashioning, begins to erupt and burst its way into the rhetorical mode. Witnessing first the suffering of Lear on the heath and now the compounding of that suffering during the mock-trial, Edgar's aside confirms the intolerable pain and suffering of his venture:

EDGAR	[aside]	My tears begin to take his part so much

[31] R.A. Foakes points in the direction of the "debate" that "continues as to whether the F version of the play is better or worse for the omission of the mock-trial sequence" (1997, 287). I would tend to concur with Foakes in including it as I intend to show its relevance regarding the importance of Edgar's role.

They mar my counterfeiting. (3.6.58-59)

Edgar is now clearly struggling to maintain his fiction. His next lines see him try to return to Tom and his rhetorical mode and, yet he quickly abandons it, returning again to the Fool's rhetorical mode. At this moment it really is as though Edgar, in Greenblatt's eyes, is visualizing all the social identities beginning to shimmer like a mirage as he desperately struggles to maintain his fictive presence:

EDGAR Tom will throw his head at them: avaunt, you curs!
Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite,
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or him,
Or Bobtail tyke or trundle-tail,
Tom will make them weep and wail;
For with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.
Do-de, de-de. Cessez! Come, march to wakes and fairs
and market towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry. (3.6.62-72)

The last line signals Edgar's desire to depart from Tom and we sense that the revealing and final end of Edgar's disguising, his rigorous self-fashioning, is approaching.

Unique to the Quarto text is the inclusion of the following passage from Edgar and it contains some relevance in understanding Edgar's role. It is the first eight lines, according to R.A. Foakes, which "play variations on the proverb 'It is good to have company in misery'" (1997, 294).

EDGAR When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers, suffers most i' th' mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind.
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip
When grief hath mates and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the king bow. (3.6.99-106)

Edgar begins to think that perhaps his disguising does have benefits – he would rather remain the disguised outlaw than suffer more pain in the realm of the court. In the next line, we see the two plots within the play coming together and a further desire to rid himself not of disguising but the disguise of Tom:

EDGAR He childed as I fathered. Tom away. (3.6.107)

It is debatable as to what Edgar means by the first sentence. Simon Palfrey outlines what realms of speculation occur within such an investigation:[32]

> He has been badly fathered (poorly treated by Gloucester), just as Lear has been badly "childed", or cruelly treated by his progeny. Conversely, Lear has been made a child ("childed"), and Edgar has been made a father ("father'd"). So who has Edgar been made a father to? (2014, 147)

In answering the final question, this could mean that Edgar is about to become the father to his blinded father, but also, it can be a recognition from Edgar that he is the creative father to his rigorous self-fashioning, which he can now sense is becoming advantageous to himself. In experiencing the mode of desire to radically conceal his identity, Edgar feels the need to adopt more disguises, to self-fashion once more (as he did when adopting the Fool's mode of rhetoric) in the fear of those other identities that raise up and need to be confronted. Edgar's final lines in this scene summarise the new-found confidence and belief in the act of self-fashioning:

> EDGAR Mark the high noises and thyself bewray
> When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,
> In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.
> What will hap more tonight, safe 'scape the king!
> Lurk, lurk. (3.6.108-112)

The final line appears to reignite the discourse of Tom but as Simon Palfrey rightly argues this may not just be Tom but also, the assertion of a new-found confidence in Edgar, preparing to use disguise to his advantage:

> To lurk is to be concealed and furtive. . . [It] suggests an active, perhaps surveilling observation of others. The lurking precedes an ambush; it is an act of waiting as much as hiding: its true secret is latency, and therefore imminence. He is waiting; he is gestating; and when he comes, he will have secret and usable knowledge. Clearly the verb applies as much to Edgar (lurking inside Tom) as to Tom (for whom lurking is vocation and ontology). (2014, 150)

---

[32] Harold Bloom in *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1998), 485, is quite adamant in interpreting this line:

> Unpack that gnomic condensation, and what do you receive? Not, I think, a parallel between two innocences (Lear's and Edgar's) and two guilts (Lear's elder daughters' and Gloucester's) because Edgar does not consider his father to be guilty. "He childed as I father'd" has in it no reference whatsoever to Goneril and Regan, but only to the parallel between Lear-Cordelia and Edgar-Gloucester. There is love, and only love, among those four, and yet there is tragedy, and only tragedy, among them.

Armed with a certain amount of renewed belief in his disguise, Edgar returns at the beginning of Act 4 and is content with the status and advantages that he sees embodied within the lowly shape he has adopted in Tom:

EDGAR Yet better thus, and known to be contemned,
Than still contemned and flattered. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear.
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace;
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts. (4.1.1-9)

This new-found confidence is quickly dashed as Edgar catches sight of his blinded father. The strain is clearly evident in a number of asides that make Edgar question the relevance of his disguise, a veil that he and the audience feel is about to break in an act of reconciliation:

EDGAR [*aside*] O gods! Who is't can say 'I am at the worst'?
I am worse than e'er I was. (4.1.27-28)

EDGAR [*aside*] And worse I may be yet; the worst is not
So long as we can say 'This is the worst.' (4.1.29-30)

EDGAR [*aside*] How should this be?
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others. (4.1.40-41)

At this moment we and Edgar are at the verge of the end of the game. The need to disguise, Edgar's rigorous pursuit of self-fashioning is falling apart. The following line appears to prepare us for that moment:

EDGAR Poor Tom's a cold. [aside] I cannot daub it further.[33] (4.1.55)

And yet, remarkably, he pulls back from this reconciliation:

EDGAR And yet I must. (4.1.57)

This decision of Edgar to refrain here has been met with bewilderment by some critics. A.C. Bradley considers it one of Shakespeare's "defects" as the playwright "was less concerned than usual with dramatic fitness" (1904, Bloom 2008, 148). Later, he questions "Is it in character that

[33] The Quarto lists "dance it farther" suggesting as R.A. Foakes adds, "jerky movements as Poor Tom, and allows a pun on 'father'" (1997, 307).

Edgar should be persuaded without the slightest demur to avoid his father instead of confronting him and asking him the cause of his anger?" (149). R.A. Foakes is equally perturbed and asks, "it is hard to see why he still must conceal himself from his father, except in terms of the needs of the plot" (1997, 307).

I believe Edgar continues his need for disguise because the radical self-fashioning he has undergone has begun to greatly influence the belief within him that it has distinct advantages. The radical concealment of his own identity has taken Edgar towards that idea of "self-content" that Greenblatt outlined in the desires of the self-fashioning subject. Coupled with his knowledge that Edmund has yet to be revenged, Edgar holds on to the disguise in the belief that the continuation of his masking will lead him to achieving his aim.[34] It is not, I believe, at all easy for Edgar to be resolute in this decision but the decision is there to be made. As we see in the coming scenes, Edgar again continues the struggle to retain his mask and yet he is prepared to invest his creative energies into self-fashioning with renewed determination.

Gloucester asks Edgar the way to Dover and Poor Tom again vocalizes Edgar's rejection of Catholic exorcism, the names of Harsnett's devils reappear ("Obiddicut / Hobbidence … Mahu …Modo …Flibbertigibbet") as well as the reference to Sara and Friswood Williams that Greenblatt discusses. This reply from Edgar also features two more recurrences of "Bless thee" (the first is at line 41 in Act 4 Scene 1) and I believe this signifies the eruption into Edgar's discourse of great sympathy for the plight of his father. No matter what discourse he borrows or feigns in his mode of rhetoric, the emergence and continued pressure Edgar feels about his father's plight only compounds the pain and suffering he feels in his psychological state already affected by his rigorous self-fashioning.

In this scene it becomes apparent that Edgar as Tom is showing signs of more socialized discourse and this points to his continuing desire to be rid of Poor Tom:

> GLOUCESTER Knowst thou the way to Dover?
> EDGAR Both stile and gate, horseway and footpath. (4.1.58-59)

[34] Hugh Maclean provides an apt summary of the strategy Edgar needs to employ to achieve this aim, to avenge Edmund:

> It is true that the disguised Edgar carries out a continuous plan of action; yet his role, while disguised, is essentially that of the man who holds a waiting brief. Once disguised, the individual must guard against three temptations. He must not leave everything to time, but must actively intervene at the proper moment; he must not allow himself to be led astray by his emotions, and throw off his disguise too soon; and he must not become so fascinated by the game of disguising that, missing the moment for action, he will retain the disguise beyond the point at which it ceases to be necessary. (1960, 52)

[…]
GLOUCESTER Dost thou know Dover?
EDGAR Ay master. (4.1.74-75)

The two of them are bound for Dover and Gloucester promises to help Edgar, to "repair the misery thou dost bear / With something rich about me" (4.1.79-80). Gloucester wants to be taken to a cliff and there, it seems, end his life. Here too, Edgar believes he can finally say goodbye to Poor Tom.

Edgar returns in Act 4 Scene 6 and is now in peasant's clothing, evidently having already profited from the promise of his father's offer of help. What is clearly evident here is that the change of clothing has also brought about a very noticeable shift in Edgar's rhetorical mode of behaviour, one that seems very unlike that of Poor Tom. This shift in rhetorical behaviour is also coupled with the improvisational mode of behaviour that Greenblatt believed was prevalent in Iago. Edgar enacts this to such an extent that we are not sure if we are actually in Dover at all, that the fictions, illusions and appearances generated by the psychology of Edgar are suddenly crystallized before us. Edgar helps his father up the cliff:

EDGAR You do climb it now. Look how we labour.
GLOUCESTER Methinks the ground is even.
EDGAR Horrible steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea ?
GLOUCESTER No, truly. (4.6.2-4)

In misleading his father[35] he has lost the rhetorical mode of Tom and this is something Gloucester picks up on. Edgar and the audience again feel that the success of Edgar's strategy is under threat:

GLOUCESTER Methinks thy voice is altered and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.
[…]
GLOUCESTER Methinks you're better spoken. (4.6. 7-8,10)

Edgar continues to fabricate the scene and delivers an extraordinary description of the view from the cliff top:

EDGAR Come on, sir. Here's the place. Stand still: how fearful
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low.

[35] I would disagree with the views of Stanley Cavell that Edgar has a distinct "capacity for cruelty" (1969, 283) that could be inferred in this scene. I agree more with critics such as John J. Norton who view the deception of Gloucester as "full of grace and mercy" (2011, 147). Edgar, as I have shown, is showing a degree of compassion for his father's plight. In leading him to the imaginary cliff he is not leading him to suicide at all but very much encouraging him to do the opposite.

The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles. Halfway down
Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade;
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.
The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice. And yon tall anchoring barque
Diminished to her cock, her cock a buoy
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge
That on th' unnumbered idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong. (4.6.11-23)

Edgar clearly has a talent for the extemporary, a borrowed discourse of poetic illusion within his rhetorical mode of behaviour, or as Jan Kott sees it, an artist at work on his canvass, for "no other Shakespearian landscape is so exact, precise and clear, as this one. It is like a Brueghel painting: thick with people, objects and events" (1967, II). This passage is also clearly not characterized by the discourse of Poor Tom and as William Carroll observes, the last three lines confirm that Edgar is "also speaking for himself as he turns away from the role of Tom" (1987, 437).

Edgar continues to help Gloucester to the top of the cliff and produces this aside:

EDGAR [*aside*] Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it. (4.6.33-34)

As Lori Anne Ferrell comments, this 'trifling' "has serious purpose" as it "exposes the edge of Gloucester's mental abyss" (2011, 112). Edgar is not cruel here, the cliff top and drop below are fictitious. Edgar seeks to interfere with his father's state of desperation, his psychological, suicidal state of mind, in order to remedy it.

Gloucester "falls" [36]and Edgar reacts in a series of asides, actually fearing in the meantime that his deceptive rouse has gone too far:

EDGAR [*aside*] And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life when life itself
Yields to the theft. Had he been where he thought,
By this had thought been past. [*to Gloucester*] Alive or
dead?
Ho you, sir! friend, hear you, sir? Speak! —

[36] Natalie Elliot believes that here, Shakespeare is making reference to scientific experiments with "falling objects" carried out by Galilieo and Thomas Harriot (2018, 41). This is typified she adds, in the contrasting use of "gossamer, feathers, air, an egg, and the 'heavy substance' of Gloucester's body [with] and the measurement and manner Edgar employs to describe Gloucester's fall—more than the height of ten masts, falling 'perpendicularly'" (41). Shakespeare's motivation here, Elliot adds, was to perhaps examine the contrast between the language of science and "moral feeling" (42).

> [*aside*] Thus might he pass indeed. Yet he revives.—
> What are you, sir? (4.6.42-48)

As Lori Ferrell argues, Edgar starts here by contemplating "his awful power of suggestion and effects . . . and past thought, his father would also be past saving" (112). Edgar fears that Gloucester really has gone, only to find consolation in the sign of his father's movement.

Nonetheless Edgar feels the need to continue the deception and continue his extemporary into the improvisational mode of behaviour, coupled with its decidedly poetic discourse. Such discourse has the effect of a prayer, the assertion of Edgar's submission to neo-Christianity. Joseph Sterrett summaries the importance of prayer to Edgar:

> Prayer for Edgar is every bit the display of a coercive act. Able to recognise the pragmatic effects of prayer in society, Edgar operates above and beyond the prayers of Gloucester, orchestrating them like an unseen God. (2012, 136)

What follows is the crowning jewel to Edgar's deception, the belief that his father has survived the impossible and what is more, has been unscathed (in the hope of curing his father's psychological despair) in the process:

> EDGAR … but thou dost breathe,
> Hast heavy substance, bleed'st not, speak'st, art sound.
> Ten masts at each make not the altitude
> Which thou hast perpendicularly fell.
> Thy life's a miracle. Speak yet again. (4.6.52-55)

Soon, we are led to believe that not only Gloucester has departed from Poor Tom at the top of the cliff. Edgar, in continuing his extemporary performance, sets out to convince his father that he was induced by the devil to commit suicide.

> EDGAR Upon the crown o'the cliff what thing was that
> Which parted from you?
> […]
> As I stood here below methought his eyes
> Were two full moons. He had a thousand noses,
> Horns whelked and waved like the enraged sea.
> It was some fiend. (4.6.67-68, 69-72)

There is also the suggestion here that perhaps, subconsciously, Edgar is stigmatizing himself in his prior role by exaggerating what he sees as its "fiendishness."

Lear soon enters the scene, the Quarto text confirming him "mad" and "crowned with wild flowers." Edgar is rattled at Lear's "side piercing sight" (4.6.85). Lear's recognition of Edgar is

marked with a startled "Hewgh!" and asks Edgar for a secret password. The reply "Sweet marjoram" is accepted by Lear. (4.6.93-95). As R.A. Foakes notices, Edgar is not necessarily playing along to the mode of nonsense but may be trying to soothe the suffering of Lear as he is trying to do with his own father.[37]

Edgar asides twice more as he is struggling to comprehend the sadness in witnessing two blinded fathers (morally and literally) coming to terms with their fates. We sense again that the mask will be departing and the endeavour to maintain his radical self-fashioning will cease:

EDGAR [*aside*] I would not take this from report: it is,
And my heart breaks at it. (4.6.137-138)
[…]

EDGAR [*aside*] O matter and impertinency mixed,
Reason in madness. (4.6.170-171)

Edgar is left behind with his father as Lear, discovered by one of Cordelia's gentlemen, is requested to return to his dearest child. When the servant Oswald reappears we soon are reminded that Edgar's dearest child remains the desire for self-fashioning, and his desire for the radical concealment of identity gives birth to another extraordinary and extemporary disguise. Oswald seeks Gloucester's life and Edgar intervenes in a disguise that lends itself heavily to a sudden shift in his rhetorical mode of behaviour, adopting what R.A. Foakes calls "a West Country yokel" accent (345). Edgar also begins to express the violence which as Simon Palfrey argues, has resulted from a stirring of that violence from within, providing him with a means to kill his assailant (2014, 253):

EDGAR An 'ch'ud ha' been zwaggered out of my life,
'twould not ha' bin zo long as 'tis by a vortnight.
[…]
Keep out, che vor ye, or
I'se try whether your costard or my baton be the harder.
[…]
'Chill pick your teeth, zir. Come, no matter vor
your foins. [*Oswald falls*] (4.6. 234-237, 240-241)

Edgar reads the letter found on Oswald in front of his father as we ironically recall the letter that Edmund read to Gloucester that sealed Edgar's fate. Goneril's signature enrages Edgar as he

[37] "Sweet Marierome is a remedie against cold diseases of the braine and head", according to John Gerard's *Herbal* (1597), 540, so Edgar's password relates to Lear's madness, and is not merely fanciful' (1997, 334).

reads of the desires existing between her and Edmund and the plot to kill Albany, who Edgar praises as "virtuous" (4.6.267). This discovery only compounds his desire to avenge Edmund further:

> EDGAR With this ungracious paper strike the sight
> Of the death-practiced duke. For him 'tis well
> That of thy death and business I can tell. (4.6.271-273)

Edgar seeks out and locates Albany and although still clothed as peasant, his mode of rhetoric has shifted yet again as he takes on the mantle of a messenger:

> EDGAR Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
> If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
> For him that brought it. Wretched though I seem,
> I can produce a champion that will prove
> What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
> Your business of the world hath so an end,
> And machination ceases. Fortune love you. (5.1.41-47)

Edgar promises to appear at the herald's cry where his letter will be read, the contents of which are yet unknown. In producing a champion, this can only refer to his desire to launch into yet another disguise, propelling the self into a further radical concealment of identity and further self-estrangement. We await exactly what that form of disguise will take with Edgar's parting line to Albany:

> EDGAR …let the herald cry
> And I'll appear again. (5.1.49-50)

In the meantime, during the short Act 5 Scene 2, Edgar and Gloucester are together as the war takes place nearby between the British and French forces. The peasant's disguise has to be in force, complete with its rhetorical mode of dialect or voice, otherwise, the import of the text that Edgar speaks would give the impression that Edgar was actually unmasked at this point and said to be having a routine conversation with his father:

> EDGAR Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
> For your good host. Pray that the right may thrive.
> If ever I return to you again,
> I'll bring you comfort. (5.2.1-4)

The word "father" erupts into his discourse, and not for the first time, appearing in Edgar's exchanges with Gloucester on numerous occasions in Act 4.[38] I believe that the inclusion of

---

[38] See Act 4 Scene 6 lines 215, 250, 281.

"father" (and later the informal term "old man" in line 5, 5.2) is expressing a loathing for his self-fashioning and here he is wishing for reconciliation.

Edgar concludes the scene by trying to cure his father of despair once again, showing his neo-Christian submissiveness in recalling biblical passages, advocating the tolerance of suffering and the readiness to face death:[39]

EDGAR What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence even as their coming hither.
Ripeness is all. (5.2.9-11)

We forward to Act 5 Scene 3, the play's final scene – the letter that Edgar composed has been safely carried and Albany opens it to the herald's trumpet. Three cries of the trumpet herald yet another disguise for the chameleonic Edgar as he enters as an avenging, armed knight. Now we are witness to what Tom Clayton describes as:

> the Western manifestation of the play's poetic justice, and it is important in the same way if not the same degree as the showdown scene in a Western film or a classical epic, beginning with the first Western, *The Iliad*, in which the showdown between Achilles and Hector is brewing from before the beginning of the epic like that between Edgar and Edmund in its own way, since each is the champion of the fighters for his culture. (2008, 193)

Edgar is now faced with the task of killing his own brother and proclaims to the Herald:

EDGAR O know my name is lost. (5.3.119)

Edgar reflects the chaos raging in his mind, the strain inflicted on his psychological well-being by another mask taking hold. In rejecting his name there again emerges his loathing for disguise, the willingness to be reconciled again to his public as Edgar. However, just as he realized while not revealing himself to his father at Dover, he knows his mission is yet incomplete and he must continue to accept and affect the role. And so his knight's part begins in a confident and assertive way as the extemporary actor in Edgar feels his way into yet another mode of rhetoric, the borrowed and feigned discourse of the knightly banner:

EDGAR Behold: it is the privilege of mine honors,

[39] R.A. Foakes writes: "The linking of birth and death recalls biblical passages such as 1 Timothy, 6.7. "'For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain, that we may carry nought out.'" (1997, 363). Also, Foakes comments that 'ripeness is all' "has great evocative power . . . [which] derives from the echo of Ecclesiastes . . . in part from a long tradition of Stoic and Christian thinking about endurance and time" (364). Interestingly still, there is a parallel passage to this one in *Hamlet: '*...if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be / not now, / yet it will come. The readiness is all.' (5.2.161-162).

My oath, and my profession. I protest,
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valor and thy heart—thou art a traitor,
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father,
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince. (5.3.127-133)

However, the anxiety that underpins the effecting of this new role becomes quickly evident, resulting in Edgar again accusing his brother of being a traitor. This time, however, he adds the compound adjective "toad-spotted" (136), an attribution perhaps more suited to the childish infantilism he displayed in reciting verses from Jack and the Beanstalk.[40]

The fight ensues, and Edgar achieves his aim in fatally wounding Edmund. The bastard brother lies dying and asks the unnamed challenger to reveal himself. Edgar's decision to agree may appear as cathartic to Edgar, as he seeks a release of those suppressed fears and desires within the radically self-fashioning subject, the desire to renounce his crafted identities and modes of rhetoric:

EDGAR My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes. (5.3.167-171)

Edgar concludes with another biblical reference[41], revealing the submissive neo-Christian part of his self. As W.C. Carroll comments, Edgar's passing of moral judgement on his brother and father evidences the cumulative effect of Edgar's experiences which have on the one hand allowed him "a deeper vision," but on the other, have "embittered him" (1987, 440). The psychological scars of disguising are seemingly much in evidence here despite Edgar appearing without sartorial camouflage for the first time since adopting the role of Poor Tom.

Towards the end Edgar begins to unfold his tale and Simon Palfrey is right, in my view, in recognizing that Edgar, supposedly now rid of disguise, has adopted another as "the dilatory tale-teller" (2014, 31). Within this new role we do witness traces of Edgar's previous incarnation at

[40] I refer to the earlier passage:

EDGAR Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still "Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man." (3.4.178-180)

[41] Wisdom 11.16 "wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall hee be" (Foakes 1997, 378).

Dover, a public persona able to employ within his discourse an ability to re-tell events (be they true or imaginary) with great effect to his audience:

EDGAR List a brief tale,
And when 'tis told, oh, that my heart would burst!
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That followed me so near—O our lives' sweetness,
That we the pain of death would hourly die
Rather than die at once! — taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags, t' assume a semblance
That very dogs disdained; and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost, became his guide,
Led him, begged for him, saved him from despair.
Never—O fault! — revealed myself unto him
Until some half-hour past, when I was armed,
Not sure, though hoping of this good success.
I asked his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage. (5.3.180-195)

Edgar, just as he did at Dover, provides a narrative begging for acceptance from both stage companions and audience. Palfrey continues to find another agreeable insight into this tale: "Edgar seems to know exactly what he is for: all this time he has been the exemplary victim and invisible agent of moral surveillance" (170).

Edgar's tale ends with the description of his father's death. In delivering these lines, Edgar must also be summarizing the pain and suffering he himself has undergone as the rigorously self-fashioning subject and the overwhelming desire to liberate himself once and for all from disguise:

EDGAR But his flawed heart—
Alack, too weak the conflict to support—
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly. (5.3.195-198)

The lines omitted from the Folio text concerning the meeting of Kent and Edgar (who reveals his disguise to Lear's former servant) (5.3.203-220) are nonetheless relevant in our assessment of Edgar's importance to the play as they continue rather in the same vein as before, very much a continuation of the tale-teller role, marking Edgar's desire to reclaim his own, unmasked identity, the self-knowledge of a cool, confident and bragging victor:

EDGAR Whilst I was big in clamor came there in a man
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunned my abhorred society, but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endured, with his strong arms,
He fastened on my neck, and bellowed out

As he'd burst heaven, threw him on my father,
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear received … (5.3.207-214)

Despite seeming to have briefly glimpsed at a self finally unmasked and perhaps an existence finally free of self-fashioning, such hope is soon brought into stark contrast as Lear brings out the body of Cordelia which prompts this response from Kent and Edgar:

KENT Is this the promised end?
EDGAR Or image of that horror? (5.3.261-262)

Kent could be referring to Lear's own hope at the beginning that he might "Unburdened crawl toward death" (1.1.40). Edgar interprets Kent's words as signifying the end of the world, the last judgment from the Bible, once again revealing that side of his submissive self to neo-Christianity.

As I have approached the play from the Arden text, I will ally myself to those critics conferring authority on Edgar in the Folio text. However, it is important, too, to reflect on Edgar's psychological state of mind as the play ends:

EDGAR The weight of this sad time we must obey,
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most; we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long. (5.3.322-325)

R.A. Foakes believes these final lines confer a freedom on both Edgar and Albany, providing themselves with the means to "speak feelingly" and it is Edgar who is noted for a "compassion through the "art of known and feeling sorrows" (1997, 392). Furthermore, Foakes adds, both characters will not now "need to suffer in order to *see* properly, they can perhaps already say what Gloucester learned only through physical blindness (392). In my view Foakes is incorrect to believe that Edgar will no longer suffer to see properly as there has been no liberation of those suppressed desires and fears that the end of the play may seem to ascribe to Edgar. His radical self-fashioning has not ceased, he has not attained the cathartic, illusory goal of "self-content," a final and irreversible departure from the crafting of his identity, its modes of behaviour, desires and expressions. These modes still very much govern Edgar even at the end. The lines that the Folio text attributes to him retain Albany's register, Edgar borrows this discourse within another crafted mode of rhetoric. Furthermore, he is also lamenting an irreversible departure from his former self while taking on the disguise of another role. Harold Bloom rightly believes that as we assess Edgar at the end of the play, "The cost of confirmation for Edgar is a savage wound in his psyche" (1998,

491). The relentless devotion to a rigorous self-fashioning has taken its toll on Edgar, the psychological strains in trying to maintain a stable self-identity, have resulted in making a more permanent mark in the mind of the country's new ruler. And so, he will continue to wrestle with those demands within which he has already placed himself as a self-fashioning subject.

Stephen Greenblatt's framework of self-fashioning has brought about some useful benefits to the reader through its interpretation of Edgar in disguise. Firstly, the focus on the mode of rhetoric afforded by Greenblatt as a key behavioural trait within the self-fashioning subject, has made the reader more acutely aware of Edgar's protean ability at employing borrowed discourses which he uses to great effect at the heart of his disguise. There is the borrowing of Harsnett, used to repudiate the validity of Catholic exorcist practices. At times, Edgar's rhetorical mode is peppered with violence and accompanied by acts of self-mutilation, particularly when the first disguise of Poor Tom is donned. Furthermore, Edgar's discourses sometimes appear to be almost nonsensical and yet they all confer themselves as verbal masks adroitly designed by a nobleman already used to a swiftness and flexibility demanded of a man of the court. Greenblatt's attention to the mode of improvisation as a key behavourial trait can also be seen within Edgar, particularly in the way he seeks reconciliation with his father, fabricating his elder's suicide at Dover.

More significantly, Greenblatt's framework has enabled the reader to delve deeper into the psychology of the self within disguise, providing some enlightening insights. Edgar's need to disguise is marked by a retreat into the mode of loss, a withdrawal into darkness and inwardness so demanded by the self-fashioning subject. It is the burden of this self-fashioning that often emerges within Edgar's discourse and is marked by his frequent desire to enter the taboo sphere or prohibited realm, forever wrestling at odds with his neo-Christian beliefs, in the desire to free himself from the constraints of self-fashioning itself. We see that throughout *King Lear*, Edgar is forever bound to his own fear that his disguising (verbal and sartorial) is inadequate and may be exposed at any moment. However, needing to continually adopt new disguises and discard old ones has a cumulative and ultimately, damaging effect on Edgar's own sanity. And so, we witness Edgar's desire to free himself from the clutches of his own self-fashioning, particularly in the last two acts of the play, while he often iterates a wish to discard aside the roles and its associated discourses that had appeared to serve him well. The end of the play reveals that Edgar is not free of disguise and the psychological burden this affords, as some critics claim. He is still held captive

by the controlling forces of self-fashioning which will continue to guide him as the ruler of a country with an uncertain future.

Ultimately, the focus on disguise within Edgar, afforded by Greenblatt's analysis, has also altered the audience's typical perception of *King Lear*. Key to this change is upholding Edgar's importance to the significance of the plot of the play, established through the arguments of those critics restoring his part, adhering to the Quarto variants of the play where the character had a substantive addition of lines and indeed, an equal billing in the play's title. Edgar's part is therefore seen to be significantly elevated, resulting in a re-enhanced textual and stage presence adding greater discursive variety to the role, further enriching the rhetorical and improvisational modes so prevalent at the heart of his disguising. The character's restored presence in the play brings to light those inner psychological torments which are seen to be on a scale equal to King Lear himself. Unlike Lear, Edgar's struggle to retain his self-identity is not always so publicly manifest. It is through the application of self-fashioning where the reader can see and feel that Edgar's woes are equally abundant within the discourses he employs.

2.4 *Measure for Measure* in Greenblattian Criticism

Greenblatt's main assessment of Duke Vincentio from *Measure for Measure* is to be found in *Shakespeare's Freedom* (2010)[42] where this character is introduced as one "who has temporarily absented himself from rule and disguised himself as a friar" (7). Angelo is handed the reigns of power by the Duke, who feigns leaving the town and disguises himself to monitor the continuation of Viennese society during his absence. Angelo is unscrupulous while executing legislation; he is adamant that there is too much individual liberty within the city and assumes responsibility to eradicate Vienna of illicit sexual activities. There are already pre-existing laws against these

[42] Greenblatt also analyses The Duke's attempts to "awaken an instructive anxiety" in the play and to "shape it into what he regards as a proper attitude" (1988, 138-141). Other, passing references by Greenblatt to the Duke can be found in his online article 'Shakespeare and the Uses of Power,' April 12 2007, *The New York Review of Books*. www.nybooks.com/articles/2007/04/12/shakespeare-and-the-uses-of-power/. Here Greenblatt comments on the Duke's "desire to escape from the burdens of governance." Elsewhere in his biography of 2004, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare,* Greenblatt mentions the scene (Act 5 Scene 1) where the Duke proposes marriage with Isabella and "punishes Lucio by ordering him to marry a woman he has made pregnant" (2004, 132). Lucio pleads but Greenblatt adds the Duke "is implacable, insisting on what is explicitly understood as a form of punishment" (2004, 132).

behaviours and institutions, and so Angelo simply decides to administer them more rigorously. Claudio is arrested for making Juliet pregnant before marriage. Although already engaged, their sexual intercourse being consensual, Claudio nonetheless faces a death sentence to act as an example to his fellow Viennese citizens.

The Duke, Greenblatt adds, shows awareness of Angelo's deception against him and wants to save Claudio and yet hints at a moral ambiguity in the Duke, who "cannot and will not simply declare the law to be unjust" (7). The Duke in turn becomes conniving, Greenblatt adds, in order to "deceive Angelo with a piece of legerdemain" (7). This form of deception involves the Duke's request to the prison provost to execute a murderer, Barnardine, "so as to present Barnardine's head, instead of Claudio's, to the cruel Angelo" (7). Furthermore, as Greenblatt contends, the conversation that the Duke and the Provost have over Barnardine's fate is typical of the play's overall attitude to the prisoner, who "seems to evoke no sympathy" (7). This exchange in particular, Greenblatt adds, is "seemingly gratuitous . . . a compressed sketch of a life worth losing [where] [e]ach of the details is cunningly chosen to diminish sympathy" (7). Also, Greenblatt continues, the dialogue shows that the possibility for the audience to picture Barnardine's moral reformation is "closed off" by the prisoner's lack of repentance and drunken behaviour (9).

The Duke is quite confident, too, in the ability of disguise. Greenblatt refers to the Provost's concern that Angelo knows both Claudio and Barnardine and will immediately detect the rouse, but the Duke is confident that death presents great opportunities for disguise where "One head will easily stand in for the other" (10).

Greenblatt goes onto comment about what he calls the Duke's "logic of interchangeability" in persuading the Provost to execute the prisoner earlier through recognizing his sworn allegiance to the Duke as well as to his deputies (10). The act of persuasion is complete in the Duke handing the Provost a sealed letter "that stands for the duke's will and countermands Angelo's order" (11). Therefore, the letter "displaces the authority of the duke's substitute . . . and licences the plan to substitute one prisoner for another" (11).

The Duke is adamant, Greenblatt adds, that Barnardine's execution be swift and "that he be dragged to the block" and yet he sees in the Duke "a man of unusual moral sensitivity" as he has second thoughts and proceeds to spare the prisoner's life (13). And yet, the result is that "There are no signs of penitence, no speeches of reformation. Only acquittal" (13). All of this, Greenblatt argues, "has little or nothing to do with realistic representation. We are in realm of stage comedy,

not of real life" (13). Barnardine, he adds, is not necessary to the plot and yet is "so theatrically compelling [who] serves as an emblem of the freedom of the artist to remake the world" (13).

Meanwhile, the Duke's "utterly implausible pardon", Greenblatt adds:

> serves as an emblem of the power of the sovereign over the life and death of his subjects and, still more, as an emblem of the playwright's power to suspend or alter all ordinary social rules. (14)

The pardon that the Duke gives leads us to Shakespeare's own conception of the ethical ambiguity of power, Greenblatt argues. Furthermore, "[t]he whole premise about *Measure for Measure* is the duke's uneasiness about ruling, an uneasiness that leads him to slip away from public view" (16). His withdrawal is marked in "strikingly theatrical terms" and Greenblatt adds that the Duke "has a strategic motive" for delegating authority to Angelo (16). Highlighting the fourteen years where he failed to enforce those strict laws on his people, Greenblatt notices in the Duke's words[43] that "respect for authority has virtually collapsed' (16). If the Duke therefore were to enforce the laws, after such a long time of permissiveness, Greenblatt adds, "he would be regarded as a tyrant" where the accession of Angelo and the public discrediting of the Duke receding into the background would ensure such an enforcement (17).

What is important, Greenblatt continues, is that the design of the Duke is seen to fail. Angelo's attempts at enforcement are "a disaster" and the Duke:

> can only resolve the tangle of hypocrisy, false accusations, slander, and arbitrary misuse of authority by staging the public, theatrical performance of himself, complete with loud applause and *aves* vehement, that he despised. (17)

Subsequently, Greenblatt sees, the Duke's attempt to withdraw from power is impossible and "though his climatic display of manipulation, masking, unmasking, and pardoning spares the innocent . . . he manages to leave the city in precisely the state of moral disorder with which it began" (17). And so, Greenblatt concludes, "[t]he exercise of theatrical authority – authority in the state, authority on the stage – cannot easily be evaded" (17). What we have seen with the Duke's withdrawal "has unexpected, potentially disastrous consequences" (17). Shakespeare does not "unequivocally endorse" what constitutes an idea of the absolutist authority in this play and instead, it remains a "problem comedy" eliciting "a strange, uncomfortable response" (17).

---

[43] DUKE Liberty plucks Justice by the nose ,
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
Goes all decorum. (*MM*, 1.3.29-31)

2.5 A Disguised Ruler: Other Critical Perspectives

The context for the role of the disguised ruler was already well-established by the time Shakespeare conceived of the character Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*.[44] J.W. Lever comments that traditionally, "the Disguised Ruler has affinities with world folklore, and tales concerning monarchs who went about in secret amongst their people, discovering abuses and righting wrongs" (2008, xliv). Later, he adds, the role encompassed "a more serious influence on political thought" where the disguised ruler "was presented as a paragon of rulers" (xliv). He illustrates his point with the role of the Roman emperor Alexander Severus, incorporated into several sixteenth century dramatic productions.[45] It is Severus who was "[d]etermined to stamp out vice and corruption" and who "meted out stern justice to offenders" (xliv). Furthermore, Lever notes that Severus' "devious methods and sensational exposures of wrong doers were dwelt on" and the emperor would make "a show of sympathy with their complaints . . . leading them on to propose savage punishments" (xlv). Lever also notes how Severus' methods were adopted by Whetstone in *A Mirror for Magistrates of Cyties* (1584), where in the preface, he "deplored the growth of vice in London, and the proliferation of brothels and gaming-houses" (xlv).

It is in these models and interpretations of Severus that Lever believes Shakespeare may have discovered the original model for Duke Vincentio. And so, the Duke is seen to be, as Lever adds:[46]

> The representative of true secular and spiritual authority, [typifying] the most widely approved models of the age. Political theory, literary tradition, and the precepts of the ruling monarch cast him for the part of an earthly providence who is, if not divinely omniscient, at least sagacious beyond the limits of the subjects he rules. (xciv)

To see the Duke in disguise as Friar Lodowick is not at all "incongruous," Lever argues. (lxxxi). Furthermore, "it is the fitting manifestation of his dual role as the head of the church and state" (lxxxi). Any manipulation the Duke uses in the play can be justified, Lever feels:

---

[44] See particular Quarmby's study *The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* that I introduced in Chapter One. Also see Lever (2008, xliv-li) for an additional summary of the disguised ruler motif in Elizabethan/Jacobean drama.

[45] See Lever (2008, xliv-xlv).

[46] Other critics also concur in their treatment of the Duke in *Measure for Measure* as a personification of a study of ethics in terms of the Christian faith. See G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (1930) and R. W. Chambers, *Man's Unconquerable Mind* (1939). Muriel Bradbrook also ascribes the Duke with the description of the "representation of Heavenly Justice and Humility" (1941, 386).

both in theory and in the practice of the ruling monarch, when exercised in the interest of the subject. It is thus as an acknowledged exemplar of virtue that the Duke applies principle and practice to the near-tragic situation. (lxxxi)

It is my belief that such a summation of the Duke's "virtues" appear to align him with the stamp of an 'ethical' authority in the play, such as we saw ascribed to Edgar in *King Lear.* What I wish to show, however, is that the Duke's claim to such an authority is undermined as he remains subject to the forces of self-fashioning, whether physically disguised or not and it is the effect of these forces that evidence a great psychological conflict in the Duke. The conflict is drawn between the expression of the Duke's submission to Christian doctrines, expressed within his rhetorical modes of behaviour, and the desire, even professed love for, disguise itself. The effect of this conflict is to witness an emergence of the improvisational mode of behaviour that constantly erupts into the discourse of a subject both in and out of physical disguise. This love of disguise encompassed within this mode bears witness to the full range of those desires and fears that I previously outlined within the self-fashioning subject and find their expression in a variety of ways. Furthermore, I wish to show that the moral ambiguities of the Duke are very much reflected in his need for disguise. On the one hand, we could see the need for the Duke's disguise as perhaps the desire for true interaction with his subjects, in order to understand his people better, to re-emerge from disguise as a confident leader, able to lead his people away from the current crisis of sexual profligacy in Viennese society. On the other hand, because I believe the Duke is very much immersed within self-fashioning, I will contend that his need for disguise is also driven as much by personal motives which naturally results in the psychological conflict within the Duke that I have already indicated.

2.6 Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure:* The Great Improviser and Manipulator

The beginning of the play finds the Duke about to assign a commission, the governance of the city of Vienna, to Escalus. It is clear, as Kevin Quarmby argues, that the Duke is confirming "Escalus's superior intellect and his practical ability to act as ruler in the Duke's absence" (2012, 134):

DUKE Of government the properties to unfold
Would seem in me to affect speech and discourse,
Since I am put to know that your own science

Exceeds, in that, the lists of all advice
My strength can give you. (*MM*, 1.1.3-7)

As much as they praise Escalus and perhaps outline what appear to be his noble intentions, the Duke's words nonetheless reveal his desire for self-fashioning – he knows clearly that the role of governance is dependent on one of its modes of behaviour, rhetoric, and that borrowing particular discourses are essential to playing the role of one in power.

The Duke appoints Escalus to his position and, yet the following line reveals the first trace of what Cynthia Lewis believes to be "[t]he tension in the Duke's character between private and public interests [which] is so delicately fashioned that we are likely to miss several of its most vibrant signs" (1983, 276):

DUKE There is our commission,
From which we would not have you warp. (1.1.13-14)

This allusion to an idea of "warping" (and "bending" which I shall return to shortly), Lewis argues, "recur in subsequent scenes to describe licentiousness, but in themselves they may suggest both error and resilience" (276). At this point it is very much the case that the Duke is already contemplating disguise, drawing towards the desire for darkness and its expressive need for inwardness as the Duke feels the tensions being created by his public and private personas.

The Duke then turns to Angelo, appointing him as the first deputy.[47] There is a sense of disappointment in this as the praising of Escalus had seemed worthy of him being assured the post. Kevin Quarmby refers to this moment when the "optimistic tenor" of the play quickly "vanishes" (2012, 134). Whatever our sympathies toward Escalus are, the Duke confirms his desire for self-fashioning while appointing Angelo, alluding to the darkness desired in disguise:

DUKE …we have with special soul
Elected him our absence to supply; (1.1.17-18)

The Duke proceeds to lavish his praise on Angelo, showing reference in his discourse to Christian ethics:[48]

[47] Jessica Apolloni sees the Duke's strategy here as a means of dramatizing "the ways a Renaissance prince might use his judicial officers for his own gain" citing Machiavelli's *The Prince* as an influence on Shakespeare's writing here (2017, 125).
[48] J.W. Lever cites several biblical references to this passage, particularly to Luke, viii 16; see (2008, 5).

DUKE	Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd
But to fine issues. (1.1.32-36)

However, there re-emerge again those points of "error and resilience", the moments when the tension between the Duke's private and public persona conflict, the desire for disguise, for self-fashioning take hold. Soon, he produces "But I do bend my speech / To one that can part in him advertise" (1.1.40-41) which Cynthia Lewis feels is "self-reflective" (1983, 276). After that, he seems to retract himself from his moralizing; something that we feel Edgar certainly would not have done himself. The line "No more evasion" (l.50) seems to be a comment on himself, somewhat ironic for a man about to enter disguise. Lewis rightly concludes at this point that here, "we come to understand that the Duke's inner conflicts lie in his ambivalence toward social responsibility" (276).

Upon the moment when he seeks to finally retreat into darkness and turn to disguise, The Duke appears to give further reasoning behind his desire to do so.[49] Once again, we feel that he is expressing ambivalence towards social responsibility and revealing those tensions in his private persona:

DUKE	…Give me your hand;
I'll privily away. I love the people,
But do not like to stage me to their eyes:
Through it do well, I do not relish well
Their loud applause and *Aves* vehement;
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion
That does affect it. (1.1.66-72)

The Duke re-emerges in Act 1 Scene 3, discussing with Friar Thomas on the reasons for the disguise. Immediately we are drawn to the nature of the imputation Friar Thomas might have made:

DUKE	No. Holy father, throw away that thought;
Believe not that the dribbling dart of love
Can pierce a complete bosom. Why I desire thee
To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose

[49] The Duke's comments are often seen in relation to James I's attitude to crowds (See Lever 2008, 8). Other critics have not only considered this as a reference to James I but also developed a general belief that Duke Vincentio *is* James I. For a discussion on this point, see Quarmby, 'King James, Occasionality and *Measure for Measure*,' (2012, 111-117).

More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends
Of burning youth. (1.3.1-6)

As Kevin Quarmby notices, the possibility that the Duke's absence is necessitated by a romantic motive, subverts the "comical-history" convention of the disguised ruler (2012, 111). Furthermore, we again begin to focus on the moral ambivalence of the Duke as we confer, in Anthony Dawson's words, the moniker of "a notoriously slippery character" (1988, 331).

Before he goes onto to explain his reason for disguise, he rather demonstrates his particular preference for it:

DUKE My holy sir, none better knows than you
How I have ever loved the life removed
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies
Where youth, and cost, and witless bravery keeps. (1.3.7-10)

Where Edgar (as Tom) could eventually see the benefits of his disguise, preferring to remain undetected and protected while surveilling the world around him, the Duke shows how he goes yet even further and professes his devotion to the realm of disguise and self-fashioning.

Like Edgar too, the Duke (as I will soon show) sees the benefits of surveillance within the Friar's robes that he is soon to adorn, but first, he outlines his reason for aspiring to that condition:

DUKE We have strict statutes and most biting laws,
The needful bits and curbs to headstrong jades,
Which for this nineteen years we have let slip;
Even like an o'ergrown lion in a cave
That goes not out to prey. (1.3.20-23)

Such lines appear to confirm the Duke's rejection of sexual profligacy in Vienna. However, we are clearly reminded, in his wavering depiction of his image as a competent ruler (there is also the reference to the Royal 'we' rather than 'I') of his failure to address this state of affairs through existing statutes, his admission in Carolyn Harper's words that he is "an inept magistrate" (1998, 11). Stacy Magedanz provides a useful assessment of the state of Viennese society that has ensued through such spread of fornication, one that has far-reaching consequences:

> Fornication is at once the most intimate and personal of sins and yet also the one that strikes hardest at the basis of social order, the family. The Vienna we see appears populated entirely by unmarried people: a bachelor duke, ascetics Angelo and Isabella, profligate Lucio, bawds and whores. The sexuality that runs through the play is almost entirely negative, the source of disease and illegitimacy, carried on in brothels and slums that are to be torn down as a danger to the public, a temptation that corrupts public officials and oppresses innocence. (2004, 320-321)

And so, we are to believe that the Duke, having appointed Angelo to enforce these laws, wishes to see (through disguise) these statutes effected once more. However, the power of secret surveillance enabled by such a disguise effects the suspicions already borne that some manipulative will is at play in the Duke's desire to disguise, hinting at the improvisational mode of behaviour within the realm of self-fashioning. This is evidenced in the Duke's desire not only to oversee the gradual obedience of his subjects while disguised, but also to carefully watch and assess Angelo himself in the process:

DUKE …Therefore indeed, my father,
I have on Angelo imposed the office;
Who may, in th' ambush of my name, strike home,
And yet my nature never in the fight
To do in slander. And to behold his sway,
I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,
Visit both prince and people. (1.3.39-45)

Through beholding Angelo's "sway" in controlling the reins of power, the Duke desires to find out "what our seemers be" (1.3.54). David Weiser points here to the Duke's exploitation of "verbal and dramatic irony, incorporating in himself a vast (if not quite complete) range of the play's ironic meanings" (1997, 337). So, we see the Duke employing the use of wordplay within his rhetorical mode which also becomes a key weapon within his self-fashioning subjects' arsenal.

The Duke appears disguised as Friar Lodowick in Act 2, Scene 3[50] and his opening gambit is used to enforce that disguise:[51]

DUKE Hail to you Provost – so I think you are. (2.3.1)

Soon it appears that the Duke desires to enter into the role of a confessor and the tone of his instruction is certainly manipulative, reflecting his own submission to the words of Peter from the Bible[52] as he wishes to visit those victims of his own laws in prison:

DUKE I come to visit the afflicted spirits
Here in the prison. Do me the common right
To let me see them, and to make me know
The nature of their crimes, that I may minister

[50] For a useful summary of the popularity of the disguised Friar convention at the turn of the seventeenth century, please refer to Victoria Hayne's discussion (1993, 24-25).
[51] J.W. Lever makes the point quite rightly that "The Duke-as-Duke would recognise his own Provost" (2008, 51).
[52] Lever notes this recalls 1 Peter iii.19: "also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (2008,51).

To them accordingly. (2.3.4-9)

And so confronting Juliet in prison, the Duke appears to deliver a Christian discourse of confession and mercy:

DUKE Repent you, fair one of the sin you carry?
[…]
Love you the man that wrong'd you? (2.3.19,24)

However, such a stringent focus on Christian doctrine begins to waver as the Duke comments:

DUKE Then was your sin of heavier kind than his. (2.3.28)

Suddenly, as Victoria Hayne notices, "[t]he apparent sternness of the Duke's rebuke . . . is virtually evaporated in the simultaneous and pointedly bawdy reference to both the heaviness of her pregnancy and the weight she bore to get it" (1993,12). The emergent strains of the desire for darkness reappear in the Duke's discourse as he struggles again to contemplate the public and private persona within self-fashioning.

Act 3 Scene 1 sees the disguised Duke still within the prison walls – this time accompanying the Provost and Claudio. It is a scene that Cynthia Lewis believes marks a great "transition" for the Duke as "learns as much from his subjects about life as he teaches Claudio about death" (1983, 282). Coupled with this transition, we realise that as well as a confessor, the Duke now wishes to play the role of a counsellor. The long speech that he delivers to Claudio echoes both a mix of Christian morality and Senecan stoicism:[53]

DUKE Be absolute for death; either death or life
Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life:
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep. (3.1.5-8)

The Duke's attempts at consolation initially seem to be successful as Claudio "seek[s] to die" (l.42). However, as Cynthia Lewis notices, "[t]his sudden change, however, gradually gives way to Claudio's renewed longing to live" (283). Therefore, we can feel that the Duke, an ineffective magistrate, is just as ineffective a counsellor, displaying a tendency to be "naïve in his attempt to control Claudio's antipathy toward death" (283).

---

[53] See Katherine Duncan-Jones, 'Stoicism in *Measure for Measure*: A New Source,' *The Review of English Studies*. *New Series*. Vol. 28, No. 112 (Nov. ,1977), 441.

Regardless of the Duke's ability to effect particular roles we nonetheless see further evidence of his penchant for wordplay within his rhetorical mode of behaviour. J.W. Lever is at pains to spot such an instance in:

> DUKE …and doth beg the alms
> Of palsied eld (3.1.35-36)

Lever comments that this "conceit" is "a play on the homophone "alms-arms". Palsied old age ("eld") begs youth for *arms*: impecunious youth begs old age for *alms*" (2008, 69). Darryl Gless also spots the "scriptural wordplay" of the Duke on "life and death" (1979, 243).

> DUKE …What's yet in this
> That bears the name of life? Yet in this life
> Lie hid moe thousand deaths; yet death we fear,
> That makes these odds all even. (3.1.38-41).

Soon the Duke continues to use his manipulative powers in persuading the Provost to conceal him in order to hear the condemned Claudio and Isabella talking. Here, the Duke begins his surveillance and becomes a figure, in the words of Ernest Schanzer, who "is a quasi-allegorical figure representing Providence" (2008, II).

The Duke overhears that Claudio may be freed should Isabella agree to sleep with Angelo. At the conclusion of their conversation it is time for Providence to intervene as the Duke advances towards the couple, ready to reignite his role as counsellor. It is Claudio to whom he speaks first and in doing so, appears to praise Angelo despite Isabella's conviction that he represents the "cunning livery of hell" (l.94):

> DUKE …Angelo had never the purpose
> to corrupt her; only he hath made an assay of her
> virtue, to practise his judgement with the disposi-
> tion of natures. (3.1.160-163)

However, we are soon privy to the return of the Duke's wavering psychological state as evidenced in his subsequent conversation with Isabella. Rather than continue to praise Angelo, he suddenly starts to utter the opposite:

> DUKE The assault that Angelo hath made to you,
> fortune hath conveyed to my understanding; and,
> but that frailty hath examples for his falling, I
> should wonder at Angelo. How will you do to con-

tent this substitute, and to save your brother? (3.1.183-187)

Darryl Gless believes that the Duke is behaving oddly here, and sees a contrivance on the Duke's part in bringing out the villainy of Angelo (1979, 225). I believe that the Duke is acting perfectly within the realm of self-fashioning because he is using the crafting powers of his improvisational mode of behaviour (and of course his rhetorical modes) to manipulate firstly Claudio and now Isabella. At this stage, the Duke is also seeking to praise the virtues of Isabella, something that Maurice Hunt too finds to be odd (1987, 218):

DUKE The hand that hath made you fair hath made you good. The goodness that is cheap in beauty makes beauty brief in goodness; but grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall keep the body of it ever fair. (3.1.179-183)

There emerges here a more complex picture of the Duke which is also bound by moral ambiguity. On the surface, the Duke appears to be testing the limits of Isabella's virtues, assessing whether she herself would make an ideal companion for the companionless Duke. However, he also seems to be testing the limits that he has placed on himself, which he finds hard to adhere to. Furthermore, he is examining the right whether to place his own subjects under such enormous strain. And so here, we are reminded of Friar Thomas's suspicions that the Duke's quest in disguise was something more deeply inspired than its claimed political and social aims.[54]

The Duke proceeds to continue the role of counsellor within the Friar's robes and tells the story behind Angelo's intended marriage to Mariana. The Duke's ambivalence towards Angelo returns in "this well-seeming Angelo" (l.223). In telling Isabella of Mariana's plight, the Duke wishes to further test Isabella's reactions, assessing her candidacy for a paragon of virtue. To the Duke's inner delight, she replies:

ISABELLA What a merit were it in death to take this poor maid from the world! What corruption in this life, that it will let this man live! (3.1.231-233).

[54] Parodoxically enough, the Duke's acts remind me of King Lear: 'As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods, / They kill us for their sport (*KL* 4.1.38-39). Furthermore, there is evident the contemporary distrust towards comic conventions.

To restore the respectability of Mariana and potentially averting the prospect of the death of Claudio, the Duke proposes his famous "bed-trick."[55] However, as Carolyn Brown notes, this version of the bed-trick differs from its inclusions elsewhere in Shakespeare. This time, it is marked by the audience being privy to the "specifics" and "sordid details" of the scheme (1997, 210). Furthermore, what is particularly alarming[56], Brown adds:

> is [The Duke's] planning and delineating the bed scene in titillating detail. Shakespeare has the bedtrick enhance the subtextual reading of the Duke by suggesting that his ruler indulges voyeuristic tendencies, enjoys hearing of others' sexual activities, and derives pleasure from imagining and planning sex for others-and all while he is executing his governmental duties. (210)

Brown goes onto contend that the Duke, in arranging such a trick, shows no love interest in Isabella but I would disagree (210). It is because he has been repressing and rejecting that aspect of his self while being the undisguised Duke and therefore in public has previously found no way of expression. In private, in disguise, he now enjoys arranging and fantasising about such pleasures and it is partly this dichotomy within his self, his almost simultaneous need for rejection and then desire for sexual and romantic pleasure, which I believe contributes to the wavering of his public and private persona and the frequent eruption of such sexual repression into his discourse. And so, when he spells out the nature of his conceit to Isabella, we can feel the strong presence of such repression while referring to the relationship between Angelo and Mariana:

> DUKE …His unjust kindness,
> that in all reason should have quenched her love,
> hath, like an impediment in the current, made it
> more violent and unruly. (3.1.240-243)

Whatever debate on the sexual nature of the Duke here, there is little doubt that he reveals the full extent of his manipulative and improvisational mode of behaviour in expounding the nature of the trick itself. In the conclusion of his intentions, the tone is clearly one of confidence in his own manipulative beliefs:

> DUKE The maid I will frame, and make fit for his
> attempt. If you think well to carry this as you may,

---

[55] The bed trick is a plot device in traditional literature and folklore; it involves a substitution of one partner in the sex act with a third person (to put it in other words, "going to bed with someone whom you mistake for someone else"). In the standard and most common form of the bed trick, a man goes to a sexual assignation with a certain woman, and without his knowledge that woman's place is taken by a substitute.

[56] As Brown acknowledges, a succession of critics including Janet Adelman (1989, 107) have also noted these tendencies of the Duke here.

the doubleness of the benefit defends the deceit
from reproof. What think you of it? (3.1.256-259).

His manipulative plans firmly include the will to win Isabella and his greatest trick is to hide his intentions from even Isabella herself but her continuing consent and willingness to go along with the Duke's intentions is working well in his favour.

Act 3 Scene 2 sees the Duke becoming acquainted with one of Vienna's most notorious bawds – Pompey. His first reactions on seeing Pompey seem to confirm that seeming rejection of sexual profligacy, advocated in the public persona of the Duke:

DUKE O heavens, what stuff is here!
[…]
Fie, sirrah, a bawd, a wicked bawd;
[…]
Say to thyself,
From their abominable and beastly touches
I drink, I eat, array myself, I live. (3.2.5,18,22-24)

The Duke's next reaction is to begin a return to his confessor's role, the seeming rejection of sexual profligacy initiating the process of self-fashioning, the desire to wear yet another mask in disguise. However, the comedic import of Pompey's reply somewhat destroys the attempt of the Duke to successfully engage with his alter ego:

DUKE Canst thou believe thy living is a life,
So stinkingly depending? Go mend, go mend.
POMPEY Indeed it does stink in some sort, sir. (3.2.25-27)

Lucio emerges onto the scene and recognizes his friend Pompey. The nature of their exchange again prompts the Duke to recoil:

DUKE Still thus, and thus: still worse! (3.2.51)

Eventually, Lucio and the disguised Duke are left alone, and we sense in their exchanges that Lucio may actually be able to see through the disguise itself. Catching sight of the friar's robes, conversation turns to the whereabouts of the Duke himself. The following exchange ironically reveals the self-identity of the Duke as he has been held within the realms of self-fashioning for some time now:

LUCIO …but where is he, think you?
DUKE I know not where: but wheresoever, I wish him well. (3.2.86-87)

Lucio then strongly suggests that underneath his strictly moralizing Christian façade, the Duke may also show signs of those sexually repressed tendencies that I referred to earlier:

> LUCIO A little more lenity to lechery would do no harm in
> him. (3.2.94-95)

The Duke (as friar) then seems to uphold the supposed asexuality implicit in his undisguised public persona, an attempt to further disguise his true sexual and romantic intentions:

> DUKE I have never heard the absent Duke much de-
> tected for women; he was not inclined that way. (3.2.118-119)

Lucio, however, does not accede to such an opinion and insists something to the contrary:

> LUCIO Who, not the Duke? Yes, your beggar of fifty;
> And his use was to put a ducat in her clack-dish; the
> Duke had crotchets in him. He would be drunk too. (3.2.122-124)

What proceeds is something of an unconvincing attempt by the Duke to refute Lucio's claims, his defence marked by uncharacteristic brevity:

> DUKE Wise? Why, no question but he was. (3.2.135)

At the same time, we develop a belief that Lucio knew well of the Duke, something the Duke himself refuses to acknowledge, confirming those ambiguities within the ruler of Vienna that we had already suspected:

> LUCIO Sir, I know him and I love him.
> […]
> Come sir, I know what I know.
> […]
> Sir, my name is Lucio, well known to the Duke. (3.2.145,148,155)

Claiming to know well of the Duke, Lucio contradicts the claim that his friend was not "detected" for women:

> LUCIO …The
> Duke, I say to thee again, would eat mutton on Fridays. (3.2.174-175)

As J.W. Lever points out, this refers to "'would do forbidden things'", with an intended word-play on "'mutton', a slang term for prostitutes" (2008, 90).

The taunts from Lucio seem to shake the already perturbed psyche of the Duke and he immediately begins to question how any authority could repress the issues of bawd and slander in his people, putting the issue of his own grip of governance under scrutiny:

DUKE …No might nor greatness in mortality
Can censure 'scape. Back-wounding calumny
The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong
Can tie up the gall in the slanderous tongue? (3.2.180-182)

Upon Escalus's return, accompanied by the Provost and the soon to be charged Mistress Overdone, we see the Duke attempting to answer Escalus' question about his origin. His reply appears to reveal where his psychological state of mind lies, exhibiting the mode of behaviour of loss, the self showing signs of its loss in the struggle for its articulation in the attempt to comprehend the distance between illusion and reality:

ESCALUS Of whence are you?
DUKE Not of this country, though my chance is now
To use it for my time. (3.2.210-212)

We are reminded of Edgar's similar articulation of loss as he faces the task of killing Edmund.

Soon, the Duke (still disguised as Friar Lodowick) begins to question the integrity, in public, of his undisguised self, asking Escalus "what disposition was the Duke?" / "What pleasure was he given to?" (3.2.224-5,228). The tensions within the Duke's psyche, his own anxiety in the face of his continued desire for self-fashioning, is clearly erupting into discourse. Such tensions, as we have seen, are also evidenced in his determination to publicly reject vice, to be contradicted by the eruption into discourse of a denial of his own sexuality. It is these tensions that find confirmation in the revelations of Escalus. These portray, as Cynthia Lewis argues, the "most honorable and the least respectable aspects of the Duke as the audience perceives them" (1983, 277):

ESCALUS Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry
at anything which professed to make him rejoice.
A gentleman of all temperance. (3.2.229-231)

Act 3 Scene 2 concludes with the Duke's raging soliloquy, attacking Angelo for the abuses of his role:

DUKE Twice treble shame on Angelo,
To weed my vice and let his grow!

O, what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side!
How may likeness made in crimes,
Making practise on the times
To draw with idle spiders' strings
Most ponderous and substantial things! (3.2.262-269)

The lines are as much a rebuke towards himself, his own inability to effect a decisive model of governance. There is also recognition to the power of self-fashioning and its ability to manifest itself in disguise (‘O, what may man within him hide’), followed by a recognition to the desire of the self-fashioning subject, to be the ‘angel on the outward side,’ the paragon of behaviour seemingly unfettered by those scheming anxieties within.

In lines which remind us of the character of Thomas More, drawn out in Greenblatt’s study of his self-fashioning, the Duke concludes his soliloquy, again referring to his “bed-trick”, by revealing his own belief in the ability to manipulate others in achieving his political, social and indeed, romantic aims:

DUKE Craft against vice I must apply.
With Angelo tonight shall lie
His old betrothed but despised:
So disguise shall, by the disguised
Pay with falsehood false exacting,
And perform an old contracting. (3.2.270-275)

And yet, as Victoria Hayne notices, these lines emphasise the rather ineffectual import of a man aspiring to rehabilitate himself for power and instead confer a comic quality of the Duke’s disguise, appearing to:

> crown the developing intimacy between the audience and the Duke-friar as a kind of inverted Vice figure, applying the Vice's craft, and inviting complicity, not in opposition to virtue but to vice itself masquerading as law. (1993, 26)

At the beginning of Act 4, the Duke is very much perceived and acted upon within his role as counsellor, Mariana seeking his “advice” (l.2). This short scene serves to outline the nature of the “bed-trick” and enforces the Duke’s manipulative will behind this strategy:

DUKE I shall crave your forbearance a little: may be
I will call upon you anon, for some advantage to yourself.
MARIANA I am always bound to you.
[…]
DUKE Do you persuade yourself that I respect you?
MARIANA Good friar, I know you do, and so have found it. (4.1.23-25, 53-54)

In keeping with the mode of the improvisational self, the Duke goes onto pacify Mariana, assuring her of the success of the scheme he has at hand:

> DUKE To bring you thus together, 'tis no sin,
> Sith that the justice of your title to him
> Doth flourish the deceit. Come, let us go;
> Our corn's to reap, for yet our tithe's to sow. (4.1.72-76)

The Duke is seeking to bring Mariana and Angelo's cohabitation into law and, as J.W. Lever argues, the pattern of the Duke's discourse (as the Friar) here could well mirror that of Shakespeare's contemporary royal elect:

> By secular standards Mariana's plight fully condoned her deceiving of Angelo, just as the plight of Helena condoned the deception of Bertram. Here indeed was a case for moral equity, an extension into the realm of 'mediocrity' which James I so strenuously advocated in temporal affairs. (2008, lv)

Lever reminds us here that it is very much the Duke, as a ruler speaking within the friar's robe that is making this case. Considering the tempting analogy between James I and the Duke, Lever adds, the proposal "would imply the authority of the supreme head of the church, and would such appear as a final ruling" (lv). Aside from this comparison, to see the Duke as an advocate for moral equity is somewhat ironic considering the presence of those moral ambiguities that lie at the heart of his self-fashioning.

The following scene witnesses the Duke re-enter the action in the manner of a Providential spirit as we sense he has been circling the scene while anticipating the moment of his return. He appears to the Provost and quickly jumps to the defence of Angelo, albeit a public one, designed to fit in with his plans to frame him by simultaneously deflecting any such criticism of him:

> DUKE Not so, not so; his life is parallel'd
> Even with the stroke and line of his great justice.
> He doth with holy abstinence subdue
> That in himself which he spurs on his power
> To qualify in others: were he meal'd with that
> Which he corrects, then were he tyrannous;
> But this being so, he's just. (4.2.77-83)

Whatever his designs on Angelo are, the Duke fails to read his deputies intentions correctly as Angelo's messenger appears in the hope of delivering a pardon for Claudio. The news that Claudio's execution has not been rescinded but actually brought forward, remarkably fails to bring about any public sense of surprise in the Duke. This is because he knows inside that Angelo has no

capacity for such mercy, a quality which he tries to portray in his own disguise as Friar Lodowick. And so, his public persona as Friar Lodowick immediately seeks to act upon the plight of Barnardine, a criminal to be executed along with Claudio, and in need of "advice" (l.144). He also seems undeterred in his mission to counsel Barnardine, despite the Provost's warning that "[h]e will hear none" (l.145).

The Duke has also been thinking fervently in how to resolve the predicament about Claudio, despite his lack of acknowledgement to the Provost's "What say you to this, sir?" (l.125). The craft of this manipulator and improviser is about to be revealed in his next trick and firstly he must convince the Provost to play his part, just as he has done with Isabella and Mariana:

> DUKE I crave but four days' re-
> spite: for the which you are to do me both a present
> and a dangerous courtesy. (4.2.159-161)

The Provost becomes privy to the Duke's scheme in "delaying [the] death" of Claudio and therein proceeds to lay out his instructions, the basis for a "head-trick":

> DUKE …let this Barnardine
> be this morning executed, and his head borne to
> Angelo. (4.2.170-172)

The Provost suspects Angelo will see through such a disguise and yet the Duke, a confessed lover of that "life remov'd", is confident of this disguise's success:

> DUKE O, death's a great disguiser; and you may add to
> it. (4.2.174-175)

The Duke continues his manipulative practices over the Provost in a way far exceeding even Edgar in his treatment of his blind father at Dover. The Provost is against the scheme and the Duke reminds him of his true allegiances:

> DUKE Were you sworn to the Duke, or to the Deputy? (4.2.182)

In concluding the scene, the Duke is forced to reveal an object that in my view almost endangers the Friar's disguise from succeeding. Clearly becoming impatient with his attempts to persuade the Provost to become involved in his plans, the Duke (as Friar) reveals a document outlining his return, containing his own signature and seal that the Provost immediately recognizes. The line "I

know them both" (l.194) may be a recognition not only of the physical characteristics of the Duke's handwriting but also of the fictive selves that the Duke has been playing.

The following scene sees the Duke returning to his role as counsellor as he confronts the convicted Barnardine. The Duke begins with a degree of confidence in his now familiar role:

> DUKE Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how
> hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you,
> comfort you and pray with you. (4.3.49-51)

Barnardine refuses to give the Duke consent to die that day and whatever confidence the Duke has in his dealings with Barnardine and in his counselling role, this is soon to be shattered as the convict retreats from any further dialogue:

> DUKE But hear you-
> BARNARDINE Not a word. If you have anything to say to
> Me, come to my word: for thence I will not today. *Exit* (4.3.60-62)

This failing of the Duke immediately prompts him to not only postpone his persuasion of Barnardine, whom he now considers "A creature unprepar'd, unmeet for death" (l.66), but also to enter yet another role, the role of a divine interventionist. The Provost's suggestion that the head of Ragozine could instead work as a substitute (as we also realise how effective the Duke's manipulation has been on him too) is met with the Duke's delight in an expressive belief of such divine intervention, "O, 'tis an accident that heaven provides" (l.76). This line, as Darryl Gless argues though, is more an acknowledgement of the Duke not as a figure of Providence, "but an imperfection of it" (1979, 248) as we must recall the immediately felt ineffectualness of the Duke's ability to counsel.

Whatever doubts have arisen about his ability to perform his different roles within his disguise, both in his own mind and in the audience's, the Duke remains committed to his plan to frame Angelo. In doing so he starts to show what I consider is a crueller approach than Edgar regarding his employment of the improvisational mode of behaviour. This is evidenced by his treatment of Isabella and instilling the belief in her that Claudio has already been executed. This enables the tide of opinion to further run against Angelo and as importantly, to instil a virtuous and resolute response to death in Isabella, qualities that the Duke is looking for in a future partner:

> DUKE Forbear it therefore; give your cause to heaven.
> Mark what I say, which you shall find

By every syllable a faithful verity.
The duke comes home tomorrow; - nay, dry your eyes. (4.3.124-127)

Isabella's following response must give the Duke great hope in his amorous quest and is testament to his manipulative powers of persuasion, finding a true converter to his faith:

ISABELLA I am directed by you. (4.3.137)

Lucio soon returns to the action and as before, there remains the impression that he is taunting the Duke in his disguise, seeming to break through its transparency. Once again, he refers to his relationship with the Duke – "Friar, thou knowest not the Duke so well as I do" (l.160) and then seems to remind the Duke of his own inadequacies at enforcing the laws of sexual chastisement in the city:

LUCIO …I can tell thee pretty tales of the duke.
DUKE You have told me too many of him already, sir, if
they be true; if not true, none were enough.
LUCIO I was once before him for getting a wench with child.
DUKE Did you such a thing?
LUCIO Yes, marry, did I. but I was fain to forswear it;
they would else have married me to the rotten medlar. (4.3.163-171)

Such taunting seems to suggest, as Anthony Dawson comments, the "undermining of authority that *Measure for Measure* dramatizes" (1978, 339).

Despite feeling that the Duke is undermining his own authority, he nonetheless attempts to reappraise his role as leader of Vienna in preparation for his reappearance in Act 5. Here, Cynthia Lewis believes the Duke, despite remaining detached from his role as a ruler, nonetheless "begins engaging in society with a new enthusiasm" (1983, 285). This confidence is expressed in his directions to Friar Peter:

DUKE Go call at Flavius' house,
And tell him where I stay. Give the like notice
To Valentinus, Rowland, and to Crassus,
And bid them bring the trumpets to the gate:
But send me Flavius first. (4.5.6-9)

The confidence that the Duke tries to instill in himself is transferred to his reappearance in Act 5. It is a reappearance on such a public level to be seen in distinct contrast to his initial desire to "privily away," "to embark on an adventure of subterfuge and surveillance" (Quarmby 2012, 116). What is equally striking is that having put down his friar's robes, the Duke nonetheless has

not refrained from the governance of self-fashioning, soon deciding to play another role, one that Cynthia Lewis describes as a “teacher” (1983, 286). His public mission while playing yet another role, is in Stacy Magedanz’s words, “to unite public and private, and specifically to expose Angelo's hypocrisy as a civil authority while eliciting Isabella's personal sense of compassion” (2004, 324). In eliciting this sense of compassion, I will argue that this is to finally prove within himself the suitability of Isabella in marriage.

Following the Duke’s return and welcoming of Angelo and Escalus, Friar Peter and Isabella begin the scene of Angelo’s public judgement, conducted very much in a theatrical way with its intention, as Magedanz adds, “to shock the audience out of rational considerations of the story’s potential dramatic failings, and into a contemplation of the irrational benefits of forgiveness” (329). At the directional chair of such irrationality lies the Duke himself, attempting to deny the wrongs of Angelo that he privately believes and are expressed by the voice of Isabella:

> ISABELLA Most strange: but yet most truly, will I speak.
> That Angelo's forsworn; is it not strange?
> That Angelo's a murderer; is 't not strange?
> That Angelo is an adulterous thief,
> An hypocrite, a virgin-violator;
> Is it not strange and strange?
> DUKE Nay, it is ten times strange! (5.1.39-44)

To enforce the design of yet another conceit, he pleads that Isabella be dismissed, giving her more time to plead her case. This leads to the Duke publicly acknowledging what he already knows inside, that the reputation of Angelo may be subject to questioning after all:

> DUKE If she be mad, as I believe no other,
> Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense,
> Such a dependency of thing on thing,
> As e'er I heard in madness. (5.1.62-66)

As the Duke publicly shows acknowledgment of Hamlet’s idea that there may be “some method in her madness”, we also begin to glimpse at the Duke’s own private “madness”, the pressures of self-fashioning constantly emerging into his discourse as he continues to try to effectively play the role of governor.

The pressures on the Duke’s psyche are not only effected by his continuing to enact his public dismissal of Angelo’s alleged behaviour, but in also dealing with the re-emergence of Lucio, who simply will not be tolerated to keep quiet while Isabella is being cross-examined:

DUKE You were not bid to speak.
LUCIO No, my good lord,
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.
[…]
Right.
DUKE It may be right; but you are i' the wrong
To speak before your time. (5.1.81-82, 88-89)

What is apparent while the questioning of Isabella continues to strengthen is that any fondness of playing the role as a teacher is soon relinquished in the Duke's turning again to the role of confessor, this time the undisguised version. Showing apparent frustration with Isabella's persistence in blackening the name of Angelo, the Duke concludes:

DUKE Someone hath set you on:
Confess the truth, and say by whose advice
Thou cam'st here to complain. (5.1.115-117)

And so, the Duke soon stages the moment when he can no longer tolerate Isabella's presence, having her arrested. Just before she exits she reveals that it was Friar Lodowick that brought her to the scene. The Duke's reply is telling for it reveals the deep influence of his self-fashioning while disguised and equally now, undisguised, as the play reaches its climax:

DUKE A ghostly father, belike. – Who knows that Lodowick ? (5.1.129)

The hold of self-fashioning remains very much within the Duke and when the veiled Mariana is brought forward for questioning, the manner of interrogation seems to mirror the desire of his inner-self in search of its own identity:

DUKE What, are you married?
MARIANA No, my lord.
DUKE Are you a maid?
MARIANA No, my lord.
DUKE A widow, then?
MARIANA Neither, my lord.
DUKE Why, you are nothing then: neither maid,
widow, nor wife! (5.1.172-179)

Mariana soon lifts the veil and tells of her plight. Here, the framing of Angelo should, we think, become apparent but the Duke agrees with Angelo that Isabella and Mariana were "instruments of some more mightier member / That sets them on" (l.236-237). It is clear that the Duke wishes his alter ego, Friar Lodowick to return and finally provide the means to seal Angelo's fate. It is a desire too, of the Duke to re-engage with his "life remov'd" that he so loves:

DUKE There is another friar who set them on;
Let him be sent for. (5.1.247-248)

The disguised Duke is soon to return to the action and in doing so, comments on the nature of the loss of his ruling identity as the sway of radical self-fashioning takes hold:

DUKE Where is the Duke? 'Tis he should hear you speak.
[…]
Is the Duke gone ? (5.1.292,297)

Soon the disguised Duke, under the burden of psychological pressure as Escalus now begins to side with Lucio in taking aim against Friar Lodowick, admits of the deferral of self-identity within the self-fashioning subject:

DUKE His subject I am not. (5.1.313)

What follows as the Duke begins to crack under the pressure, is his utterance of the very reason behind the Duke's disguise, in an expression of loathing for the state of Vienna. Here, the Duke also indicates what he may have learned as a result:

DUKE …My business in this state
Made me a looker on here in Vienna,
Where I have seen corruption boil and bubble
Till it o'errun the stew: laws for all faults,
But faults so countenanc'd that the strong statutes
Stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop,
As much in mock as mark. (5.1.314-319)

The Duke is at the point of expressing his desire for self-knowledge which disguise has appeared to give him. We already know, however, that this is simply unattainable within the demands of the self-fashioning subject.

Lucio's sheer intolerance of Friar Lodowick leads him to reveal the Duke in disguise. The revealed Duke's reaction serves as an ironic comment on his own behaviour, his own knavish antics behind the Friar's robes contributing very much toward the self that this leader of Vienna has fashioned:

DUKE Thou art the first knave that e'er madest a duke. (5.1.354)

The desire to see the Friar "hanged in an hour" (l.353) suddenly turns table after the unveiling as Lucio fears his actions "May prove worse than hanging" (l.358). The revealed Duke continues his

manipulative, improvisational self in the subsequent handling of Angelo. In sentencing him initially to death, the Duke wishes to bring about one of his own desires from disguise, winning the hand of Isabella. In achieving this aim, the Duke must engender the begging and forgiveness of Angelo, which the deputy accedes to. The result of this is the immediate insistence on the marriage of Angelo to Mariana. As David Thatcher rightly sees, the Duke's pairing of these two in marriage leads us to conclude: "Is it cynical to suppose that Duke Vincentio, by marrying Angelo off to Mariana, eliminates a possible rival for Isabella's hand?" (1995, 274).

The Duke soon turns to Isabella and continues to praise her virtues in the pursuit of her affections while promoting his perceived indispensability to her:

> DUKE Come hither, Isabel.
> Your friar is now your prince. As I was then,
> Advertising and holy to your business,
> Not changing heart with habit, I am still
> Attorney'd at your service. (5.1.379-383)

Angelo and Mariana return to the action and it is immediately clear that the Duke has not finished with his manipulation of Angelo. In a speech which Stacy Magedanz believes "invokes the strictest principle of the Old Law, an eye for an eye" (2004, 325), the Duke vehemently demands Angelo's execution:

> DUKE The very mercy of the law cries out
> Most audible, even from his proper tongue:
> 'An Angelo for Claudio; death for death.
> Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
> Like doth quit like, and Measure still for Measure.' (5.1.405-409)

Mariana pleads for Angelo's life and quickly seeks aid in the person we know the Duke has been listening to all along, Isabella. Despite Isabella's plea and the insistence that Angelo's "thoughts are no subjects; / Intents, but merely thoughts," (l.451-452) the Duke finds the argument "unprofitable" (l.453) and Angelo remains condemned to die.

Approaching the climax of the play, we see the Duke leaning rather towards his submissive religious codes and this is transmuted into an extended display of Christian forgiveness. We begin to wonder if the "life remov'd" has taught him not only the power of this trait but also if this has meant that his desire for self-fashioning has ceased. Barnardine is summoned and pardoned by the Duke who delivers his mercy, as Darryl Gless contends, in a "hyperbolic and comic variant of Angelo's failings" (1979, 227).

DUKE	Sirrah, thou art said to have a stubborn soul
That apprehends no further than this world,
And squarest thy life according. Thou'rt condemn'd;
But, for those earthly faults, I quit them all,
And pray thee take this mercy to provide
For better times to come. (5.1.478-483)

The muffled man under which lies Claudio is also pardoned, and soon after this the Duke reveals one of his key ploys behind his disguising, to win the hand of Isabella:

DUKE	…and, for your lovely sake
Give me your hand and say you will be mine. (5.1.489-490)

It is not at all clear, though, whether Isabella will accept, and Shakespeare deliberately leaves us without this resolution answered.[57] This open-endedness is also exemplified in the Duke's arrangement of the marriage of Angelo and Mariana, as well as the insistent pairing of Lucio with a prostitute in order to save his life. It is as though, as Kevin Quarmby remarks, that we see characterised "vexed marital alliances without satisfactory resolution" (2012,111).

No more is this vexation and a sense of satisfactory resolution characterized in the mind of the Duke himself. In castigating Lucio, he tries to attempt a rejection of the part of himself which Cynthia Lewis claims "most resembled Lucio" (1983, 288) namely, his tendency towards disguise and his self-indulgent behaviour:

DUKE	You, sirrah, that knew me for a fool, a coward,
One all of luxury, an ass, a madman:
Wherein have I so deserved of you,
That you extol me thus?
[…]
Is any woman wrong'd by this lewd fellow,
As I have heard him swear himself there's one
[…]
Thy slanders I forgive; and therewithal
Remit thy other forfeits.
[…]
Slandering a prince deserves it. (5.1.498-501,507-508,517-518,522)

[57] Anthony Dawson comments that Isabella's silent refusal to accept the Duke's proposal is seen, like Angelo, in a failure "to write Isabella's destiny" (1988, 337). He also refers to John Barton's 1970 production of the play which "had Isabella turn away from the Duke's marriage proposal in confusion, [and so] he underlined an ambiguous silence that, like Lucio's wayward voice, helps to undo the elaborate structure of verbal and theatrical authority constructed by the Duke and his deputy (and of course by Shakespeare himself as well)" (337).

The Duke’s mode of rhetoric, seemingly characterized by his Christian forgiveness and newly found assurance in his former role, is soon to be contrasted by his final obligation to Isabella, which as Kevin Quarmby argues, “overshadows the Duke’s offer to the silent Isabella” (2012, 111).

> DUKE …Dear Isabel,
> I have a motion much imports your good;
> Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,
> What's mine is yours and what is yours is mine.
> So, bring us to our palace; where we'll show
> What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know. (5.1.531-536)

The uncertainty of the play’s outcome, that Isabella will indeed agree to play a major role in the Duke’s future, is somewhat a measure of the uncertainties that rage within the Duke’s psychological state of mind. The continuing conflict, evident in his discourse, between Christianity and the seeming love of the “life remov’d” along with its manipulative and improvisatorial mode of behaviour leave the audience themselves perplexed and irresolute at the end of this play, themselves lacking the “self-knowledge” that such a climax should enable.

There is a clearly a generic difference between *Measure for Measure* and *King Lear*, and yet the two plays are not very distant in time, both written already under the reign of James I, with *Measure for Measure* staged at court in the season directly preceding ‘the year of Lear” (to use James Shapiro’s phrasing from his 2015 publication). Consequently, both plays reflect some apprehensions prompted by the arrival of the new monarch, a devout Calvinist with an absolutist agenda. It seems to me that the profound political change must have also affected the modes of self-fashioning, intensifying the schism between the self and its public projection(s) in a more equivocal and uncertain reality. (Greenblatt’s original analyses mostly refers to the Elizabethan period). Both Edgar and Duke Vincentio represent the court and in order to adopt disguise effectively, a flexibility and swift inventiveness of new forms of camouflage to interact with fellow characters is required. As long as Edgar appears to be forced to adopt disguise, the Duke does it out of his own volition and remains largely in command of the course of action. It could be argued that given the Duke’s inability to resolve situations and the increasing scale of depravation, his disguise is also essential. Both characters are also seen to employ their disguise to manipulate other people whom they seemingly love most (Gloucester and Isabella) or whom they suspect most (Edmund and Angelo).

Furthermore, both the situations of Edgar and the Duke give rise to some ethical doubts and we appear to witness an infringement of the most intimate realm of the relation of man and God by adopting the role of confessors or spiritual councillors or providential companions. In fact, they may be seen as transgressing other people's spiritual intimacy, tampering with their conscience or even committing sacrilegious acts (eliciting confessions, faking providential interventions). This would stigmatize disguise as a manipulative device, but it would also emphasize the inherent darkness of their psychological motivations.

Furthermore, we see that in both cases, disguise appears in the context of death. Edgar offers his father a simulacrum of suicide, the Duke prepares Claudio (and not only him) for execution. Therefore, disguise warrants unlicensed access to others in some radically intimate circumstances (for example, prayer, reckoning of conscience and fear of death) and as such appears never entirely innocent or, one can argue, transgressive.

The Duke and Edgar may be also seen as healers, struggling to offer therapeutic effect of sorts. It seems to me, however, that the dramatic images / enactments of disguise do not serve to consolidate the early modern subjectivity. To the contrary, the variety and pace of adopting new forms of camouflage testifies to the increasing realization of the complexity of the human psyche, far exceeding the intricacies of mediaeval psychomachia or the introspective epiphanies of some tragic figures. Interestingly enough, Shakespeare's uses of disguise in his mature plays may be seen as a substitute / replacement of the convention of soliloquy which he himself had developed in plays such as *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*. Thus, the famous "inwardness" (theorized by Greenblatt in *Will in the World*) gives place to a contrary tendency where the knowledge about the self and about others is attained (if at all) by active incognito performance rather than meditative detachment. The disguisers are incognitos to others and to themselves. They learn who they are by inventing and practicing their roles.

CHAPTER 3

The Ethics and Politics of (Disguised) Kingship: An Examination of Shakespeare's Second Tetralogy

My previous chapter concerned itself with two examinations of the psychological pressures placed on self-fashioning subjects desiring to be incognito. In Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays - *Richard II, Henry IV Parts One and Two* and *Henry V* – we witness a grouping of kings in which I wish to explore a further implication of disguise i.e. its political dimension.

In investigating this dimension, I will incorporate, in addition to my analytical model on self-fashioning, another train of Greenblattian criticism evident in his earlier and later works. While I intend to address Greenblatt's views on the second tetralogy outlined in 2010's *Shakespeare's Freedom,* I will primarily focus on Greenblatt's earlier preoccupation with societal power relations. This is firstly outlined in his introductory preface to *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance* (1982) and, later, to a larger extent within the essay 'Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and its Subversion,' first appearing in 1981 and revised in 1985 and 1988.[1] The latter essay contends that the second tetralogy deals with kingly power and the relationship of power with notions of 'subversion' and 'containment'. Therefore, historical plays, Greenblatt insists, are not merely a "perfectly orthodox celebration of legitimacy and order" (1982, 1444). Conversely, kingship continually involves the creation of subversion and disorder to contain and maintain power over its subjects.

My investigation will explore the notion that Shakespeare's subversion consists in showing kingship as a form of disguise. This political dimension of disguise also calls for an elaborate mask, concealing the individual (and his fragility, hesitancy and humanity) behind the monarch. As I intend to show, it is a mask involving the employment of various instruments and strategies used by kings to expose or conceal their kingship. These include traditional props (for example, robes, crowns, sceptres), rhetorical strategies as well as proximity codes (for example, physical distance

[1] See S. Greenblatt, "*Invisible Bullets*: Renaissance Authority and its Subversion," *Glyph 8* (*1981*): 40-60. Then, "*Invisible Bullets*: Renaissance Authority and its subversion, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*" in Ed. Dollimore, J. and A. Sinfield, *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985): 18-47. Finally, see 'Invisible Bullets,' in S. Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1988): 21-65.

reduced in the case of monarchs concealing their status).[2] Integral to my investigation is also an examination of how the deposition of a king may imply the release from the necessity and the means of disguise. In addition, I intend to focus on the subject who is no longer a king, confronting an abandoning of disguise and thereby initiating a search for an identity as an individual. This raises the question as to whether this state implies exposure or a series of rehearsals of some new versions of identity, with frequent recourse to old habits.

In selecting Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays for an examination of the political dimension of disguise, I therefore do not pay attention to his first tetralogy – *Henry VI Parts I* to *III* and *Richard III*. Masking and disguise also feature within this cycle of plays. *Richard III,* in particular, uses deception in an instrumental manner and yet there is no prolonged meditation on the pressure of such strategies on him as an individual. Richard P. Wheeler stresses the conventional design of Richard III as a Machiavel, devoid of true subjectivity, and governed by a compulsive urge to perform and dominate:

> Machiavelli, of course, insists that a ruler be an actor, a dissembler who appears to act in the interest of the good while actually contriving to maintain and extend his power by any means necessary. Richard's ascent to power is grounded in his acting artistry, in his ability to fabricate reality, to create a world of illusion that others accept as real. (1971-72, 311).

The only person who makes Richard drop his mask is his mother: an interesting insight on Shakespeare's part. However, in *Richard II* and *Henry IV*, we deal with two reverse situations: a king deposed, divested, stripped of his kingship and therefore seeking his identity as an individual and a teenager maturing towards his role as a monarch.

As my analysis will concentrate on the consistent critical focus on how the king is presented in relation to his subjects, I wish to show how the audience's design of a model of kingship is primarily shaped by self-fashioning royal subjects, often employing with great agility those modes of behaviour that verbally disguise the ever-watchful and anxious self. Two of the kings within the

[2] Charles R. Forker comments on the use of traditional kingly props in *Richard II* and their relationship to a king who "functions . . . as an ambiguous icon of divine and human reference" (2002, 74). Subsequently, it is these objects in which Richard authorises himself, Forker adds, and they present a contextual means for "regarding the King as a complex image of cosmic splendour and authority, of inadequate ruler and of suffering humanity" (72). Donovan Sherman comments on these kingly objects in *Richard II,* referring to their integral nature within the ceremonial and sanctified perception of a monarch (which I shall shortly expand on in my discussion of Marc Bloch and Ernest Kantorowicz). Sherman contends that these objects are "found to be useless" following Richard's deposition, "cast aside without any further capacity to participate in political machination" (2014, 22).

Second Tetralogy prove themselves to be authentic self-fashioning subjects while accentuating their histrionic, role-playing masks. And so, we witness Richard II employing the modes of courtly rhetoric allied with the modes of ritualism in the attempt to maintain rule. The royal subject, Prince Hal, who eventually becomes Henry V, initially embraces the mode of improvisation in his quest to redeem himself to his father and then assume the identity of a king ready to accede the throne. In his quest he has to practise deception on a large scale, particularly to his companions in Eastcheap, befriending them in public, verbally disguising the determination of his redemptive quest and calculating the precise moment when he can discard his errant behaviour. Of equal importance is Hal's use of this mode of improvisation to exercise his own strategy at being able to subvert and contain those around him. Both Richard and Hal display other competing modes within the self-fashioning subject, and through their usage, we become witness to particularly subversive thoughts and actions. For example, Richard experiences the modes of loss and darkness, exemplifying his estrangement (using soliloquy) and an eventual recourse to inwardness as his divine protections become elusively inadequate for him. Hal also experiences such a retreat into inwardness and resorts to the mode of sartorial disguise in a desire for true interaction between himself and his subjects.

My investigation of the political dimension of disguise within the context of kingship, and this elaboration of my analytical model, is justified by reference to the work of two historians – Marc Bloch and Ernst Kantorowicz. Both investigate the modes of representation of monarchs, emphasising the way the concept of royalty is presented to the subjects. This is also precisely the area explored by Shakespeare (perhaps also aligning itself to those Greenblattian principles of subversion and containment) in his designs of kingly figures in his historical tetralogies, setting aside the question of various psychological tensions and anxieties this situation produces within the sovereign. Bloch's *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France* (1973), examines the royal dynasties of France and England and the phenomenon of the supposed healing abilities of its monarchs. He goes onto show how the healing rite produced a conception of a king's sacredness in the mind of society, producing social cohesion around the king, who embodied the total society. Furthermore, the sacredness of the king was achieved, Bloch adds, through the act of anointing and such an act helped society identify its strong, past associations that "contributed above all to confirm in the mind of the people the notion of the sacredness of kings" (72). This seemingly magical confirmation of sanctified royalty, Bloch noted, enabled the French

and English dynasties to strengthen their appeal and help counter any crisis. Elsewhere, Kantorowicz's *The King's Two Bodies* (1957) outlines another case for the sanctification of the monarch by society. He depicts how a monarchical state emerged from English Christian beliefs around the period of the mid sixteenth century noting how English legality viewed the physical body of the ruler as one joined to a "body politic," so forming the Tudor definition of monarchy.[3] Indeed, it is Shakespeare's *Richard II* which includes many themes relevant to Kantorowicz's work including conceptions of the body politic.[4]

It is also my intention in this chapter to ask what New Historicism has brought into our understanding of historical plays. In doing so, I wish to highlight the extent to which Greenblatt's earlier observations and interpretations have been embraced by fellow critics, who in turn, I believe construct their own readings of the second tetralogy using the same ideological message as Greenblatt. Therefore, I believe that these responses can be incorporated into an analysis of Shakespeare's historical plays, making my study not only a recapitulation of Greenblatt's contribution but also an overview of other critical approaches to history plays in the wake of Greenblatt's analyses.

I wish now to elucidate Greenblatt's views on subversion and containment, outlined within 'Invisible Bullets' which outline his views on Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays. Beginning with his views on *Richard II*, I will take into account Greenblatt's emphasis on subversiveness. Regarding his specific commentary on *Henry IV Parts One and Two and Henry V* (which follows his account of subversion and containment within 'Invisible Bullets') I will refrain from summarising it due to its extensive nature. Subsequently, I will seek to include his insights from these passages within my own analysis. This is because his views are best referred to in tandem with my own in order that they can more readily illuminate each point in the play more directly and relevantly. Following my account of Greenblattian subversiveness in 'Invisible Bullets', I will outline the critical approaches to history plays as a response to Greenblatt's views.

---

[3] Charles R. Forker provides his own interpretation of this theology:

> The King's natural body incorporated his humanity and was thus subject to the frailties and mortality of the flesh, but his body politic embodied the state and so set him apart from all others, being ubiquitous and immortal. If the doctrine were applied uncritically, particular actions of a king might be interpreted as possessing a mystical and almost unchallengeable authority. (2002, 17)

[4] Kantorowicz believes that the concept of The Kings Two Bodies is "the very substance and essence" of *Richard II* (1957, 26) and it is Shakespeare, he adds, who is responsible for preserving this image in the minds of contemporary audiences despite it disappearing "from modern constitutional thought . . . all but completely" (26).

Finally, I will commence my own investigation of disguise within the plays, taking into account Greenblatt's emphasis on subversiveness while continuing my analytical model on self-fashioning.

3.1 The Second Tetralogy in Greenblattian Criticism

Greenblatt comments within ''Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and its Subversion',[5] that "the representation of a self-undermining authority is the principal concern of *Richard II"* (1988, 40). Greenblatt is responding here to the concept of (sacred) kingship in *Richard II* which had already received much critical attention, further augmented by the seminal work of Kantorowicz's *The King's Two Bodies* (1957). Subsequently, Greenblatt sees the self-undermining authority of this king having tragic consequences in "the fatally self-wounded royal name of Richard II" (41).

In a subsequent introductory preface to *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance*, Greenblatt once again looks to an interesting non-literary text to begin his analysis of *Richard II*. This is an anecdote allegedly made by Elizabeth I to an antiquary, William Lambarde, where she firstly identifies herself with Richard II and then comments that the play itself "was played 40tie times in open streets and houses" (1982, 1443). Greenblatt goes onto identify this remark as a comment of the very subversive nature of the play itself, highlighting how it had broken free from the constraints of the playhouse: "are the 'houses' to which Elizabeth refers public theatres or private dwellings where her enemies plot her overthrow?" (1443). However, it is the potentially subversive nature of Richard's auto-reflexive comments and intimate confessions, followed by various containment strategies which are the focal point of Greenblatt's inquiry. Traces of similar emphasis on the oscillation between subversion and containment can be also found in the critical commentaries of other scholars, writing in the wake of Greenblatt's analysis, which I will outline shortly.

In addition to the above insights, it is vital in introducing two remarks that Greenblatt made about *Richard II* which briefly reference two modes of behaviour, desire and fear within self-fashioning and so prove influential on my own analysis of Richard's subversive thoughts and actions that I wish to develop. In a preface to the 2000 Norton edition of the play, Greenblatt

[5] I reference this comment first as it was originally written in 1981, therefore providing a chronological starting point for recording Greenblatt's comments on the play.

comments on the deposition scene in Act 4 Scene 1 as Richard "experiences the loss as the eradication of his name, the symbolic melting away of his identity" (2000, 58). As I will show, the mode of loss is continually experienced by Richard and it often finds expression through a key mode of self-fashioning, one that Greenblatt acknowledges in a 2004 online article *The Death of Hamnet and the Making of Hamlet*. Citing the imprisoned Richard's soliloquy in Act 5 as "Shakespeare's growing interest in the hidden process of interiority" this is indicative of, Greenblatt concludes, "a major advance in the playwright's ability to represent inwardness" (*New York Review of Books*, 2004).[6] I also intend to convey in my analysis how this expression of the self-fashioning subject fully penetrates Richard's discourse at this later stage in the play and helps to gain some own personal insights into his downfall.

Greenblatt's continuing exploration of Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays is to be found within the aforementioned essay, 'Invisible Bullets.' It is here that he introduces the concept of subversion and containment as an instrument of power by focusing on Thomas Harriot's report made in 1588, *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. Harriot, acclaimed in Elizabethan society for his talents and skill as a mathematician and cartographer, had produced a report which Greenblatt claims "professes the most reassuringly orthodox religious faith" (1988, 21). However, what Greenblatt notices is that Harriot was also reputed to be an atheist. Despite this being difficult to prove from the historical evidence available, Greenblatt remains confident that the connection between Harriot's professed orthodoxy and his reputation for subversive atheistic practices, are evidenced in the report itself. It is through an understanding of this connection, Greenblatt adds, that has a particular relevance in our understanding of the history plays of Shakespeare:

[6] During his lifetime, Greenblatt has continued in other publications to comment further on *Richard II*. Largely meditating on the theme of power within the play, Greenblatt remarks in a 2007 online article that Richard is among those rulers who seek to retreat from power who "fascinated Shakespeare at least as much as those who strive to exercise it." Richard is then referred to as a "spoiled dreamer . . . who seems to embrace his fall from the throne" (www.nybooks.com/articles/2007/04/12/shakespeare-and-the-uses-of-power/). In 2018, Greenblatt's own *Tyrant: Shakespeare on Power* sees the author exploring the staging of *Richard II* that was planned as part of the unsuccessful coup by Lord Essex in February 1601. Assessing why the conspirators were so enthusiastic to see the play performed, Greenblatt points to its ability to "conjure up an entire ethos of power in operation" (2018, 19). This is felt, Greenblatt adds, in the moves to firstly depose and later murder Richard, both of which are not directly ordered by Bolingbroke. When Exton is persuaded to kill Richard, overhearing Bolingbroke's "Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?", Greenblatt adds that we are made aware of the effect of this ethos of power – "all that is needed is a pregnant hint, carefully repeated, conjoined with looks directed intently . . . toward someone likely to grasp the hint's meaning" (19).

> I want to suggest further that understanding the relation between orthodoxy and subversion in Harriot's text will enable us to construct an interpretive model that may be used to understand the far more complex problem posed by Shakespeare's history plays. (1988, 23)

Greenblatt then briefly examines the differing ideological "strategies" that have been historically attributed to Shakespeare's history plays. It is these strategies, he adds, that "fashion Shakespeare's history plays [which] help in turn to fashion the conflicting readings of the plays' politics" (23). Such blueprints, he continues, are evident in Harriot's report, where we witness "the discourse of authority," containing within it "a powerful logic [which] governs the relation between orthodoxy and subversion" (23).

Before Greenblatt turns to the plays, he proceeds to outline his interpretive model, exploring Harriot's report in more detail. It is noted that Harriot perceived the natives as having a degree of religion to their culture, of which he drew parallels to Christianity. However, it became evident, Greenblatt adds, that within their society, a "split" had been created between the priests and the commoners (26). It was the commoners' conviction that the Gods possessed a human form and that Harriot, Greenblatt feels, had perceived the priests as taking hold of their beliefs to then manipulate the people and maintain authority.

Greenblatt goes on to point out the ambiguous status of Harriot in contemporary culture, accusing him of atheism and being a "juggler", a member of a conspiracy imposing a new religion (41). Furthermore, Greenblatt describes the misinterpretations by the Indians of the power and status of the invaders and the way these subversive accounts are "contained" by making, for example, the overall technological superiority of the Europeans an expression of God's will, and therefore justly used to manipulate the Indians into believing in the divinity of those who possess it. This, for Greenblatt, is the first strategy of "the *testing* of a subversive interpretation of the dominant culture" (35). Greenblatt then describes how the Indians tried to account for the occurrences perpetuated by the newcomers' presence, looking at, for instance, the spread of disease and the resulting death of the tribes. This strategy he calls "the *recording* of alien voices or more precisely, of alien interpretations" (35). Greenblatt contends that both strategies are at work in Shakespeare's histories which make them reinforce the Tudor orthodoxy and – at the same time - appear dangerously radical. This theory, Greenblatt adds, immediately implies maliciousness and Machiavellian callousness but this is not always the case, and he takes pains to stress that Harriot may not have been acting maliciously. Hence, we arrive at how Greenblatt named his essay, derived from Harriot's report and referring to "the invisible bullets", for instance, the way the

English inflicted diseases and misfortune on the hostile tribes. Originally the expression was to render the unexplainable nature of the weapons used by the newcomers. Paradoxically, however, modern knowledge about the spread of viruses and bacteria renders this comparison very accurate.

In his attempt to theorize this mechanism and arrive at the general dictum that subversion is invisible to the targeted audience, Greenblatt states that Shakespeare's history plays:

> are centrally, repeatedly concerned with the production and containment of subversion and disorder, and the practices that I have identified . . . all have their recurrent theatrical equivalents, above all in the plays that meditate on the consolidation of state power. (40)

The resonance of this assertion clearly reverberated within the field of Shakespeare Studies and it is my intention to now account for and assess its critical reaction to Greenblatt in this respect.

3.2 The Critical Response to Greenblatt on the Second Tetralogy

A succession of critics has tried to take Greenblatt to task for his bold assertion on the role of subversion in Shakespeare's historical plays. However, what becomes apparent is that they construct their own readings of the second tetralogy using the same ideological message as Greenblatt. David Kastan (in his introduction to the third Arden edition of *Henry IV Part One*) for instance, questions the overriding characteristic of 'containment' afforded by Greenblatt:

> neither the history play nor history itself in fact gives much evidence that containment is ever as efficient or complete as [Greenblatt's] reading insists. If subversion were always produced by and for power, power would always remain unchallenged and intact; but Henry IV's very presence on the throne argues otherwise. (2002, 38)

Kastan's concerns are shared by Edward Pechter who believes Falstaff is a very representation of such a challenge to the discourses of power. The character is voicing what Pechter believes to be an opposition and therefore a resistance to Greenblatt's "essentially hypothesis-confirming discourse" (1987, 294).[7] D.A Traversi and Roy Battenhouse both find agreement with Kastan and Pechter, arguing that Falstaff in no way represents submission as a knight type-cast as Hal's dog.

---

[7] Brian Walsh also feels that Falstaff is the subject of containment, but this time, not by authority. Rather, Walsh believes, Falstaff is contained by time itself:

> [H]e lives in a time-bound world where obligations and responsibilities catch even him up, no matter how much he resists them. He might prefer to be home in bed, but he is nonetheless present at Shrewsbury, however ignominious his behaviour there" (quoted in Longstaffe, 2017, 154).

It is therefore tempting to view Falstaff, they argue, as a character employed by Shakespeare to warrant judgment on the play's events, "through open comment and parody" (Battenhouse 1975, 34; Traversi 1947, 327-31). Harold Bloom also contends that Falstaff is seen to operate quite independently of Hal because the old knight's "matrix is freedom" (2017,5). Furthermore, he continues, Falstaff stands alone because he is "different. His zest for life pervades his torrent of language and laughter." (6) His difference to Hal, therefore, is characterized in that zest for life. Hal is also not trusting of Falstaff's exuberance, he adds, although he "goes to Falstaff to be confirmed in it" (6). Why is it, he adds later, that Falstaff's death is not staged? Perhaps Shakespeare wanted to appreciate Falstaff as life itself and ever-living, Bloom concludes (120-121).

Such views have also been shared by scholars within Cultural Materialism, although they proceed, like Kastan and Pechter, to dissect Greenblatt's polemic within the framework of subversion and containment. Jonathan Dollimore in *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism* (1985) focuses on Greenblatt's claim that it is only authority that can both generate and crush subversion. Dollimore disagrees and claims that we need to account for "[r]esistance to that process. . .although subversion may indeed be appropriated by authority for its own purposes, once installed it can be used against authority as well as used by it" (12). Catherine Belsey in *Shakespeare in Theory and Practice* (2008) also pays homage to Greenblatt's ideological message while challenging the view that subversion and disorder can always be contained by the ruling elite. It is those New Historicist theories of power relations, she contends (echoing Dollimore), which should account for "the possibility of resistance" and a re-definition of 'power' to incorporate resistance "as its defining, differentiating other, the condition of its existence precisely as power" (136). It is conceivable, she adds, that resistance is "not tamed" and not indeed "contained" by any "reaffirmation" of power as Greenblatt would have it (136). Belsey's reading centres therefore, on a re-definition of Greenblatt's model and is not a repudiation of it.

Neema Parvini, in *Shakespeare's History Plays: Rethinking Historicism* (2012), indeed tries to repudiate Greenblatt's reading of the second tetralogy and yet succeeds in espousing some perceived virtues of the interpretative model of subversion and containment. Before specifically addressing Greenblatt, Parvini examines the Cultural Materialist interpretation of subversion and containment, typified by the views of Dollimore and Belsey. He sees that the Cultural Materialist response cannot ultimately reject Greenblatt's interpretive model, what he calls "the prism of

containment and subversion" (2012b, 86). Parvini's subsequent analysis of New Historicist and Cultural Materialist readings of the second tetralogy (banded together under the umbrella 'Cultural Historicists') are praised for their "invaluable and lasting contribution to our understanding of the history plays" (2012b, 178). Furthermore, Parvini believes that this work has achieved a greater perception of historical background of the plays and also the idea that "the history plays deal at some level with the issue of state power and its containment of potential resistance through covert ideological or discursive methods" (2012b, 178). Despite his further trying to distance himself from New Historicism[8], Parvini's acknowledgment of, and therefore not a comprehensive rejection of, these interpretations or redefinitions of the subversion and containment model is clearly evident.

It is also apposite to summarise the reaction within New Historicists, not specifically in connection with their own readings of the second tetralogy, coming to terms with Greenblatt's theory of subversion and containment. Louis Montrose, in *The Purpose of Playing: Shakespeare and the Cultural Politics of the Elizabethan Theatre* (1996), tries to dismiss Greenblatt's theory but does not offer a convincing repudiation of it. Firstly, Montrose claims that on the one hand, the framework is "hopelessly reductive," claiming that Elizabethan authorities were never able to enforce an effective policy of containment (104). However, and despite his belief in the inability of Elizabethan authorities to contain "alternative and oppositional discourses," Montrose still appears to believe that effective containment can emerge, contending that "such total control is (as yet) beyond the power of any state" (104). Elsewhere, Stephen Mullaney outlines his reluctance to accept containment as a "generalized condition of power" but rather opting for an "ideological containment" working in "such a paradoxical and cunning fashion in some local and historically specific instances" (1996, 27). Nonetheless, Mullaney still upholds the notions of Greenblatt's dictum in principle, working towards a slight modification as Dollimore and Belsey had also sought.

From these critical responses to Greenblatt's interpretation of power relations with Shakespeare's history plays, it is clear that none offers a clear and comprehensive departure from the framework of subversion and containment. These responses are still constructed using the same

---

[8] Parvini tries to take New Historicism and Greenblatt to task for their reliance on what he terms anti-humanist and relativist thought. This centres on its tendency, he adds, to assume that human beings are shaped by and subjected to larger social forces, including language itself. Therefore, Parvini concludes, humans are not autonomous creators of their own destiny. Such an approach, Parvini feels, is uniquely unsuited to deal with a figure like Shakespeare, who arguably transcends his time and place in achievements and abilities (2012b, 207-208).

ideological message as Greenblatt, at best only offering modifications to that framework. Subsequently, and focusing on the notion of subversiveness as Greenblatt sees it, my intention is to now explore a set of fundamental questions concerning the relation of subversiveness to the role of kingship as a form of disguise in *Richard II*: does Shakespeare's subversion consist in showing kingship as a form of disguise? and, does deposing a king imply freeing him of the necessity and the means of disguise? Furthermore, what happens to a no-longer king when he abandons disguise and only begins his search for an identity as an individual? Does this condition entail a disclosure to, or a sequence of trial performances of, some new identity, with a continual resorting to previous inclinations?

3.3 *Richard II* – The Monarchical Self in (Un)disguised Crises

From the very outset of the play we are made aware of the anxieties that are surfacing through the discourse of Richard as he struggles to effect the elaborate mask of a king. The very nature of being a king is seen to involve a disguising of the self which is hidden beneath the mask, a camouflage of an inner-identity characterised by a fragility, hesitancy and humanity. He begins to demonstrate an affinity with the typical self-fashioning subject as confusion resides within him concerning the precise location of his identity. This is evidenced as we witness him shifting from the individual self through the pronoun "Tell *me* moreover" (1.1.8) to the plural, Royal pronoun "Yet one but flatters *us"* (1.1.25) (my emphasis).

Despite this wavering grasp of self-identity, Richard nonetheless seeks refuge in a system that not only helps maintain his ruling protections, through the employment of systematic and elaborate ritualistic routines, but also enforces his employment of disguise. We see the emergence of a specific use of props, costume, rhetoric and devices connected to special arrangement, such as physical distancing and elevation of the throne. The command to his attendants in the first scene, to summon Bolingbroke and Mowbray "to our presence / Face to face" (1.1.14-15) points to Richard utilising what Charles R. Forker calls "special protocols such as standing, removing headgear and not turning one's back on the throne" (2002, 181). The king continues to employ such similar protocols to augment his disguise and it is through the utilisation of such a system, Forker notes, that Richard places "his whole trust in its theatrical protections" (2002,1). The proceeding argument between Bolingbroke and Mowbray is continuing testament to the use of

ritualistic protocol, where soldiers' gloves (or gages) are repeatedly thrown to the floor, signifying challenges to each other's beliefs. Richard himself uses a kingly tool through which he believes can exercise power, and indeed, grant privileges to his subjects:

> KING RICHARD: Now, by my sceptre's awe, I make a vow
> Such neighbour nearness to our sacred blood
> Should nothing privilege him nor partialize
> The unstooping firmness of my upright soul.
> He is our subject, Mowbray; so art thou
> Free speech and fearless I to thee allow. (1.1.118-123)

Those oscillations between individual and Royal selves are continually evidenced here and what is particularly striking about this passage is that the entire scene – with the aggravating conflict of Bolingbroke and Mowbray – signals the inevitable beginning of Richard's downfall. Bolingbroke attacks Mowbray for what Richard had done about Gloucester, whereas the only way for Mowbray to defend himself is to reveal Richard's guilt. None of the three speaks (or may speak) the truth. Thus, the scene is subversive because it shows how the king (guilty of what he is accused of) defends himself with a recourse to ritualism (evoking the concept of sacred blood, threatening Bolingbroke for the sake of royal justice, and projecting the image of a benign and fair ruler, for example, to speak freely, be fearless) while in fact he wants both of them to be silent. Exposing the hypocrisy of the ruler is potentially subversive and discredits the arguments and formulas used by Richard. And yet, this subversiveness is also contained (similarly as in the case of Harriot's justification of deluding the Indians) by the ultimate course of history: the rebellion leads to Richard's deposition, the deposition to his murder, and his murder to the wars of the roses, and therefore to the destruction of many lives and the ruin of the country.

Richard's response to crises is to augment his disguise as an anointed king, the somewhat magical incarnation of sanctified royalty as Marc Bloch deemed it. As we see, it is a disguise that hides his insecurities and perhaps, too, his sense of guilt. Furthermore, it is a protective and ritualistic disguise strengthened by a dextrous employment of the mode of rhetoric. Richard's words are seen to render most of the arguments he uses about sacred kingship entirely empty, a claim particularly risky from the point of view of Tudor royalist doctrines. Neema Parvini, conducting his own reading of *Richard II* very much in line with Greenblatt's general assumption about the recurrent pattern of subversion and containment, states that if Richard means to exercise power, to contain it through a recourse to ritualism, we cannot ignore Richard's method of asserting

that ritualistic grasp of power through language (2012b, 184). In this passage where Richard recommends resolving a dispute between Mowbray and Bolingbroke in the form of a duel, we see the king trying to define his sense of royal identity, one that is inborn, inherited, predetermined and unnegotiable:

> KING RICHARD: We were not born to sue, but to command,
> Which since we cannot do to make you friends,
> Be ready, as your lives shall answer it,
> At Coventry upon Saint Lambert's day.
> There shall your swords and lances arbitrate
> The swelling difference of your settled hate. (1.1.196-201)

What is evident here is a crisis of identity, with Richard giving the impression that he does not know what he is, or what he was born to be. This in turn makes the audience realise that a king, who is trying to augment his status as a divine ruler, would indeed be a man in disguise if we allowed for the divinity of kingship. Richard's appeal here to the divine right of rule, is therefore through language, which Charles Forker views in this king to be an 'essentialist' conception which:

> obliterates the space between signifier and signified, like the priest who transmutes the bread and wine of the Eucharist into the body and blood of Christ by saying the words of institution: "this is my body…this is my blood." (2002,66) [9]

Despite having already felt indications of his inner-self at conflict, we eagerly await to be invited to share Richard's most intimate thoughts. Richard's power has hitherto been exercised publicly, its theatricality very much played out on the stage, his ideology conveyed for all to see and hear. What we have seen to date with Richard, as Neema Parvini notes, is that his system is a conscious creation for its producers and an unconscious force for its consumers, his subjects, which controls and contains them (2012b,184).

Before we begin to gain a greater access to Richard's inner-world, we are very much reminded of the power that he desires to exercise through the employment of ritualistic objects and protocols. Despite their being used with the aim of enforcing his disguise as a divine monarch, particular uses of these objects and protocols seem to actually betray his investment of trust in their protections. Prior to the duel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, Richard proceeds to greet the

---

[9] Catherine Belsey approaches this perception of this 'essentialist' conception of language from a slightly different but by no means less intriguing angle. In Act I of the play, she adds, there is a moment when "the truth of things is perceived to reside in names, when the grand simplicities appear to be in place, or when the (royal) sentence seems absolute" (1991, 34). She adds that by Richard's naming of Mowbray and Bolingbroke's banishment, "the king is able to bring it about – or to repeal it" (34).

former with “We will descend and fold him in our arms” (1.3.54). We are immediately made aware of the position of an elevated throne and as Charles R. Forker perceives, a representation of “a symbolic condescension to a person of a lower rank” (2002, 212). On the one hand, the image of Richard descending from the throne helps augment his disguise as a sanctified ruler[10] but on the other, it may reveal, as Forker perceives, “an ironic prolepsis of Richard’s abdication” (212). Perhaps this is the very moment where Richard, the consummate actor and player king, is already rehearsing for this abdication. He is seemingly operating from within the realm of self-fashioning, already envisaging, anticipating and then, enacting the next role he feels he will have to play.

Nonetheless, Richard continues to use kingly objects in the attempt to augment his disguise as a divine ruler. The duel which follows between Bolingbroke and Mowbray is dramatically halted by the intervention of Richard throwing down his warder. The king proceeds to issue banishments to the two men and in doing so, obediently coerces Bolingbroke to pledge a public devotion to the divine ruler.

> BOLINGBROKE: Your will be done. This must my comfort be. (1.3.144)

Their banishment is marked by placing hands on Richard’s sword and they need to swear in an allegiance to God that neither will seek a reconciliation. Richard therefore places his trust in God that this ritualistic act will help curtail any threat of future uprising against his power.

While in banishment, Richard learns of the increasing popularity of Bolingbroke among his fellow men. In this passage, where Richard reveals a degree of anxiety about Bolingbroke’s rising status and potentiality, we can see how he can easily recognize the theatricality of somebody else’s performance. He is suspicious because he himself knows how to pretend and realises the power of appearances:

> KING RICHARD: What reverence he did throw away on slaves,
> Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles
> [. . .]
> Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench.
> 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 our England in reversion his,
> And he our subjects’ next degree in hope. (1.4.27-36)

[10] Later, in his meeting with John of Gaunt, Richard swears by his throne (“Now, by my seat’s right royal majesty” (2.1.120), in his desire to confer it as a symbol of divine authority.

Richard's perception of reality, bound up in his invocation of the relationship between stage and audience (and use of direct speech) is very theatrical, and this stems from the frequent use of disguise that he employs in maintaining the persona of a king.

Richard returns from the Irish wars in Act 3, Scene 2 and receives assurances from Carlisle that the "Power that made you king / Hath power to keep you king in spite of all" (3.2.27-28). Aumerle, however, reminds Richard of the realities awaiting him as he confirms that Bolingbroke "Grows strong and great in substance and power" (3.2.35). The following reaction from the king serves as an earnest foreboding of the events that are about to unravel:

> KING RICHARD: 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. (3.2.54-57)

This passage is important as it touches upon the mystical interpretation of kingship. If Richard is sincere, disguising his fears stems from his understanding of his duties as a king. If he trusts God, he must think of kingship as a divine privilege and divine obligation. However, doubt remains as to whether his faith in kingship and duty to God are as steadfast as they appear. In contrast, it now appears that in such a profession of faith lies the beginnings of a collapse in that faith, faced with his impending deposition. What we see here is yet another source of the crisis of identity within Richard as he grapples to effect his disguise as a monarch divinely sanctioned.

Before being confronted with some revelatory information, Richard once again seeks recourse in affirming his rule through the protections of his divine guardian:

> KING RICHARD: 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. (3.2.60-62)

Richard conjures up the vision in that 'glorious angel,' the Angel Roof at Westminster Hall and the way the imagery was used to uphold the idea of the divinity of kingship. What we therefore see here is, metaphorically speaking, a gigantic, lavish architectural disguise for the fragility of the monarchical power.

Richard's words seem to convince us that he has just embodied the figure of Greenblatt's "spoilt dreamer" (2009,68-69), especially when Salisbury then brings news that somewhat sweeps the glorious angel and his heavenly guardian apart. Richard's army has dispersed and gone to

Bolingbroke's side and this proves to be the moment when the king's peace and his inner-world is truly shaken. Richard cannot comprehend that God could have led him to such an outcome and soon takes on the mantle of a monarch beset by anxiety and delusion. A king once enshrined to its divine status, wedded to the body politic, is now one retreating from his faith. This now ensures that his rhetoric becomes fully disguised as whatever recourse to divinity he wishes to profess, is undermined by his increasingly subversive views of the divine monarch. Aumerle comments that Richard looks "pale" (75) following the release of the news and the king responds that "Time hath set a blot upon my pride" (81). Note that the reference is to himself and not the pride shared by the royal "we" of the body politic. From now on, we also begin to see evidence of the mode of darkness surfacing into Richard's discourse, as he feels the relentless pressure of the advancing Bolingbroke. Richard's strategy in dealing with this pressure is now to try to disguise the release of his self's anxiety as he greatly perceives a gap beginning to open up between the public persona he plays (the divine monarch) and the demands of the watchful inner-self. What is immediately clear is that his strategy also entails the mode of loss (as Richard contemplates his departure from the role of divine monarch) which also appears and then quickly compounds the overall anxieties of this self-fashioning subject while he still tries to exercise his authority:

> AUMERLE: Comfort, my liege. Remember who you are.
> KING RICHARD: I had forgot myself. Am I not king?
> Awake, then coward Majesty, thou sleepest!
> Is not the King's name twenty thousand names?
> Arm, arm, my name! (3.2.82-86)

The continuing recourse to his mode of disguising rhetoric can therefore only bring about this king's 'undoing'. As Parvini notes, exemplifying Greenblatt's view of Richard self-undermining his authority, the king soon becomes over-reliant on his convictions of power and language which later emphasises his inability to act, showing how ideology becomes ineffective if not supported by physical action (2012b, 190). Catherine Belsey also notes how Richard's undoing is marked by what she calls a process of 'un-kinging' (2008, 126-131) where Richard now begins to reflect more on the very nature and name of a king as he digests the contents of Salisbury's news.

Lord Scroop appears and soon delivers more worrying news for the king, confirming the advancement and success of Bolingbroke's men. Richard's response is to arm himself in his verbal allegiance to God, now taking the form of a verbal disguise as he employs a rhetoric seemingly faithful to his guardian:

KING RICHARD: Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?
Greater he shall not be. If he serve God,
We'll serve Him too, and be his fellow so.
Revolt our subjects? That we cannot mend.
They break their faith to God as well as us. (3.2.97-101)

The irony is, of course, that Richard's faith to God has already broken - such is the king shaken by the recent turn of events. When Richard learns that Bushy, Bagot and Green (originally designated as Richard's peacemakers) have made their "peace with Bolingbroke" (127) he becomes extremely anxious, fearing they have betrayed him. This results in an outpouring of the modes of hatred and indeed, slander, as the king compares the men to Christ's own traitor:

KING RICHARD: O, villains, vipers damned without redemption!
Dogs easily won to fawn on any man!
Snakes, in my heart-blood warmed, that sting my heart!
Three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas! (3.2.129-132)

From our previously small perceptions of anxiety surfacing into a supposedly regal discourse, we are again witness to a much clearer and expansive emergence of a now tortured inner voice, a king grappling with the demands of self-fashioning as he tries to hold onto his rhetorical disguise. The results of Richard's crisis and the way it is disrupting his discourse, moving from the lyrical regal tone to the instant one of loathing, is felt by Scroop himself:

SCROOP: Sweet love, I see, changing his property,
Turns to the sourest and most deadly hate. (3.2.135-136)

Aumerle confirms that the three messengers have died and what is also clear is that Richard's belief in the king as the expression of the body politic has died with it. Very quickly, this king now only seeks identification in mortality:

KING RICHARD: 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. (3.2.145-148)

This highly subversive account, railing against the beliefs of Tudor royalist doctrines, receives its full dramatic confirmation not only in discussing the mortality of kings but also in the

perception that the crown is nothing more than "hollow" (160). As Richard continues to express his mode of hatred, desperately disguising the desire to seek inner-peace, his views on divine monarchy are now somewhat less than savoury as he likens the undertaking of the role to that of becoming a madman:[11]

KING RICHARD: [. . .] 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. (3.2.162-166)

Richard's doubts, that he had been suppressing for so long, rapidly rise to the surface. Furthermore, they are underscored by his sense of theatricality and tinted with grim irony. He becomes a man turned inside out. The verb 'to monarchize'[12] also depicts Richard's linguistic energy and points to his acknowledgment that playing the role of a monarch is also one played by an actor, a performer-king held by the influence of self-fashioning.

Richard is now clinging onto his rhetorical disguise as a ruler, clearly showing inner disarray while openly subverting the very court he still occupies. He is now firmly locked within his conviction that the king is now no more than a mortal soul which thereby enables him to continue mocking and stripping away at his royal vestige, protections, rituals and theatricalities**.** The following passage is testament to this as he again desires to 'un-king' himself:

KING RICHARD: …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? (3.2.172-177)

Carlisle and Aumerle briefly manage to pull Richard out of himself as the "ague fit of fear" in the king is "overblown" (190). It is the news that York has now switched allegiance to Bolingbroke that again throws Richard off-kilter and finally necessities his retreat to Flint Castle.

[11] Such is the condition of almost self-torture that Richard now inflicts upon himself that I am reminded of Harold Bloom's perception that this king becomes a "moral masochist" operating in a "luxurious self-indulgence in despair" (2017,7).
[12] I am indebted to Charles R. Forker's definition of *to monarchize*, "play the part of a king" (2002,330).

The king feels his power has waned and what awaits him is the mode of darkness as he contemplates his “woe” (210) within his own “night” (218).

Bolingbroke, too, appears to forbode within Richard a darkening of his once powerful light when they meet at the walls of Flint Castle. His analogy contends that it is Richard, like the sun, who “perceives the envious clouds are bent / To dim his glory” (3.3.65-66). We await, therefore, to see what role the king will be playing as he verbally tries to disguise his anxiety upon revealing his public persona once more to the world.

Richard appears and soon it is apparent that he feels he has been usurped despite Bolingbroke’s professed confirmation to the contrary.[13] What proves equally compelling though is Richard’s now desperately self-deceiving recourse to God in seeking to punish those who are believed to have usurped him. Modes of aggression begin to emerge in a subject that has already berated his once divine protector for the situation he has found himself in:

> KING RICHARD: Yet know: my Master, God omnipotent,
> Is mustering in His clouds on our behalf
> Armies of pestilence, and they shall strike
> Your children, yet unborn and unbegot,
> That life your vassal hands against my head
> And threat the glory of my precious crown. (3.3.85-90)

His aggressively charged rhetoric, disguising the anxious self with its competing identities, soon turns to the mode of violence as Richard strives to discover and forge his new identity:

> KING RICHARD: Ten thousand bloody crowns of mother’s sons
> Shall ere become the flower of England’s face,
> Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace
> To scarlet indignation, and bedew
> Her pastor’s grass with faithful English blood. (3.3.96-100)

When Northumberland returns with fresh news from Bolingbroke, Richard again encounters his own considerable anxieties which throw him into an outpouring of the mode of loss

---

[13] I particularly reference his request to Northumberland as the meeting with Richard draws nearer:

> BOLINGBROKE: Henry Bolingbroke
> On both his knees doth kiss King Richard’s hand
> And sends allegiance and true faith and heart
> To his most royal person. (3.3.35-38)

Greenblatt also himself notes how Bolingbroke “never declares directly that he intends to topple the reigning monarch” (2018, 18).

as he again fears that deposition is at hand. While employing this mode of behaviour, he also demonstrates the self-fashioning subject's recognition that a new identity will be needed, complete with its own set of less than regal protections which he must trade through this deposition:

> KING RICHARD: What must the King do now? Must he submit?
> The King shall do it. Must he be deposed?
> The King shall be contented. Must he lose
> The name of king? I' God's name, let it go.
> I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,
> My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,
> My gay apparel for an almsman's gown,
> My figured goblets for a dish of wood. (3.3.143-150)

Richard has fully rehearsed his abdication speech, convinced that he is to be usurped at any moment. The next step for him is to contemplate delivering his speech to Bolingbroke, to perform it "in the base court" (176). Richard instantly utilises his mode of rhetoric and his penchant for wordplay by focusing, rather like Edmund in *King Lear*, on the word "base":

> KING RICHARD: Down, down I come, like glist'ring Phaëton,
> Wanting the manage of unruly jades.
> In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,
> To come at traitors' calls and do them grace.
> In the base court? Come down? Down court, Down king! (3.3.178-182)

While imagining a once seemingly unimaginable fall from grace, Richard demonstrates his addiction to the sway of self-fashioning in a theatrical denigration or loathing of the court and, indeed, for his soon to be relinquished role. Contemplating his own future, seeing the imminent end of his reign, Richard's rhetoric is now underscored by the anxieties within his inner-self trying to comprehend and evaluate another, hitherto unknown role.

When they meet, Richard is convinced that Bolingbroke does not fit the mould of a king who can take his seat in heaven:

> KING RICHARD: Up, cousin, up. Your heart is up, I know,
> Thus high at least, [*indicates crown.*]
> although your knee be low. (3.3.194-195)

Bolingbroke again indicates he has no designs on the crown – he desires to come for his restored dukedoms "for mine own" (196). And yet, as they head to London, Richard remains convinced that all is lost and surrendered, and he is no longer God's agent on earth but Bolingbroke's:

> KING RICHARD: Your own is yours, and I am yours and all. (3.3.197)

In Act 4 Scene 1, the moment finally arrives when Bolingbroke suddenly decides to assume the throne. Carlisle immediately objects but then is arrested and now the path is clear for Bolingbroke to ask Richard to deliver him the crown. Even at this stage Richard still claims to be in possession of his "regal thoughts" (4.1.164) which we know he has been trying to dispel for some time. There is the admission here too that he is now contemplating his new identity he negates himself from his former role – "God save the King, although I be not he" (175). Richard shows himself to be in the grip of self-fashioning, exhibiting the desire to adopt new roles and verbal disguises. He follows the steps of Edgar in *King Lear*, delving ever deeper into his inner self to seek self-knowledge and content in the response to crisis and anxiety.

Richard eventually gives Bolingbroke the crown having described his personal grieving in letting it go. The burden of his previous role has proved quite considerable for Richard to play as he contemplates his quest for a new self-identity – "I give this heavy weight from off my head" (204). In the moment of abdication, we are now reminded that Richard has already gone through its own dress rehearsal and now he must replicate it in the royal court. As the circumstances dictate, we are not surprised to see Richard rising to the occasion, complete with the masterful command of the mode of rhetoric, here adopting a distinct courtly rhetoric we know he is capable of delivering:

> KING RICHARD: With mine own tears I wash away my balm,
> With mine own hands I give away my crown,
> With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,
> With mine own breath release all duteous oaths. (4.1.207-210)

In discarding his role as king, Richard discards those protections that once augmented his disguise as a divinely sanctioned monarch. As Donovan Sherman perceptively comments, the object that is most notably abandoned is "the king himself" (2014,22), the effect of which prompts Richard to contemplate a new self-identity divested of the burden of the crown, one that will no longer involve the suppression of the self in favour of playing the public role. However, it is the dictate of self-fashioning to place Richard still within the realms of anxiety as the relinquishing of former woes

is to be replaced by those newer ones where the self feverishly searches and grapples at constructing a new identity. Richard and audience are therefore left to ponder on what such a future construct of a self, stripped of the monarch's public role, would entail:

> KING RICHARD: What more remains?" (4.1.222)

His contemplation and search for his new-found identity begins with Richard exhibiting the mode of loss as Northumberland asks him to read out a paper containing a list of "accusations" and "grievous crimes" committed against the state (223-224).

> KING RICHARD: No lord of thine, thou haught insulting man,
> Nor no man's lord. I have no name, no title -
> No, not that name was given me at the font -
> But 'tis usurped. Alack the heavy day,
> That I have worn so many winters out
> And know not now what name to call myself. (4.1.254-259)

As Stephen Greenblatt himself notes, (outlined in my introduction) the usurped king contemplates the bleak state of his self-identity which has virtually been eroded. Richard is very much in the throes of trying to locate his self-identity, the mode of loss contributing to the overwhelming sense of negation he feels. In the quest to begin to find himself, however, he does not yet find the mode of inwardness that will help him discover his inner-self. Instead, he believes at this stage that to look outwardly at his face in a mirror and to see the book "where his sins are writ" (275) are satisfactory enough means to locate his identity – "and that's myself" as he concludes (275). He quickly realises that these visual objects do not give him a true assurance of his self-identity, which results in his eventual frustration in his breaking the glass of the mirror. Also, we seem to witness in this act an additional mode of Richard's loathing for the inability of his face to convey this self-identity.

> KING RICHARD: Is this the face which faced so many follies,
> That was at last outfaced by Bolingbroke?
> A brittle glory shineth in this face.
> As brittle as the glory is the face! [*Shatters glass*] (4.1.285-288)

At the beginning of the play's final act, Richard's quest for his new self-identity is made more apparent to himself as he shows a degree of self-awareness of his past life and the need to

distance himself from it. The words to his visiting wife at the Tower indicate, in Greenblatt's phrasing, that he had become a "dreamer".

> KING RICHARD: …Learn, good soul,
> To think our former state a happy dream,
> From which we awaked, the truth of what we are
> Shows us but this. (5.1.17-20)

Despite this reference to waking from a dream, he is not yet prepared to forget his usurpation – the pain of which still very much underscoring the mode of darkness he finds himself in:

> KING RICHARD: For why the senseless brands will sympathize
> The heavy accent of thy moving tongue,
> And in compassion weep the fire out,
> And some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black,
> For the deposing of a rightful king. (5.1.46-50)

Northumberland intervenes and with him carries the news that Richard is to be taken to Pomfret Castle while the Queen is banished to France. Upon parting with his wife, Richard provides us with an indication of the sadness that will pour from his heart in captivity – "The rest let Sorrow say" (102).

From a very public design of the king, we become a better witness to Richard's more private thoughts while in captivity in Act 5, Scene 5, typifying his estrangement from his subjects, his state, and indeed, his self. As Greenblatt commented, it is a moment when we witness Richard expressing the mode of inwardness where he finds his retreat from the world of courtly pressures, a place where he can begin to demarcate the distance between his public and private personas. As Greenblatt himself elsewhere commented in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* inwardness is able to harness self-fashioning, to reveal its sense of great longing, aggression and self-interest while conversely, self-fashioning appropriates inwardness to embolden its theatrical power (1980, 156). Subsequently all these features find their expression in Richard's soliloquy as he finds himself finally alone with his thoughts. Here, we are privy to a greater, more intimate relationship in the sharing of a 'kingly' consciousness (albeit a deposed one).

Richard's first concern when alone in captivity, within his continuing quest to re-construct his self-identity, is what to actually do with his thoughts. The scene is important because it prepares us to see a crowd of people within the disorientation of Richard's mind. He firstly desires to create a companion, a personification of his brain and soul in the hope of generating more thoughts to accompany him, or as he puts it "a generation of still-breeding thoughts" (5.5.8). Then Richard

proceeds, in a way to further pass the time, to categorise his thoughts and reflect on how they only engender discontent. The first, is "divine" thoughts (12) and Richard believes they become intertwined with "scruples," setting "the word" in opposition to the word of the Holy scripture itself. Richard is therefore recounting his own fate, how his delusion with playing the role of the divine king began to develop as he perceived God to be deserting him. After this, he examines "thoughts tending to ambition," (18) probably pondering over the usurpatory desires of Bolingbroke and concludes they are worthless as they can only "die in their pride" (22). Finally, Richard turns to "thoughts tending to content" (23) and straightaway we are drawn to the ultimate desire of the self-fashioning subject, the desire to achieve self-content. And so, Richard concludes, such thoughts ultimately do not lead to content as they can be likened to beggars in the stocks, who seemingly contented, are still nonetheless "[b]earing their own misfortunes on the back / Of such as have before endured the like" (29-30).

As he proves to himself that such a range of thoughts provide no content, he returns to his analogy that his thoughts are people. In doing so, he reflects on his own self-identity, and this unravels here in a depiction of all the roles that populate his mind, both familiar and foreign to himself, with his true subjectivity never truly formed or defined.

> KING RICHARD: Thus play I in one person many people,
> And none contented. Sometimes I am king;
> Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar,
> And so I am. (5.5.31-34)

To ourselves, the audience, we see Richard discovering himself at the heart of his self-fashioning. He has realised that his self-identity is a composite of the many different roles he has had to play in his life and that even the illusory goal of the self-fashioning subject, self-content, is unattainable. In fact, the conclusion he appears to arrive at, is that there is no goal at all:

> KING RICHARD: But whate'er I be,
> Nor I nor any man that but man is
> With nothing shall be pleased till he be eased
> With being nothing. (5.5.38-41)

The idea that contentment only lies within death itself becomes a means to prepare Richard for his end, to face up to its prospect as the state of nothingness, a Godless realm, awaits.

My intention in conducting a reading of *Richard II*, to focus on the notion of subversiveness as Greenblatt sees it, was to explore a set of fundamental questions concerning the relation of subversiveness to the role of kingship as a form of disguise. The first was to answer whether Shakespeare's subversion consists in showing kingship as a form of disguise. It is my belief that this is the case and that Richard's kingly disguise is augmented through the systematic use of ritualistic protections. While employing these protections, be they through traditional props, rhetoric and proximity codes, Richard embraces the theatricality involved in effecting the performance of a seemingly sanctified ruler. The power of his rhetoric, his command of language, also seems to help enforce his divine right to rule but this is checked by the growing anxiety that Richard feels due to the rising opposition from Bolingbroke. This forces the king to prepare and begin a cycle of rehearsals for not only his abdication, but for the roles he is going to play once his royal vestiges are stripped. Subsequently, Richard's rhetoric itself becomes highly subversive in terms of its opposition to Tudor Royalist doctrines as he realises the need to immerse his inner-self into new identities, furthering a desire to locate a self-content. This points to Richard's ceaseless use of self-fashioning, and, in doing so, leads to my refutation of the second question I intended to answer in my analysis, to establish if the deposing of a king frees him of the necessity and the means of disguise. While it seems to be the case that Richard is freed from the need to disguise having discarded those divine protections which had augmented his disguise as a sanctified monarch, he retains the necessity and the desire to continue disguising his inner-self per se. His untimely death robs the audience of seeing Richard fully embracing and rehearsing any newly constructed self-identity and his prior penchant for self-fashioning would have ensured him adopting a new fictive identity had he remained alive.

This conclusion leads me to answer the final two questions I posed at the outset of my analysis of the play, firstly, to consider what happens to a no-longer king when he abandons disguise and only begins his search for an identity as an individual. As I said, Richard does not abandon disguise at all, only that afforded by his kingly role. Subsequently, in his search for an identity as an individual, I turn to answering my final question, to establish whether this state implies exposure to, or a series of rehearsals of, some new identity, with frequent recourse to old habits. There is undeniably the need for Richard to continually grapple with and rehearse the fictive roles that he believes he will need to play. In doing so, he remains governed by the modes of behaviour, the desires and fears of the self-fashioning subject which have conspired to divest him

of his monarchy. His adherence to self-fashioning leads him to the anticipation, and eventual confrontation of, one final role; death itself. Ultimately, it is only within death that Richard believes lies an end to disguising the inner-self and adopting new identities. In death, there is also the conviction that the realm of nothingness can only provide the answer to the illusory goal of self-content which the self-fashioning subject forever seeks.

3.4 *Henry IV* – A Testing Ground for Princely Disguise(s)

3.4.1 The Presence of Disguise in the Plays and Its Rationale for Hal, Prince of Wales

Disguise is forever present within the next two of Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays, and it operates very much within a world of deception[14], appearances and distrust which hardly saves anyone from falling prey to deceit. As Hotspur and Hal meet, the latter winning the day and sending the young Percy to an early grave, there is one word that resounds through the scene having been mouthed by several of the characters – "counterfeit." In his fight with the king, Douglas fears "another counterfeit" (*HIV*1, 5.4.34) having already killed Sir Walter Blount in error. Falstaff, having arisen after feigning his death in an altercation with Douglas, delivers a catechism on the same topic, claiming "I am no counterfeit" (5.4.114). He then proceeds to stab Hotspur fearing that "he would prove the better counterfeit" and suddenly revive (5.4.123). Shakespeare is propagating and repeatedly referring to the notion that what is made to look like the original is constructed for illegal or dishonest purposes. On an immediate level, it may be a comment on the decision of Falstaff to claim the death of Hotspur. On a wider level, it could well be a reference to the deposition of Richard by Bolingbroke, particularly as Douglas greets the king with "What art thou / That counterfeit'st the person of a king?" (5.4.26-27).

[14] Derek Cohen contends that deception has a wider role to play when considering Shakespeare's history plays. He feels deception is:

> [s]o deeply embedded in the practice of the monarchy . . . that the actors . . . kings and noblemen alike – do not themselves comprehend the extent to which they are involved in its convolutions. They write, record, and recall history with apparent sincerity, and yet their versions of the same past events are remarkably different (2002, 301).

On yet another level though, it could also be a reference to the behaviour of the new, virtuous warrior that is destined to accede the English throne, Hal, Prince of Wales. Hal, as I shall shortly outline, employs disguise in several ways. Firstly, there is a use of sartorial disguise which, despite involving Hal in the recording of his colleagues' discourses (which I shall comment on shortly), is specifically used to test (in Greenblatt's phrasing) his ability to contain the subversion which he helps to generate. By later revealing himself to those colleagues previously unaware of Hal's involvement because of that disguise, Hal then tries to contain that subversion by exercising his authority. The figure Hal mainly seeks to contain is of course, Sir Jack Falstaff, mentioned in my discussion of those critics opposed to the use of Greenblatt's framework in reading Shakespeare's history plays. And so through an exploration of Hal's use of sartorial disguise in *Henry IV Parts One and Two*, I will examine the conviction of Greenblatt in *Invisible Bullets* that Hal's image "involves as its positive condition the constant production of its own radical subversion and the powerful containment of that subversion" (1988, 41). Secondly, there is Hal's desire to disguise his true "fully mature" royal self" which will eventually reveal itself as fit for purpose for the accession of the throne. The form of this disguise is not dependent on Hal going undercover, and is a verbal disguise employed with the aim to record (again in Greenblatt's phrasing) the discourses of his subjects, to understand them better in readiness for his role as king. Such disguising is seen against the backdrop of Hal's redemptive strategy to convince his father, Bolingbroke, that as his son he can abandon his wayward tendencies exhibited in the East London taverns and assume the rightful qualities that future kingship demands. In abandoning those tendencies, Hal feels that he must also abandon his colleagues. In doing so, this confers in Hal, as I further agree with Greenblatt, a "conniving" (41) somewhat Machiavellian approach in his desire to seek redemption and eventually claim the crown.

Finally, I will assess whether Hal, in desiring to abandon his past life while acceding the throne, succeeds in letting go of disguise itself. As he undertakes his kingly role I will look at how Hal assumes the identity of being Henry V, to see if he, like his predecessor Richard II, attempts to augment a new disguise as the new monarch.

In terms of self-fashioning, as I will go on to illustrate throughout my analysis, Hal's ability to be at once the power that generates and then ultimately contains subversion, is demonstrative of a self fully able to exert the mode of improvisation into its behaviour. In fact, as I will now begin to show, Hal increasingly becomes a subject fully immersed in the variety of modes of behaviour,

fear and desire that ultimately qualify him as an adept sartorial and verbal disguiser. This naturally makes him yet another theatrical, kingly embodiment of a public persona who relishes role-playing while his private persona anxiously seeks self-content.

3.4.2 Hal's Use of Sartorial Disguises: Testing Subversion and Exercising Containment

Hal's participation in the Gads Hill robbery is important as it truly portrays a character in disguise. What is of significance, too, is Hal's initial reluctance to take part in the scheme only to then realise that such a disguise can actually help him test his ability to contain a subversive situation which he actually helps to generate. One of the colleagues befriending the Prince of Wales in East London, Edward (Ned) Poins, has some initial difficulty persuading Hal to participate in the Gad's Hill robbery, perhaps indicating the anxiety and mode of loathing the Prince feels at the prospect of indulging in such an exploit. Whatever Hal is verbally disguising here is counterpoised by Poins' ruse involving a cunning employment of sartorial disguise. In Poins' plan to rob the robbers themselves, this involves:

> POINS: Our vizards [which] we will change after we leave
> them; and sirrah, I have cases of buckram for the
> nonce, to inmask our noted outward garments. (1.2.169-171)

Hal is much taken with the scheme and finally, is happy to go along with it. Daniel Colvin emphasises the enjoyment with which Hal plays his parts, typified by that at Gads Hill; "Hal has demonstrated the ability to fashion himself in whatever disguise he wishes" (2007,53).[15] The

---

[15] Colvin, in "(Re)covering the Self: Hal and the Psychology of Disguise," discusses Greenblatt's self-fashioning in relationship to several Shakespearean characters, particularly Hal, and I believe his insights occasionally illuminate my own analysis. However, Colvin approaches the relationship of self-fashioning to disguise from the materialistic viewpoint, not exploring aspects of verbal disguise. In *Henry IV Part One*, Colvin sees that:

> clothing in general and the use of disguise in particular become significant matters, for they point toward not only the means by which Hal will attain the throne but also the fashioned character of Henry V (2007, 52).

However, in reaffirming his materialistic convictions, Colvin does concede there to be a link, as Greenblatt states, between self-fashioning and language:

> Because the imagery of clothing in the play is as much visual as it is verbal, what the audience *sees* in Hal is as important as what it hears from him. Thus, while Greenblatt is right in asserting that self-fashioning is "always, though not exclusively, in language," we need to recognize that drama is a visual form with visual metaphors. Such is the case with Hal's clothing (2007,53).

inspiration and persistence of Poins has seemed to arm his princely colleague with a useful strategy in the attempt to help solidify his authority in the challenges that lay ahead.

Hal, of course, has to complete his test, needing to reveal himself to his unsuspecting colleagues at Gads Hill to then attempt to exercise his authority and contain the subversion he helped generate. The target for this exercising of authority is Sir Jack Falstaff and this is attempted during their reconvening in Eastcheap, in Act 2, Scene 4. Falstaff re-appears in a state of dismay, expressing his concern that Hal had not been present at the robbery. Both Hal and Poins (privy to Hal's original disguise at Gads Hill) are highly amused as Falstaff retells the story of being robbed by the disguised robbers. In recounting the events, Falstaff fabricates them – the robbers in buckram suits soon becomes eleven and all dispatched at the gallant's hand. Hal is so incensed at the depth of Falstaff's lies that he reactivates his mode of loathing:

> PRINCE: These lies are like their father that begets them,
> gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou clay-
> brained guts, thou knotty-pated fool, thou whoreson
> obscene, greasy tallow-catch. (2.4.218-221)

Falstaff, himself angered at Hal's continual abuse of him, offers his own mode of loathing, calling the prince a range of names from "dried neat's tongue" to "standing tuck" (240-241). Hal then attempts to reassert his authority and contain Falstaff with "Well, breathe awhile" (242). And so, the prince proceeds to tell the story behind his sartorial disguising and the events as they really unfolded at Gads Hill. Falstaff denies that he, "[t]he lion" would never "touch the true prince" (263). It is debatable, recalling those critics I earlier mentioned in this chapter, whether Hal's test has worked and if Falstaff has in any way been contained by the authority of the Prince here. What is significant is that Hal does not refrain from adopting this means of sartorial disguising within this cycle of plays, and he seizes upon other opportunities to test the effectiveness of the exercising of his power.

In *Henry IV Part Two,* Hal is again together with Poins in Act 2, Scene 2 and it is here that the scheme for another sartorial disguise takes shape. Hal reports that his father is sick and in doing so, reveals that his redemptive acts have perhaps not endeared him to his father. He is nonetheless grateful for the less than savoury company (returning to his mode of loathing) he is keeping while he deals with the situation:

> PRINCE: By this hand, thou thinkest me as far in the devil's

> book as thou and Falstaff for obduracy and persis-
> tency. Let the end try the man. But I tell thee, my
> heart bleeds inwardly that my father is so sick; and
> keeping such vile company as thou art hath in reason
> taken from me all ostentation of sorrow. (2.2.43-49)

Bardolph and Falstaff's page come to see them and present Hal with a letter from Falstaff. Where Falstaff had once thought Hal to be "dog" (*HIV1*, 3.3.86) Hal is now quite happy to proclaim the reverse, confident that he is able to run rings around his older companion and exercise the authority he believes he possesses:

> PRINCE: I do allow this wen to be as familiar with me as
> my dog, and he holds his place, for look you how
> he writes – *[Reads]* 'John Falstaff, knight.' (2.2.101-103)

The contents of the letter, particularly Falstaff's belief that Hal will marry Poins' sister Nell, are discredited by Hal and Poins. In turn they plan to pay Sir Jack a visit in Eastcheap to exercise their revenge.

In plotting their revenge, Hal seeks recourse to the mode of sartorial disguise, and turns again to the logistical expertise of Poins who had served him so well at Gad's Hill. Poins devises a cunning plan to enter Falstaff's favoured drinking tavern in "two leathern jerkins and aprons and wait upon him at his tables as drawers" (2.2.164-165). Hal is initially alarmed by the demotion in social rank in taking on his latest sartorial disguise, but he eventually sees reason in it, just as he did with the Gads Hill plan, as "the purpose must weigh with the folly" (169).

Two scenes later we see Hal and Poins poised to yet again surprise and then curtail the subversive actions of Falstaff as they overhear a discussion between Falstaff and Doll Tearsheet. The topic is the relationship between the two men that are overhearing the discussion. The less than complimentary opinions which ensue from the old knight somewhat serve to strengthen Hal's mode of loathing as he responds: "Would not this nave of a wheel have his ears cut / off?" (2.4.254) and this is further emphasised in "[l]ook whe'er the withered elder hath not his poll / clawed like a parrot" (256-257). As the pair reveal themselves from their latest sartorial disguises, we are reminded that Hal is trying to exert his authority, believing he can contain the subversive thoughts and practises of Falstaff:

> PRINCE: I come to draw you out by the ears.
> [. . .]

PRINCE:	I shall drive you to then confess the wilful abuse, And then I know how to handle you.
FALSTAFF:	No abuse, Hal, o' mine honour, no abuse.
PRINCE:	Not? – to dispraise me, and call me pantler, and Bread-chipper […]? (2.4.308-312)

Soon, the revelries and amusements are themselves curtailed by the arrival of Peto, who informs Hal of a commission arriving at Westminster. This immediately returns Hal into his mode of loathing, probably because he feels that he has been unable to fully exercise his authority over Falstaff, proclaiming: "I feel much to blame, / So idly to profane the precious time" (358-359). What's more, the mode of darkness engulfs the fears and desires of Hal, the reference to a "tempest of commotion . . . [b]orne with black vapour [which] doth begin to melt and drop upon our bare unarmed heads" (360-362). Hal knows that he has to return to playing the verbal disguise of his true "fully mature" royal self, and his comment to "[g]ive me my sword and cloak" (363) symbolises the need of the inner-self to seek protection in his royal vestige.

3.4.3 Hal's Disguising of a True "fully mature" Royal Self

Hal's antics in East London have made his father, Henry Bolingbroke, somewhat concerned about the plight of his son. We recall from R*ichard II* that the king had heard of Hal being among "unrestrained loose companions" in Eastcheap (5.3.7). In the previous play, the king's blossoming admiration for Harry Percy (Hotspur), the son of Northumberland, had also been established and in *Henry IV Part One*, Bolingbroke expresses his desire to adopt Hotspur as a future king instead of his biological, wayward offspring:

KING:	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. (1.1.77-85)

In the father's eyes, the prodigal rises as the son falls but, it is his wastrel, Hal, who proves to be better favoured by Fortune. Furthermore, it is Hal who Stephen Greenblatt believes provides the means to solidify authority, to reclaim it from an enfeebled and self-undermining state (1988,40-

41). Before I analyse how Hal goes about this, it is important to briefly outline the ineffectiveness of Bolingbroke's reign implied in Greenblatt's comment because it emphasizes the considerable task that his son needs to undertake to actually restore authority to the crown. We are reminded, as Catherine Belsey points out, that Bolingbroke's victory "is an effect of force, not legality" (1991, 38). Such a forceful effect is felt in his employment of language, one that conveys, according to Neema Parvini, a more systematic, indeed 'business-like' approach to power than his predecessor Richard II, where "leadership is driven more by physical action than by words" (2012b,191).

KING: Our holy purpose is to Jerusalem.
Cousin, on Wednesday next our Council we
Will hold at Windsor. So inform the Lords.
But come yourself with speed to us again.
For more is to be said and to be done
Than out of anger can be uttered. (1.2.99-106)

The often poetical impetus of Richard is absent from this king's discourse and moreover, as Parvini adds, language has become "drained of its ideological significance, because it is no longer in the service of power" (2012b,193). To achieve the reverse situation, to imbue language with that ideological significance, to return it to the service of power, there has to be a way for a king to acquire an affinity with the discourses of his subjects in order to better understand his subjects and retain power. This is where Hal steps in, and even at the beginning of the play, we witness him in the throes of recording those discourses before the audience is informed why is he doing so.

We are greeted with the arrival of the Prince and Falstaff in Act 1, Scene 2 in Eastcheap, the backdrop from within which Hal begins to acquire the affinity and understanding with those subjects he will eventually rule. Immediately, we are drawn to Hal's less than savoury compliments directed to his older companion:

PRINCE: Thou art so fat-witted with drinking of old sack,
[. . .]
What a devil
hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless hours
were cups of sack, and minutes capons, and clocks the
tongues of bawds, and dials the signs of leaping-houses,
and the blessed sun himself a fair hot wench in flame-
colored taffeta, I see no reason why thou shouldst be so
superfluous to demand the time of the day. (1.2.2-11)

Hal is beginning to outline the disguising of his true, "fully mature" royal self, and while holding onto the need for political survival (enabling him to solidify his authority) he contemplates the inner-workings of a self-fashioning subject in employing his mode of mockery on his companion. Further still, there are hints in this discourse of a mode of loathing or hatred, a contempt even for the idle life spent in Eastcheap, which Hal also uses in the desire to solidify his authority by openly rejecting it. And so, all these modes seem to work in support of Hal exercising his power. However, what is equally important to do is consider how these modes support Hal in achieving his personal motivations which, hitherto, have remained disguised.

What is most significant in this scene is that audience is now allowed to gain access and share the most intimate thoughts of a royal subject, who delivers the outline of his redemptive strategy in the form of soliloquy. As Richard II was able to do, Hal is also able to share his intimate thoughts with the audience, revealing his estrangement (whether real or feigned). In addition, we see an identification between the two protagonists as role-players, the actor who would be king (Hal) and the former actor king (Richard). One also wonders whether Poins' powers of persuasion have left an indelible mark on Hal as he delivers his Machiavellian plan, a strategy of deception involving his hitherto feigned discourse and modes of behaviour. As a listener, we are now aware of a subject fully in the grip of the mode of improvisation as Hal prepares to reveal his plan to disguise his true, wholly developed royal self, recording the discourses of his subjects, to understand them better in readiness for his role as king. The prince begins to paint the fictional image of a role he wishes to adopt within the realm of his self-fashioning:

> PRINCE: I know you all and will uphold
> The unyoked humour of your idleness.
> Yet herein will I imitate the sun. (1.2.185-187)

Hal dextrously employs a use of wordplay in 'sun' – it could be either a referent to the symbol of royalty or to his filial relationship to his father.[16] Regardless of which definition we could reference, Hal clearly believes his time in Eastcheap and the role he plays there (whether to mimic the role of royal subject or son to the father) is about to be cast away – a clear indication of a self-fashioning subject who is seeking a reformation of his self by delving into and them emerging from a

[16] As Chris Fitter comments, Hal's reference to "upholding" the "unyoked humour of your idleness" is itself highly subversive. This is due to the passing of a 1603 act in Parliament, she adds, where it became prohibited to sit and drink for more than one hour, so thereby counteracting the increasing tendency of "masterless men" to congregate in the city (quoted in Longstaffe, 2017, 109).

forbidden, prohibited realm. This prohibited realm is of course, Eastcheap itself and Hal expresses his mode of loathing of its taverns in the desire to seek his own reformation:

PRINCE: Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up the 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. (1.2.188-193)

Hal then later emphasises the nature of deception in his strategy, to discard his "loose behaviour" (198) and in doing so, he quite clearly believes that this will show "By how much better than my word I am" (200). So, like his father, a policy of virtue achieved in action is what matters. Curiously, too, this line seems to indicate, like his father's, the demotion of the role of language in the exercise of ideology. Therefore, considering how Hal is more than capable of utilising his mode of rhetoric in achieving his political and personal aspirations, this line evidences his own essential ambiguities regarding the usefulness of language.

As his soliloquy concludes, we must not forget that like Richard, his lines clearly express the need for a calculated distance between his private and public persona, extant in the mode of inwardness. In this soliloquy we have witnessed how self-fashioning has taken hold of inwardness to embolden the latter's theatrical power.[17] And so at the culmination of the speech we witness the histrionic image of the final redemption involving a careful calculation at its centre of execution:

PRINCE: And, like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend to make offense a skill,
Redeeming time when men think least I will. (1.2.202-207) [18]

Like Richard II, Hal invests greatly into his theatrical performance, boldly asserting his claim that he can at once cause offence and yet have the power to redeem himself at any time of his choosing and to be the architect of the subversion and its containment. In the following Act of the play, we

[17] Greenblatt also noted that one of power's essential modes lies in its theatricality and here, Hal is very much performing his part within the scheme of power (1988,46).
[18] When thinking about the religious codes which Hal openly submits to, it is worth considering Robert Hornback's interpretation, where he detects what he feels to be "Calvinist-inspired ideology" at the heart of Hal's reformation, pointing to what he sees as "an echo of St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians: 'Take hede therefore that ye walk circumspectly, not as fooles but as wise,] Redeeming the time; for the days are evil' (5:15-16)" (quoted in Longstaffe, 2011, 137).

witness yet another of Hal's attempts to be the supplier and container of subversion - Hal's testing of Falstaff, not involving sartorial disguise this time but very much in line with his disguising of his true, wholly developed royal self who is seeking to also record and appropriate the discourse of his subjects.

In Act 2 Scene 4, shortly after revealing his part in the Gads Hill robbery, Hal plays out an extraordinary scene with Falstaff intended to amuse themselves, becoming also largely comedic to the audience.[19] Falstaff requests that the two "practice" the scene when the prince meets his father and immediately, Hal attempts to continue testing his exercising of authority by insisting he play himself and Falstaff, the king. Immediately, Falstaff chooses to mock those kingly objects so bound up in their symbolic resonance of a divine, ruling monarch:

> FALSTAFF: This chair shall be my state,
> this dagger my scepter, and this cushion my crown. (2.4.368-369)

The mockery of objects finds its way into discourse as the exchanges between the two clearly run in opposition to the tone of courtly rhetoric.[20] Falstaff (as the king) advises Hal to retain the services of his older companion and the charge of "thou naughty varlet" (419) prompts Hal to switch roles in the play. Once the roles are reversed, Hal (as the king) uses the play role to continue his loathing of Falstaff:

> PRINCE: There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of an old fat
> man. A tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou
> converse with that trunk of humors, that bolting-
> hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies,
> that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloakbag of
> guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in
> his belly, that reverend Vice, that gray iniquity, that
> father ruffian, that vanity in years? (2.4.435-442)

The scene is not only showcasing Hal's desire to play and switch roles but also, it foregrounds something which is at the heart of his self-fashioning, bearing a similar characteristic to that in

[19] In acting out this play extempore, we become aware of its own subversiveness as a dramatic form, especially considering its relation to the context of contemporary Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. As Paul A. Gottschalk comments, that "[w]hat makes this skit unusual among Elizabethan and Jacobean plays within plays is precisely that it is a 'play extempore': both characters create their role as they go along" (quoted in Bevington, D. Ed. 2015, 342).

[20] Alison Findlay remarks on this particularly subversive scene, where:

> Falstaff's selection of his crown, dagger, and cup of sack parodically mimic the crown and chalice of St. Edward, still used in Tudor and Stuart royal processions to invest the monarch with the full sacred authority borne by monarchs of a bygone age" (quoted in Longstaffe, 2017, 89).

King Richard. Like the former king, Hal is already rehearsing and anticipating the moment when he can discard disguise. As Richard rehearsed his deposition and eventual farewell to his disguise as the anointed monarch, so Hal rehearses the moments leading up to his accession and his desire to discard his disguise of his true, wholly developed royal self. In attempting to come to grips with these moments, he will have to discard his loyal companions and his previous wayward tendencies. And so, Hal continues to wield his improvisational mode in the play extempore – key to his maintenance of power – over his companion, accusing Sir Jack of being a "villainous, abominable leader of youth" (450). Again, Falstaff musters a case for upholding his virtue and then delivers a plea for retaining his services, fueled this time by a greater anxiety:

> FALSTAFF: But to say I know more harm in him than in
> myself were to say more than I know. That he is old, the
> more the pity; his white hairs do witness it. But that he
> is, saving your reverence, a whoremaster, that I utterly
> deny.
> […]
> No my good Lord,
> banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins, but for sweet
> Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff,
> valiant Jack Falstaff, […] banish not him thy Harry's
> company. […] Banish
> plump Jack, and banish all the world. (2.4.454-467)

Later, Hal the role-player supreme, responds in a chilling way, overwhelmingly reminding us of one of the goals of his redemptive strategy, to throw off the life of Eastcheap and its companions so that he can be free to assume the role of regal son and heir to the throne:

> PRINCE: I do; I will. (2.4.468)

In a dramatic conclusion, Hal arrives at the very moment where he can begin to see beyond his current disguise and is now beginning to conceive of a new identity as a future monarch. What shape or form that identity consists of is at that moment unclear but we are soon to be presented with an early sketch or outline of Hal's next role during the meeting with his father in Act 3 Scene 2.

During this meeting, Hal again promises to reveal his redemptive strategy, no longer aiming to deceive his own father, to "Quit all offences with as clear excuse" (3.2.20). Nonetheless, there follows a stern lecture administered to the son culminating in Bolingbroke's conviction that, "thou

hast lost they princely privilege / With vile participation" (3.2 85-87). The crime is heinous, and Hal must come up with the means to complete his strategy of redemption. However, it is the king himself who clearly offers his son that means – the opportunity to fight with him in a bid to defeat Harry Percy (Hotspur) who has sided with the Earl of Douglas in undermining the peace and stability in the kingdom. Hal's eagerness to accept the challenge is clearly wedded to his need for redemption, but in doing so, he reveals the identifying characteristics of the next role he wishes to play:

> PRINCE: I will redeem all this on Percy's head,
> And, in the closing of some glorious day,
> Be bold to tell you that I am your son,
> When I will wear a garment all of blood
> And stain my favors in a bloody mask,
> Which, washed away, shall scour my shame with it. (3.2.132-137)

Hal talks of needing to wear garments and masks and envisages redemption through the virtuous action of bloody war as the blood washes away, taking with it previously accumulated sins. In this moment, Hal anticipates entering yet another role, as a virtuous warrior and to equip him in it, we also become witness to the emergence of the modes of aggression and violence which we later see become particularly prevalent during his leadership as Henry V. The image of Hotspur presents itself to him and Hal seeks to emulate his foe with a desire to firstly adopt, then take over the role. Hal's references to the young Percy range from "This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight" (140) to a man capable of "glorious deeds" (148).[21] Such is the prevalence and insistence for self-fashioning in Hal, and his need to adopt those verbal (and sometimes sartorial) disguises, that you begin to conclude that he cannot possibly live without it, that self-fashioning lies at the very essence of Hal's being. Daniel Colvin also arrives at a similar viewpoint, claiming:

---

[21] Hal reiterates his praise and noble image of Hotspur later in Act 5 and again concludes that he should look to emulate, adopt and take over this image as it has made him realise his shortcomings regarding his princely role:

> PRINCE: I do not think a braver gentleman,
> More active-valiant, or more valiant-young,
> More daring or more bold, is now alive
> To grace this latter age with noble deeds.
> For my part, I may speak it to my shame,
> I have a truant been to chivalry,
> And so I hear he doth account me too. (5.1.89-95)

> the pattern of disguise presented in the play subverts the audience's ability to believe in an essential identity in Hal. Strip off all his layers of disguise, of self-fashioning[22], and there would be no Hal. (2007,54)

And so we await in anticipation of Hal's latest incarnation of his self-fashioning at the Battle of Shrewsbury, expecting there to be clear evidence of the virtuous warrior that the prince had pledged to become. When Hotspur asks about Hal's whereabouts:

> HOTSPUR: Where is his son,
> The nimble-footed madcap Prince of Wales? (4.1.93-94)

Vernon replies, providing us with at least some exterior proof of a reformed prince vigorously about to enter battle:

> VERNON: All furnish'd, all in arms;
> All plumm'd like estridges, that with the wind
> Bated like eagles having lately bath'd,
> Glittering in golden coats like images. (4.1.97-100)

When Hal reappears in Act 5, we are drawn to the ease and effectiveness with which he assumes the role of a valiant soldier, promising to take on Hotspur "in a single fight" (5.1.100) and urging Falstaff to fight too, saying that it is about time he "owest God a death" (126). As the battle enters its climax, Hal intervenes between the king and Douglas, sending the Earl away with his calling card; "It is the Prince of Wales that threatens thee, / Who never promiseth but he means to pay" (5.4.41-42). He reiterates his father's policy of virtue in action to which the king warmly responds by uttering the words that Hal has long been waiting for:

> KING: Thou hast redeemed thy lost opinion
> And showed thou mak'st some tender of my life
> In this fair rescue thou hast brought me. (5.4.47-49)

Not only is redemption to his lost reputation realised but also, it is compelling to think of Hal operating from within the throes of self-fashioning here and him anticipating, rehearsing the

[22] As I stated on page 152, Colvin refers to self-fashioning in connection with Greenblattian criticism (2007, 53). While agreeing with Greenblatt that self-fashioning resides mostly in language, Colvin argues for a wider definition of the term. Instead, without exploring aspects of verbal disguise in the plays, he contends that self-fashioning should account for visual images and metaphors that are exemplified in Hal's choice of costume (53). Elsewhere, Colvin expresses agreement with Greenblatt's conception of "representational exchanges." Colvin believes they offer a useful means of explaining how traditional, well-known drama could provide "a conceptual and dramatic framework for Shakespeare's plays, specifically those dealing with didactic history" (50).

monarch's role that he will eventually assume. Is the initial template of the valiant warrior he is sketching here going to be incorporated within his role as monarch? In addition, with his intent to both anticipate and rehearse his new identity, how much of it will still summon the deceptive practices that have been used to facilitate his redemptive strategy, utilising the modes of improvisation and rhetoric, complete, of course, with their sartorial and verbal disguises? During my remaining analysis of the second tetralogy, I will aim to answer these questions as I begin my analysis of Hal's use of disguise within his accession to power in *Henry IV Part 2*.

At the start of *Henry IV Part 2,* Hal is, of course, still very much a king in waiting although it is imperative to consider where Hal's penchant for deception, roleplaying and disguise will take him as his accession approaches. In assessing the impending discarding of Hal's disguise of his true, wholly developed royal self, I will analyse whether he manages to complete an irrevocable separation from his previous identity both prior to and after claiming the crown. Therefore, I will assess to what extent Hal is seen to retain those traits of deception, role-playing and disguise once his intended, mature royal self emerges. As we saw at the end of the first play, the formulation of the warrior disguise is also taking shape as Hal attempts to emulate, adopt and assume Hotspur's role, and it is seen that within the conception of this disguise resides a frequent recourse to the modes of violence and aggression. As he is about to accede to the throne, to power, I will also consider the extent to which Hal (as a subject fully held within the sway of self-fashioning) is continuing to rehearse and anticipate this new identity, to accept it as fit for purpose before he can discard this disguise of his true "fully mature" royal self. Furthermore, in the anticipation of the ending of this disguise we can only assume, viewing the theatricality imbedded within Hal as a self-fashioning subject, that this unmasking will undeniably be a dramatically conceived one.

Those uncertainties which surround the construction of Hal's current and future identities (both within his own and the audiences' minds) are reflected in the transitional mood between the two parts of *Henry IV*. The conclusion of *Part 1* highlights the uncertain mood of the King and his nation following the Battle of Shrewsbury.

> KING: How bloodily the sun begins to peer
> Above yon bulky hill. The day looks pale.
> At his distemperature. (*HIV1*, 5.1.1-3)

Stephen Greenblatt sees that there is now one political system, one of lies and sentiments "where the illegitimacy of legitimate authority is repeatedly demonstrated" (1988,55). The theme of

honour, often referred to in Part 1, is dead, he adds. The comedy and warmth in Eastcheap has gone and no longer "a subversive alternative to rebellion" (1988,47). Much of that comedy was of course alive in Sir Jack Falstaff and *Part Two* finds him alone, nursing an attack of gout.[23] The Chief Justice comes to tell Falstaff that his exploits in battle have somewhat restored his reputation after the aftermath of the Gad's Hill robbery where the older knight's actions are deemed to have mislead the Prince. Falstaff turns the tables on the Chief Justice's accusation and claims that it is he who has the power to exercise authority over Hal, not vice versa:

> FALSTAFF: The young prince hath misled me. I am the fellow
> with the great belly, and he my dog. (1.2.144-145)

Greenblatt believes Hal to be less calculating in *Part 2* (1988,48) as there is no need, he adds, for him to return to his redemptive strategy which he had already revealed in pledging allegiance to his father. However, I believe that there is still considerable evidence of Hal adopting the calculating side of his character in this play. This is because he has not yet dismissed his company in Eastcheap and so completely "shaken off the loose behaviour" he had promised in *Part One*. The prince is still a king in waiting and feels he must continue his deception and manipulation of his companions, the disguise of his true, wholly developed royal self, until accession to the throne. We, the audience, are now waiting for the moment when Hal is going to discard his disguise, and in doing so, whether it is to be carried out prior to or only proceeding his father's death.

Hal first appears in this play with Poins in Act 2 Scene 2, containing their sartorial disguise as drawers that I have already commented on. The scene is also significant as it immediately addresses, as A.R. Humphreys sees, the melancholy Hal feels as he longs for his father's death (1981,49). The line "I am exceeding weary" (2.2.1) on the one hand indeed indicates an impatient longing to be king, to become that new identity he so craves. However, Hal knows that he is growing tired of the need to continue his deception of his colleagues in Eastcheap which he feels has to proceed for a little longer yet in order to locate the right moment to discard the disguise of his self. The entrepreneurial and perceptive Poins is also becoming aware that Hal (who brags about his prince-like "appetite" (2.2.9)), is somewhat of "a most princely hypocrite" (2.2.50) for

[23] Roy Battenhouse plausibly argues that Falstaff's talk of illness and his references to tailoring during his emergence in *Part 2*, are both motifs which "now characterize the drift of England's history and will do so throughout the play's subsequent action" (1975, 44). Derek Cohen sees the reference to illness in line with "[a] kind of ill temper [which] pervades the play: each of the chief characters seems to anticipate impediment and conflict, to which expectation they respond in advance with quick and ready aggression" (2002, 308).

continuing to keep both his and Falstaff's company. We are prevented in this scene from any further exploration of Poins's intuition due to the arrival of Bardolph and Page and the eventual playing out of the sartorial disguise on Falstaff, such an intervention preventing any potential investigation of deception on Hal's part. Even at this stage, any potential threat to Hal's authority is seemingly curtailed by intervening events.

Act 3 sees the king alone, turning to soliloquy and cursing a lack of sleep which has resulted from the guilt associated with his prior usurpation of the throne. This passage reveals his estrangement from the assured, kingly rule that Hal, his son, is trying to reclaim:

> KING: Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
> To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
> And in the calmest and most stillest night,
> With all appliances and means to boot,
> Deny it to a king? Then happy hour, lie down!
> Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown. (3.1.26-31)

As Neema Parvini feels, this king is also made to suffer because he lacks a discourse of domination, one that Richard II appeared to command before his downfall (2012b,203). The king, as he also soon admits, is clearly recoiling because he believes that Richard's own prophecy about Northumberland is coming true, that the "'Time will come, that foul sin, gathering head, / Shall break into corruption'" (76-77). It is clear, too, that the king is referring to his son, that he fears that the heir to the throne will continue to entertain his retinue of corrupt and base colleagues within the king's court. It seems that even Hal's own father is yet to be remotely convinced that his offspring can truly help prevent the fulfilment of Richard's prophecy.

Indeed, when the king returns in Act 4 Scene 4 and is accompanied in Westminster by Hal's brothers, the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, the king's concerns about Hal are reignited when Clarence informs the king that Hal is dining in London with "Poins, and his other continual followers" (4.4.53). The seemingly redeeming exploits of Shrewsbury have proved somewhat premature and now, Bolingbroke expresses concern on the potential state of rule that his son could exercise as king:

> KING: 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. (4.4.60-64)

Also, among the king's party is Warwick, who shares none of the king's fears about Hal. He tries to convince the king that Hal is enacting his own plan of deception and does indeed intend to cast away his London retinue. Here, in Warwick's words, we recall the words of the prince's earlier soliloquy, outlining his need for deception with his redemptive strategy:

> WARWICK: My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite.
> The Prince but studies his companions
> Like a strange tongue, wherein to gain the language […]
> The Prince will, in the perfectness of time.
> Cast off his followers. (4.4.67-75)

Warwick outlines to the audience the purposeful intent of Hal's scheme to record the language of his companions in the attempt to better understand his subjects that, one day, he will exercise rule over. He also makes clear reference to the fact that there will be a redemption, an abandoning of his colleagues. The audience (and Hal) are of course waiting for the moment when this can transpire.

Witnessing the dying king there is a heightening of the expectation that Hal's full redemption is nearing and with it, the imminent discarding of the disguise of his true "fully mature" royal self. Hal returns to soliloquy, helping to clarify his own estrangement from his father while at the same time focusing the designs on the crown that he sees lying by the king's side. As Hal picks up the crown, Greenblatt contends that Hal is seen to be "see merging his body into 'the great body of our state'" (1988,55):

> PRINCE: My due from thee is the imperial crown,
> Which, as immediate from thy place and blood,
> Derives itself to me. [Putting it on his head] Lo where it sits,
> Which God shall guard; and put the world's whole strength
> Into one giant arm. (4.5.40-44)

Where Richard had felt departure from God, Hal experiences by wearing the crown a sense of bonding with his divine protector, arming him with the strength and authority needed to rule, providing us with a glimpse of the divine protections that Henry V will invoke. The king awakes to find the crown gone and learns that Hal, watching his father while asleep, had taken it. The king quickly returns to berating his son for abusing the "sweetness" of paternal care and producing from this a "bitterness" which "[y]ields his engrossments to the ending father" (4.5.79).

Hal eventually returns and witnesses his father's abdication of the throne, one that it somewhat markedly different, almost the antithesis to the theatricality and poetry of Richard's self 'un-kinging'. One cannot help but feel, as Neema Parvini suggests, that the King has no control over language, no ear for the poetical forces of language which have failed him in his struggle to exercise rule (2012b,203).

> KING: 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 –
> Henry the Fifth is crown'd! (4.5.116-119)

At this moment, his father confirms the title of Hal's new role, Henry the Fifth, one that his son had been anticipating and rehearsing for so long both in the taverns and on the battlefield. Despite his father's iterated concerns that his son's rule will end in chaos, "What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?" (135), Hal in fact stages a show of loyalty in trying to appease and then redeem himself to his father. His redemption centres on the belief that he thought the king had been dead already, and that he took the crown to – somewhat theatrically – wrestle with it as a murderer of his father. Subsequently, there are a lot of his tears in this scene: most of it reported off-stage. The length of appeasement is considerable, and one wonders why this is the case, with Hal having privately confessed to Poins "let the end try the man." Perhaps this lengthy appeal is masking the anxiety of Hal who desperately desires, as the quintessential self-fashioning subject, to emancipate himself from what he also thinks is the unacceptable image of a prince soon to be king. Aside from considering the magnitude of Hal's speech, the import of it seems to warm the king to his son once more as he proceeds to give "the very latest counsel / That ever I shall breathe" (182-183).

As the play draws to a close, the newly-crowned King is quick to execute the final stage in his redemptive strategy and end his deceptive behaviour – to rid himself of his former retinue, which in the manner typical of self-fashioning subject, is performed in a dramatic fashion through his rejection of Falstaff, one prophesied, as we saw, at the end of the Eastcheap extempore play. Falstaff is stood near Westminster Abbey, waiting for the newly-crowned king's arrival, expectant at getting a royal nod of approval. However, Hal is intent on sealing Falstaff's fate, charging his discourse with the now customary mode of loathing that he has directed at his former companion throughout:

KING: I know thee not, old man. Fall to thy prayers.
How ill white hairs becomes a fool and jester.
I have long dreamt of such a kind of man,
So surfeit-swelled, so old, and so profane;
But being awaked, I do despise my dream.
Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace;
Leave gormandizing. Know the grave doth gape
For thee thrice wider than for other men.
[…]
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.
When thou dost hear I am as I have been,
[…]
Till then I banish thee, on pain of death. (5.5.47-63)

The resulting effect of Hal's lines is nonetheless as chilling as those he uttered during the soliloquy outlining his plan of redemption. We learn that Hal has kept his pledge to redeem time when men least think he would. Stephen Greenblatt feels, perhaps as the audience does, "a frustration at the harshness of the play's end" (1988,55-56). And yet, he adds, this frustration "confirms a carefully plotted official strategy whereby subversive perceptions are at once produced and contained" (56). So, in these final moments perhaps Falstaff is no more than Hal's dog after all. In banishing Falstaff, he has seemingly parted with his desire for deceptive behaviour, claiming to have turned away from his "former self.", turning his back on the company of others (notably Poins) who were often pleased to aid and comfort the prince, with whom Hal had formed a genuine bond of friendship. Considering the import of what Hal means by this rejection of his former self, we need to read this line within the context of Hal as a self-fashioning subject. In rejecting one identity, it means, as we saw with Edgar in King Lear, the desire to imagine, anticipate and rehearse new fictive identities in which to locate the self. Hal is not rejecting disguise as he has already begun to create and augment a new one in the form of his own brand of kingship. It will be my intention to analyse how Hal, as Henry V, augments this disguise in the following section in this chapter.

As the action moves into the final play of the second tetralogy, it is important to reassess the questions I posed at the start of my analysis to *Henry IV Part Two* as this has a significant bearing regarding Hal's seeming rejection of deception, disguise and role-playing at this play's conclusion. As I have just contended, as Hal is a self-fashioning subject, there is evident in the new king, a desire to discard one identity but only to embrace another. So, while there appears to have been an irrevocable separation from his previous identity as a wayward and unfavoured heir to the throne, Hal is soon eager to immerse his inner-self within his new fictive identity of Henry V. I

will go onto contend in my analysis of Hal as Henry V that he very much retains those traits of deception, role-playing and disguise that are imbedded within the conception of his mature royal self that he desired to publicly reveal. It is my view that he is already trying to augment a new disguise of kingship, a brand of which he uses to arm himself with its own form of protections, some similar and dissimilar to those Richard II had used. Within this disguise he will use the characteristics of the warrior disguise with which Hal has attempted to emulate, adopt and assume Hotspur's role. Additionally, I will content that Henry V's augmentation of disguise utilises a use of rhetoric which calls upon his men to fight for the king's (and God's) cause. However, this is often counterbalanced by the frequent emergence of the modes of aggression and violence into his discourse, threatening to compromise Hal's political ambitions. As we saw in *Henry IV Part Two*, Hal continued to use his time in Eastcheap to continually rehearse and anticipate this new identity as king, to continue testing and recording those discourses of the taverns until the moment when he could discard this disguise of his true "fully mature" royal self. Furthermore, it was proved that the eventual ending of this disguise contained the theatricality so typical of Hal as a self-fashioning subject, that this unmasking was undeniably, a dramatically conceived one.

3.5 *Henry V* – The (Re)institution of Royal Disguise

The stage is set in *Henry V* for Hal to fully immerse himself within his new fictive identity as king. In my analysis of the play, I will investigate the extent to which Hal has retained the key tenets so essential to self-fashioning and to what extent he will continue to incorporate his penchant for deception, role-playing and disguise in his new role. Ultimately, I will uphold the contention (as I did during my analysis of Richard II), that Shakespeare's subversion consists in showing kingship as a form of disguise. In turn, I will look at three ways that I believe Hal employs to help augment his disguise as a monarch. The first, is the recurring use of sartorial disguise that he still uses in the need to test the subversion of and then record the discourses of his subjects, in the desire to know those subjects better. The second, is the need to augment a disguise as a divinely sanctioned monarch in response to those crises and anxieties that Hal will experience in enacting his reign. I will look at how he will augment this disguise of kingship previously witnessed in Richard II prior to his deposition and analyse how it appears similar and dissimilar to that of his predecessor. Will there also be a frequent recourse to ritualism, an employment of those the divine protections once

favoured by Richard II? In augmenting this disguise as king, I will finally focus on the form of disguise that Hal employs the most in this play; a disguise of a warrior in the employment of a use of rhetoric which calls upon his men to fight for the king's (and God's) cause. However, this is often counterbalanced (and indeed superseded) by the frequent emergence of the modes of aggression and violence into his discourse, threatening to compromise Hal's political ambitions.

3.5.1 A Return to Sartorial Disguise – Testing and Recording of the King's Subjects

The final act of *Henry IV Part Two* witnessed Hal's claim that he had finally turned away from his former self. Whatever self it is that Hal had rejected, it is clear that in *Henry V* he retains the deceptive means of sartorial disguise from these plays with the desire to get to know his subjects better. Act 4 sees Hal markedly concerned about the condition of his soldiers and devises a solution to rally their spirits which is in full-keeping with his tried and often tested mode of improvisation. In a bid to instil his beleaguered men, he desires to conceal his outward identity as he wishes to seek a truer interaction with them. In opting for sartorial disguise once more, he borrows the cloak of Sir Thomas Erpingham in his ploy to gauge the mood of his soldiers. Hal is keen for Erpingham not to accompany him on his mission as he fears Sir Thomas would discover the subversiveness behind the king's actions and jeopardise his plan – he deflects his colleague from his path by saying "I and my bosom must debate awhile, / And then I would no other company" (4.1.31-32). Company, of course, is what Hal seeks and soon he plays on the potential ironic import of his new disguise as he greets Pistol that he is "a friend" (36). We know that Hal, like Richard, relishes his chance to play new roles and he is quick to provide a name to his latest fictive creation, "Harry le Roy" (49). His disguise, like Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*, enables Hal to carry out surveillance on his men, to gauge opinions about his own rule and others serving under him – Pistol calls the king a "lovely bully" (48) and later, Hal is impressed with Fluellen who offers calming advice to Gower on the eve of the battle. He then encounters Bates and Williams, again greeting them in the manner he did Pistol. His reply to Williams that he serves "[u]nder Sir Thomas Erpingham" (95) is again evidence of clever wordplay, an allusion to the sartorial disguise he is playing under the borrowed cloak. Hal then proceeds to deliver his opinion of himself, that:

KING: I think the King is but a man, as I am:
The violet smells to him as it doth to me; the element
Shows to him as it doth to me; all his senses have but

Human conditions. (4.1.102-105)

Perhaps, as Neema Parvini states, this proves Hal is human after all (2012b,177) and reminds us of the self-awareness that Richard II began to show in captivity. Regardless of any attribution to his humane perceptions, there remains the overwhelming impression of Hal, an incognito figure, probing and manipulating his soldiers. He imparts to the soldiers that the King "would not wish himself anywhere but where he is" (119-120) – a telling comment considered that he is currently in disguise, the admission that in the realm of disguise and self-fashioning he finds his inner-self to be most truly located.

He continues in his attempts to win over the soldiers, adding that "I could not die anywhere so / Contented as in the King's company" (4.1.126-127). But as Greenblatt sees, Hal's continuing explanations in this scene soon become conflicting, casting "long shadows over the king himself" (1988,61). The moment of contradiction is borne, Greenblatt adds, from the enquiry of Bates and Williams to establish whether the king is responsible for the death of his soldiers. Hal replies by offering one explanation:

KING: [. . .] the King is not bound to answer the particular
Endings of his soldiers. (4.1.155-156)

Greenblatt then goes onto outline his meditation on the duplicity[24] of generals but there remains something more significant in terms of my own investigations. While Hal is uttering these contradictions, what also becomes evident is that the attempted verbal disguising of Harry le Roy, with its tones of contrite humanism, begins to erode as Hal's anxiety emerges into his discourse. We are reminded at this moment of the desires of the self-fashioning subject. In its verbal disguising, the discourse of the new identity still very much remains attached to the discourse of the other you seek to separate yourself from. The anxiety that emerges is marked by the modes of aggression and violence that, as I will shortly argue, feature prominently in their frequent emerging within Hal's disguising as king:[25]

[24] It appears that death in battle, as Greenblatt contends, is here a "completely unforeseen accident" (61). Soon, Greenblatt adds, other explanations from Hal confer a different view. We are confronted, for example, with the view that war and death in battle "were a religious blessing, an 'advantage'" (61) to a warrior who can "wash every mote out of his conscience" (4.1.178-179).

[25] As Williams later acknowledges when meeting the King, disguised revealed, we later learn of the human cost of Hal's strategy.

WILLIAMS: Your majesty came not like your self: you

KING: […] there is no
king, be his cause never so spotless if it come to the
arbitrament of swords, can try it out with all unspotted
soldiers. Some, peradventure, have on them the guilt of
premeditated and contrived murder; some, of beguiling
virgins with the broken seals of perjury; some, making
the wars their bulwark, that have before gored the
gentle bosom of peace with pillage and robbery. (4.1.158-165)

Despite those open wounds appearing in his verbal disguise,[26] Hal soon finds time to begin the execution of yet another bout of subversion which he will later be seen to contain. As the discussion focuses on the topic of the king's ransom, Hal says he eavesdropped on the king who confirmed it would never happen. Williams jests that it could happen after they are all killed, and they would not know the difference. After a further trading of gibes, in which Hal asserts that if times were different, he might be furious with Williams, Williams takes up the idea and challenges Hal to combat should they both survive the battle. In a manner befitting the ritualistic practices of Richard II's court, they agree to exchange gloves and wear them in their caps, so they can find each other the next day.

The two eventually find each other following the victory at Agincourt and we are instantly drawn to the fact that Hal's sartorial disguise as Harry le Roi is about to reveal itself to the unsuspecting Williams. Again, as Hal had done at Gadshill and in the taverns, he is using the opportunity to reveal himself to exercise his own authority, to test the subversiveness of Williams and to contain it in due course. Williams returns and Hal spots him sporting the glove they had previously exchanged. Williams reiterates his desire to fight the cloaked soldier at the eve of the battle and Hal, obviously recognising Williams, seeks to conjure another amusing conceit in the desire to exercise his authority. He gives his other glove to Fluellen on the pretext that he had retrieved it from a fight with the Duke of Alençon. If Fluellen can locate the bearer of the Duke's other glove (which we know to be Williams) he has permission to "apprehend him" (156). Hal

---

Appeared to me but as a common man – witness the
Night, your garments, your lowliness; and what your
Highness suffered under that shape. (4.8.51-54)

[26] Catherine Belsey claims this scene "presents the king as a popular hero and thus helps to legitimate his sovereignty" (1991,39). While I agree that even despite the emergence of the modes of violence and aggression which he does utilise in exercising his authority, I would question whether the scene convincingly presents Hal as a popular hero. Not only has Greenblatt discerned contradictions in Hal's responses to Bates and Williams, but also, as I have shown hitherto, Hal has continued to exercise deception in this play thereby questioning the status that Belsey affords him.

confesses to Warwick and Gloucester of his deceit and his lines that "[s]ome mischief may arise of it, / For I do know Fluellen . . .will return an injury" (4.7.175-177) suit his vengeful purposes on Williams well. Later, Hal's scheme receives its crowning moment as he intervenes in the duel, which seems to confer a moment of joy for Hal as he reveals his true persona to his soldiers:

> KING: Give me thy glove, soldier. Look, here is the
> fellow of it.
> 'Twas I indeed thou promised'st to strike,
> And thou hast given me most bitter terms. (4.8.40-42)

Even at the defining moment of Hal's kingship, victory against the French forces, he has shown his inability to conquer the forces of self-fashioning and the need to use sartorial disguise to serve his own deceptive practices. Hal's desires to redeem himself to the crown, to redeem authority to the English throne and redeem himself to his subjects, can only viewed within the overarching scheme of deception he has ruthlessly employed from the very outset of the second tetralogy of Shakespeare's history plays.

3.5.2 The Augmentation of the Disguise of a Monarch Divinely Sanctioned

Stephen Greenblatt's conferral at the end of *Henry IV Part 2* that Hal, during his coronation, is seen to merge the body politic with that of the state, appears to suggest a divine protection over Hal.[27] As *Henry V* opens with its prologue, we are immediately asked to view the ascension of the new king to a heavenly platform, characterised by "a muse of fire, that would ascend / The brightest heaven of invention" (*HV*, 1.1.1-2). We are reminded that this platform is very much the one where

[27] See also Greenblatt (2010,79) in *Shakespeare's Freedom*, where he states that "*Henry V* is probably the closest Shakespeare ever came to representing the authority of the ruler as divinely sanctioned." He points to the climax of the play, where the victorious Henry announces the death penalty "for anyone who denies that the victory was God's alone." But this announcement, Greenblatt adds, "only underscores what the play repeatedly makes clear: here, as throughout Shakespeare's work, the ethics of authority are deeply compromised" (79). Within this more recent publication, particularly in the discussions concerning artistic freedom in the last two chapters, we generally witness a continuing relevance of Greenblatt's insights regarding the mechanisms of solidifying authority by apparent criticism. According to Greenblatt, an artist who uses such criticism in the attempt to assert a creative autonomy over his/her perceived social and cultural limitations is deluded. Subsequently, autonomy is no more than a "cherished fantasy of dignity and freedom," Greenblatt contends, and "is untrue to the psychic bonds that were forged at . . . birth and to the social bonds that were forged by the community that gave [the artist their] honorific name" (110). Furthermore, he later adds, Shakespeare himself was quite aware that artistic freedom is dependent on "a social agreement, a willingness on the part of the elite – 'the gentles' – to permit it to exist and to exist without crushing, constant interference" (120).

Richard II had descended from.[28] The rising of Hal and the descent of Richard are seen in contrast and it is pertinent to discover how Hal will choose to view the role of king in relation to his predecessor. Within *Henry V*, there becomes apparent Hal's unique approach in augmenting a disguise as a divinely sanctioned monarch in response to those crises / anxieties that he faces.

In Act 2, Hal uses an extremely deceptive and ultimately, Machiavellian way to then augment this disguise. Fearing that the Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop and Sir Thomas Grey are part of a conspiracy to remove himself from power, Hal devises a clever conceit, firstly requesting the audience of the three men (originally appointed as commissioners to France) to provide counsel on suggested ways to tackle the French threat. It is subsequently apparent that Hal wishes to frame this exposure of their conspiracy in as highly theatrical a manner possible, a king remaining at the merciless force of self-fashioning. Initially, while the men discuss tactics, Hal immediately draws a comparison to Richard II in the frequent employing of "we" within his mode of rhetoric, the confirmation of a king united with the body of the politic and the state. With this king however, the devotion to that "we" is unwavering as Hal is resolute in his allegiance to God. The presence of divinity that Hal invokes ensures respect and obedience from the king's commissioners:

CAMBRIDGE: Never was monarch better feared and loved
Than is your Majesty. There's not, I think, a subject
That sits in heart-grief and uneasiness
Under the sweet shade of your government.
GREY: True. Those that were your father's enemies
Have steeped their galls in honey and do serve you
With hearts create of duty and of zeal. (2.2.25-31)

The dialogue returns to affairs with France, following discussion of the fate of a prisoner. Hal immediately states: "Who are the late commissioners?" (61). The word "late" is key – on the one hand it could mean "recently appointed" but, on the other hand it can refer to someone who has died.

Hal provides an indication that he is about to end their lives and he goes about fulfilling this prophecy by invoking God as the chief arbiter and executioner in the matter. As Hal swiftly

[28] The image of Hal ascending towards heaven and receiving God's divine protection receives recognition from Stephen Greenblatt. While Greenblatt feels that the prologue outlines Hal's claim to the throne, being "an ideological justification of English policy" it also foregrounds "the self-interests of the monarch and the interest of the nation [which] are both in turn secured by God's overarching design" (1988, 60).

serves the men papers with their death warrants, we are made aware how the king further wishes to augment his disguise as a divine monarch. The king senses divine opposition to be the driving force behind the commissioners' motives, citing a "cunning fiend" (111) as inspiration for their crimes, later referred again as "that same demon" (121). Listing "their faults" (142) against the king, God's representative on earth, the men are arrested. Then, it is up to God himself to "acquit" the men "of their practices" (144). The men soon recognise that God has discovered their "purposes" (151) and at this point we find it hard to distinguish whether it is Hal or God that the men pay respect to, such is the powerful influence generated by the king's augmented disguise as a divine monarch. Hal replies that "God quit you in his mercy!" (166) and then offers sentence as though he is actually mouthing his divine protector's edict. As Hal concludes his sentence, he speaks as God's representative, saying that it is down to the mercy of God to provide those punished with "patience to endure, and true repentance / Of all your dear offences!" (181-182). Hal is in no doubt that God has ensured that the men's crimes have "so graciously [been] brought to light" (186) and his punishment be delivered "into the hand of God" (191). The final impression we get here is of Hal working together in tandem with his divine protector, with the aim to curb yet another challenge to the crown.

Later in the play, we witness Hal's own views regarding the treatment of those ritualistic objects once favoured by Richard II. Where Richard once believed in the divine status of those objects, propagating a divine protection, I will now assess whether Hal, too, is willing to augment his disguise as a divine monarch in a similar way. Hal's views on the role of ritualistic practices and divine associations are to be found immediately after the departure of Bates and Williams in Act 4, following Hal's episode of sartorial disguise. Hal is alone once more, his solitude finds comfort in the company of soliloquy and as we saw with Richard, Hal begins to respond to the mounting pressures of his public role. A dialectic begins where the self-fashioning subject seeks to calculate the distance between his private and public persona – Hal now remains in the firm grasp of the mode of inwardness. Initially, we see him rail against the advantages that a king supposedly has over his subjects. One advantage comes under particular scrutiny:

KING: Must kings neglect that private men enjoy!
And what have kings that privates have not too,
Save ceremony, save general ceremony?
[…]
What is thy soul, O adoration?
Art thou ought else but place, degree and form,

Creating owe in other men. (4.1.234-244)

Hal has also unleashed, in his discrediting of Richard II's ritualism, his mode of loathing.[29] Soon, as he turns to those symbolic representations that once served Richard in his divine rule, he adopts the mode of mockery, seeking to belittle those representations of a system which he or his own subjects cannot recognise.

KING: 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. (4.1.256-260)

In the end, Hal concludes that it is only the "wretched slave" (265) that truly enjoys a restful sleep while the king (as we are reminded of Bolingbroke's nights awake with guilt) remains awake in order to keep the peace.

It is following the scene marking Sir Thomas Erpingham's reappearance, where we witness Hal alone. Here, there is a retreat to the mode of inwardness and it is within that mode where Hal seeks to draw upon the theatricality so inherent to his self-fashioning. In doing so, he fears that his men may not possess the courage to succeed in battle and so, in response to this crisis, he seeks to augment his disguise as a divine monarch, desiring to arm his men with the courage to succeed at Agincourt. Hal makes a straightforward plea to God, desiring that his divine guardian "steel my soldiers' hearts; / Possess them not with fear" (4.1.286-287). However, this is proceeded by perhaps the crux of his appeal:

KING: Not today, O Lord,
O, not today, think not upon the fault
My father made in compassing 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 I have in yearly pay
Who twice a day their withered hands hold up
Toward heaven to pardon blood. And I have built
Two chantries where the sad and solemn priests
Sing still for Richard's soul. (4.1.289-299)

[29] Despite Hal's castigation of ritualism and ceremony, it is important to remember that he later seeks recourse to it, particularly in paying homage to Richard before the battle of Agincourt.

Contradictions within Hal are again evident as he seeks to augment his own disguise as a monarch divinely sanctioned. Having derided the system of ritualism inherent in Richard's reign, Hal is now seen to instigate his own brand of ritualism, designed to atone the burden of guilt derived from the deposition of his father's predecessor.[30] Everything again points to the improvisational mode of Hal as he desires to summon the approval of God in order to see him through to his next goal – defeat of the French and access to their throne. Hal's kingly disguise is becoming one greatly influenced and defined by the deceptive and Machiavellian tendencies so evident in his time as Prince of Wales. In the final lines here, there is evidence of Hal's craftiness in which we witness, as Greenblatt puts it, "a moment that anticipates Claudius' inadequate repentance of old Hamlet's murder" (62). This moment is encapsulated in Hal's belief, "penitence comes after all" (301) complete with the prior conviction that there is little his bargaining can achieve ("[t]hough all that I can do is nothing worth" (300). I would concur with Gary Taylor's interpretation of this line to conclude that Shakespeare is seeking here to come up with an idea which "would allow H[al] to think himself inadequate, but permit the audience not to think so" (Taylor 1982, 295-301 quoted in Forker 2002,277). Hal wants the audience to remain aware that even when appealing to God and augmenting his brand of a monarch divinely sanctioned, he is bold enough to employ his improvisational designs, and here, he provides a signal that using any means is necessary to achieving his political purposes.[31]

One of those purposes is of course to secure victory over the French at Agincourt and in desiring this, Hal summons his disguise as a divinely sanctioned monarch, calling upon God to provide divine protection when he needs it most. It is God who is asked to "dispose the day!" (4.3.132). Upon hearing from Montjoy that the battle is won, Hal immediately gives thanks to God. Later, when hearing that the number of English dead is considerably less than the French, Hal is convinced that God's "arm was here" (4.8.107) and "God fought for us" (121) such was the believed extent of the support from his divine liege. There is a final pledge, as a sign of thanks to God's active involvement in victory, to perform "holy rites" (123) through the singing of psalms. This is further evidence that Hal confers a belief in ritualistic practices to augment his divine

[30] Derek Cohen notes the human costs to the second tetralogy's leading characters as they often refer to Richard: "King Richard, haunts the protagonists of the *Henry IV* plays. The relation between the Richard they remember or merely imagine and the Richard of *Richard II* is fraught with emotional, moral, and ideological consequences" (2002, 293).
[31] In 2010, Greenblatt cites this scene as an example of "something deeply flawed in [Hal's] possession of power" (79). Hal may have "temporarily won over" God on this occasion but Greenblatt points to the play's epilogue which makes it clear, he believes, that Hal "and successor was soon to lose everything that his father had won" (79).

monarch's disguise, helping to contradict his previously recorded distaste for those practices in Richard II's court.

3.5.3 Arming Divine Protection: The Disguise of the Warrior

I turn to Hal's final use of disguise within *Henry V*, one that I believe he employs the most frequently in the play. Due to the threat of impending crises, be they tensions arising from abroad or the harsh reality of war and combat, Hal seeks recourse to a form of disguise, a mask of a warrior, fashioned from the inspiration of the defeated Hotspur. Key to identifying this disguise is the use of rhetoric which calls upon his men to fight for the king's (and God's) cause. However, this is often counterbalanced (and indeed superseded) by the frequent emergence of the modes of aggression and violence into his discourse, threatening to compromise Hal's political ambitions. Armed with these modes, Hal nonetheless desires, as king, to use them as the basis of his publicly stated intent, to strike the enemy hard and ruthlessly. In turn, the continual recourse to these modes becomes a way for Hal to further verbally disguise his anxious, inner-self while strengthening his own belief in a self-identity, however ruthlessly conceived, worth believing in and fighting for.

From the very opening of the play, its opening prologue seems to pay homage to Hal's newly acquired public persona of the warrior. Then follows the attribution that Hal (Harry) is "warlike" (5) the crowning recognition of the public face that Hal had ever wanted to present. Subsequently, it is Hal who is able to "Assume the port of Mars" and in his wake "Leashed in like hounds, should famine, sword and / fire / Crouch for employment" (1.1.6-9). While it seems that Hal is being decked out like a god of war[32], the prologue does its best in engaging the audience's

---

[32] It is important, too, to recognise how other characters in the play help the audience design Hal's warrior-like self. For example, we witness the French king, who sounds a fearful and anxious note at:

FRENCH KING: […] the English with full power on us,
And more than carefully it us concerns
To answer royally in our defences. (2.3.1-3)

The Dauphin, incensed at Hal's rebuttal of the tennis-balls, expresses a dismissal of the English strength but the Constable refutes this view, commenting how Hal is "modest in exception, and withal / How terrible in constant resolution" (34-35). The French king is eager to agree, and the scene leaves us with this parting image of Hal very much in line with the way the English king would himself like to portray:

FRENCH KING: think we King Harry strong.
[…]
Let us fear

active imagination, a crucial theme made clear in the audience's desire to understand a historical play:

CHORUS: Can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
[...]
And let us, ciphers to this great account,
On your imaginary forces work. (Prologue 31-38)

Also, we are reminded that our imagination has been very much involved throughout the second tetralogy, in designing our kings:[33]

CHORUS: For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,
Carry them here and there, jumping o'er times,
Turning th'accomplishment of many years
Into an hour-glass. (Prologue 28-31)

And so, the audience prepares to design the newly crowned Henry V. Stephen Greenblatt is confident how the audience are going to design this king, that this is undertaken within the framework that tests whether competent rule depends as much on "demonic violence" as sacredness. This, in turn, is achieved in: "the context of a celebration, a collective panegyric to 'This Star of England', the charismatic leader who purges the commonwealth of its incorrigibles and forges the national state" (1988, 56). Greenblatt is right to assume, in my view, that Hal's rule depends as much on violence as sacredness (as I intend to show). However, I feel Greenblatt does not go far enough in recognising the extent to which the deceptive practises and intentions previously evident in Hal still remain within this new king, tarnishing any gloss with which this leader can be painted. Regarding Greenblatt's analogy of a "celebration", we shouldn't be surprised that Hal is capable of being part of this, for creating it, as he's been the supreme role-player all along. In *Henry V*, Hal reminds us of his ability to harness the essential modes of theatricality. If, as Greenblatt contends, theatricality is one of the keys to successful rule, we must examine how Hal's self-fashioning is integral to this. As we saw towards the end of *Henry IV Part Two*, Hal has already been working on anticipating, rehearsing, moulding and shaping his kingly public persona,

---

The native mightiness and fate of him. (2.4.63-64)

[33] While considering whether Shakespeare's history plays can ever be truly representative of those events which really occurred, Catherine Belsey emphasises that Shakespeare's history plays can only be inventions of the author, being "[b]rilliant fictions, and perhaps equally brilliant propaganda, [where] the history plays are understood to be precisely art, not life, imagination, not truth" (1991,24).

using the modes of improvisation and rhetoric to exhibit forthrightness and ultra-confidence in his behaviour. As a result, Hal seems to provide authority which Richard II had lost, certitude in the face of Henry IV's equivocal grasp of authority. Now, as Greenblatt confidently asserts, authority has been "reclaimed" (1988, 56). His words, like his father's, often proclaim the virtue of action rather than the language he uses. However, his attitude to language, as I have indicated, is somewhat ambiguous. This is because Hal has already used his rhetorical mode on a number of occasions (in the *Henry IV* plays) in his desire to maintain his disguise of a true "fully mature" royal self, to try to test the containment of the subversion he has generated and to record those discourses of his fellow subjects in order to understand them better.

Hal first appears in the play showing evidence he has not only retained his liking for deception but also, sensing opposition to the English claim to French dukedoms[34], he is willing to enter the throes of his warrior disguise. As Canterbury gives Hal the green light to pursue his claim, French ambassadors arrive at the court bearing a gift and a response from the Dauphin to Hal's claim on the French dukedoms. The response itself arrives in the form of a refusal while also deriding the impetuosity of Hal, saying "you savour too much of your youth" (1.2.251). Hal's anxiety is then heightened further as he discovers that the gift is some tennis-balls. This anxiety finds its way into discourse firstly through the emergence of the mode of aggression:

> KING: We will in France, by God's grace, play a set
> Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.
> Tell him he hath made a match with such a wrangler
> That all the courts of France shall be disturbed
> With chases. (1.2. 263-267)

God is seen to armour the king's soldiers with an ability to handle the pressures of life on the battleground, likened to a champion's performance on the tennis court. Simultaneously, though, Hal's rhetoric sees the emergence of the modes of aggression and violence as he conceives of his gift of tennis balls as a potentially violent weapon, one that can be used to help achieve his aims. The image conjured here points to the desire, yet again, to depose another monarch in this tetralogy of history plays. Hal conceives himself to be an opponent suited to disputes and there is little doubt

[34] The pursuit of those dukedoms may well be seen to be conducted on the basis of dishonest premises. I refer to Henry V's decision to go to war based on Canterbury's argument to refute French Salic Law, designed to prevent English kings from acceding the French throne. (*Henry V*, Act 1, Scene 2). In his argument, Canterbury states that King Henry V has a legal right to rule France because his great-great-grandmother (Isabel) was the daughter of the French King Phillip IV. Also, he contends the Salic Law only originally applied to Germany and not to France.

that any resolution of such will rely on his enactment of aggression and violence. Soon, we see the modes of aggression beginning to take on more violent overtones:

KING: That I will dazzle all the eyes of France,
Yea, strike the Dauphin blind to look on us.
And tell the pleasant prince this mock of his
Hath turned his balls to gun-stones, and his soul
Shall stand sore chargèd for the wasteful vengeance
That shall fly with them; for many a thousand
widows
Shall this his mock mock out of their dear husbands,
Mock mothers from their sons, mock castles down. (1.2.280-287)

Amongst the need of the warrior to shine brightly appears Hal's vengeance which is charged with promises of death on a large scale, coupled with the destruction of enemy fortresses. Such a resort to the modes of aggression and violence (almost immediately emerging into Hal's warrior disguise) are seen to be an early indication of a chief component of Hal's kingly rhetoric, forming the basis of a publicly stated intent to attack the enemy with ruthless conviction. As the play progresses, we see a recurring reappearance of these modes into Hal's warrior-like rhetoric which, in turn, is employed in the attempt to further disguise his anxious, inner-self. As a subject engrossed within self-fashioning, the ability to maintain disguise carries with it a heavy psychological burden, as is witnessed by his appeal to God in Act 4, Scene 1. Nonetheless, as the intensity of the threat facing the English gathers pace, there remains a determination to hold onto the mask of the warrior. Hal seeks to strengthen his own belief in its self-identity, the composition of which is becoming further and further defined by the recurring emergence of the modes of violence and aggression into its discourse.

The warrior-like virtues of mightiness and strength are especially conveyed during Hal's war-cry at the beginning of Act 3. Here, we witness the compelling spectacle of power, its theatricality, solidified in a strident, confident kingly public persona, receiving its apotheosis:

KING: Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,
Or close the wall up with our English dead.
[…] when the blast of the war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger,
Stiffen the sinews, conjure up the blood.
Disguise fair nature with hard favoured-rage. (3.1.1-8)

'Disguise', 'imitate', 'conjure up', remind us that in his mode of rhetoric, our once role-player Prince remains very much the role-player King, advising his soldiers to self-fashion their way as

victorious warriors. Coupled with the need to disguise is Hal's advice to adopt those modes of aggression so essential to the identity of a virtuous soldier in battle:

> KING: Then lend the eye a terrible aspect,
> Let it pry through the portage of the head
> Like the brass cannon, let the brow o'erwhelm it
> As fearfully as doth a gallèd rock
> [. . .]
> Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide,
> Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
> To his full height. (3.1.9-17)

Later in Act 3, we find Hal at the walls of Harfleur, where he reflects on the role that he thinks best defines himself: "as I am a soldier, / A name that in my thoughts becomes me best" (3.3.5-6). We have already discovered that in forging his identity as the virtuous warrior, that Hal has frequently looked to the modes of aggression and violence to embolden and clarify it. In this scene, sensing that Harfleur offers some resistance to his advances, Hal strikes out in his most vengeant and overtly violent tone yet:

> KING: 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 fresh fair virgins and your flowering infants. (3.3.11-14)

Hal implores that a hardened warrior must be used to bloodshed and unscrupulously capable of murdering innocent women and children in support of the king's cause. Hal's intensifying anxieties are channelled into the most potent release of the modes of aggression and violence into his rhetoric. Shortly, he warns the French that they are about to bring rape and pillage upon themselves, but what seems to follow, as Stephen Greenblatt suggests (1988,62), is an impression of Hal speaking as the head of the army that is actually about to pillage and rape the French:

> KING: Therefore, you men of Harfleur,
> Take pity of your town and of your people
> […]
> why, in a moment, look to see
> The blind and bloody soldier with foul hand
> Desire the locks of your shrill-shrieking daughters. (3.3.27-35)

In the desire for victory, Hal's ambitions continue to be seemingly unscrupulous in their aims and expectations.

As the battle of Agincourt fast approaches, Hal's increasing anxieties determine the rapid execution of yet another improvisational design. This involves a desire to further instil the image of the warrior, forged within his own self-identity, into the minds of his soldiers. No more is Hal's scheme better laid out that in the dramatic apotheosis of his warrior-like self, delivering his famous war-cry in Act 4, Scene 3, referencing the feast of Saint Crispin. For the king, he desires his men to be avid pursuers of things that are not outward – where, for example, honour is "a mere scutcheon" for the likes of Falstaff, Hal sees it is a truly inward pursuit, despite it being perceived "sinful." So, his men must follow his own path, obeying the forces of self-fashioning to create a new fictive self from within themselves. Therefore, as Hal has shown to have done throughout the series of history plays, the soldiers must forge their warlike identities and create public personas that are inspired by the inner-self's modes of aggression and violence. To attain honour, as Hal sees it, his men must show physical proof of the acceptance and adoption of such modes. Within his rallying cry, Hal implores every soldier, on the day of battle, to "strip his sleeve and show his scars" (47). Later, he promises that "For he today that sheds his blood with me / Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile" (61-62). Hal offers his men redemption from any wrongdoing they may have committed in their past life but, clearly, it is achievable by placing yourself within the jaws of death. We are reminded that perhaps Hal's own redemption to his role of Prince of Wales and to his father was not dependent on risking his life in such a way.

During the battle scenes that culminate at Agincourt, Hal receives news of those men who have indeed shed their blood, such as the Duke of York, in pledging allegiance to their king. Hal is determined to hold onto the warrior disguise right up to the moment of victory, his public persona still exhibiting strong traces of those modes of desire and fear (aggression and violence) which are anxiously surfacing into his discourse. In a final bid to crush the enemy, he wishes to "make them skirr away as swift as stones" and "cut the throats of those we have" (4.7.60,62).

Such is the force and influence of Hal's rhetoric that it seems to inspire his soldiers to victory in the battlefield. The play's final act, post Agincourt, seems to give reign to the idea that Hal is now free of the need to disguise, the threat of French invasion quashed and with it, it seems, no crises for the king to divest himself into either the roles of warrior, Harry le Roi or the divinely sanctioned monarch. However, crises future and present emerge. Despite the image that Hal is the all-conquering "star of England," (Epilogue, 6) attributed by the final chorus, even this seemingly glowing summary of a king's exploits is tainted with the consequences of his actions against the

French – the impending losses against France and the Wars of the Roses during the reign of Henry VI. In Hal's desire to woo his new bride to be, Princess Katherine, Hal must also play a new role and yet he finds it extremely difficult to affect the modes of behaviour required. If Hal has proved a master of warrior-like rhetoric in battle, able also in recording those discourses of his fellows in Eastcheap to generate and contain their subversion, he somewhat struggles here to devise a discourse of courtship. Finding it hard to comprehend her attempts to communicate, Hal eventually admits defeat to the one thing that has eluded him:

> KING: Our tongue is rough, coz, and my condition is
> not smooth, so that, having neither the voice nor the
> heart of flattery about me, I cannot so conjure up the
> spirit of love in her that he will appear in his true
> likeness. (5.2.283-287)

Hal's mode of improvisation has finally been shown to fail him as he is unable to deceive Katherine and claim victory in the realm of human relationships by securing her love. Rather than exhibiting the verbal dexterities and disguise that have previously served him well, Hal now finds himself rather at the beginning of the discovery into forming successful and lasting bonds with others.

Aside from Hal's assessment of his ability to form romantic ties, the audience has been privy to his full immersion within his fictive identity as king, Henry V. Hal's claim at the end of *Henry IV Part 2* that he had rejected his former self has proved somewhat misleading. It is clear that in *Henry V,* Hal retains his overarching fondness for deceptive practices in helping to achieve his aims. It is deception which continues to motivate and inspire the execution of a range of disguises in Hal, which in turn gives the overriding impression, as I concluded during my analysis of Richard II, that Shakespeare's subversion in *Henry V* consists in showing kingship as a form of disguise One of these forms sees him retaining a liking for sartorial disguise in the role of Harry le Roi, which he still uses in the need to test the subversion of and then record the discourses of his subjects, in the desire to know those subjects better. Another, is the need to augment a disguise as a divinely sanctioned monarch in response to those crises and anxieties that Hal experiences in enacting his reign. Hal augments this disguise along contradictory premises because he actually desires to initiate his own form of ritualistic practices in devotion to God after he initially is seen to reject them. Hal's identification of the monarchy as divinely sanctioned is much greater than Richard II's. God is lauded by Hal as the arbiter and executor of the king's plans, united in their purposes, the recurring "we" of the seemingly undefeatable team of king and divine protector. In

the final augmentation of Hal's disguise as king, I focused on the form of disguise that Hal employs the most in this play; a disguise of a warrior which Hal desires to fashion through his attempt to emulate, take over and adopt the role of Hotspur. Through the increasing emergence of the modes of violence and aggression into his warrior-like rhetoric, Hal's soldiers are inspired to win the day at Agincourt. He has endeared himself to his men and to his country but the question remains if he has ever endeared himself to the audience at all, such is his desire to respond to crises with the continuing use of deception, a penchant for role-playing and those ways of disguise as I have outlined.

CHAPTER 4

Bitterness, Irony and Social Commentary: Feste in *Twelfth Night* and Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale*

Stephen Greenblatt's insights, promoted by his concept of self-fashioning, have hitherto proved highly useful when it comes to forming my own set of analytical tools of disguise. These insights allow both audience and reader unparalleled access to not only the inner-anxieties of my selected Shakespearean incognito figures but also to the theatricality governing a character's enactment of those fears. We are able to identify with characters whose inner-world is itself a theatrical production, one continually staging, often rehearsing the need to adopt and ultimately assume new fictive identities in a quest for survival and co-operation within the public sphere. As a result, we can better understand and appreciate the psychological torments of Edgar and Duke Vincentio. Despite their acquiring an impressive range of borrowed discourses in formulating the mode of rhetoric central to their disguise, they are both characters who continually wrestle with the burden of their disguising and, at the same time, are never able to discard their desire to be incognito. I have also shown how two other Shakespearean protagonists seen to be at the mercy of self-fashioning, and the need to disguise, are to be found within Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays where I examined the political implications of disguise. Greenblatt's analysis has helped enrich our understanding of two kings, themselves undoubted player-kings, both actors who are driven by self-fashioning to two distinct outcomes in their attempts to augment their disguise of kingship: Richard II's deposition and Prince Hal's accession. With Richard II, there remains the tantalizing thought that he could have broken free of the reigns of self-fashioning and the need to disguise had he lived. With Hal, however, there is little doubt that his life will continue to be shaped by self-fashioning, executed through a multitude of deceptive practices that he enacted while Prince and monarch.

It is my intention to focus now on the characters of Feste in *Twelfth Night* and Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale*, where there is again much attention paid to the psychological aspects of the disguise, including the descent into the inner recesses of the self, with its fears and fantasies both thriving and suppressed. What deserves equal investigation in these plays, though, is the idea that self-fashioning (and its ensuing contention about the inherent theatricality of life), creates great reciprocity between the interpretation of Shakespeare's characters and Elizabethan and Jacobean

social structures. This in turn, draws attention to the construction of identity within the social context and enables us to see the purposes of this construction which can range from survival, pleasure, advancement to control. Despite emanating from two distinct periods in Shakespeare's career, Feste and Autolycus appear within these comedies as comedians that portray similar attitudes of irony and bitterness towards their roles in society, providing social commentary on the plays themselves.

While assessing both characters' need to construct an identity within the social context, it is important to take into account two things. The first, is to focus on how these characters themselves are constructing their identity within the social context – do they see themselves as able to choose and define this themselves or are they somewhat resigned to the view that their identity within the social context is determined, as Greenblatt saw it, by the power relations of that society? If the agency of that construction does not reside merely within the individual – there is a need to examine how others in the play help to form it. Therefore, I will pay attention to those other characters in *Twelfth Night* and *The Winter's Tale* who help shape the identities of Feste and Autolycus within their social contexts.

4.1 Feste in Greenblattian Criticism

Greenblatt's hitherto albeit cursory examination of Feste is mainly embedded within two chapters of his 1988 publication, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. The first in which the jester appears, is Chapter 3 entitled 'Fiction and Friction' (66-93). Greenblatt's general aim here is not to deepen and explore the construction of early modern subjectivity per se but rather, to prove that the theme of *Twelfth Night* is centered on the relationship between atypical and standard conceptions of sexuality. In his view, Greenblatt perceives a tension between "nature" as recognized by Elizabethan society (namely an adherence to the predominance of heterosexuality) and "desire" (generally regarded as something imprecise in having connections to homo/bisexuality). Subsequently, it is the play, Greenblatt contends, that solves the tension between the two. Ultimately, he adds, it is heterosexuality which is espoused as the preferred sexual orientation although the play still very much lauds the very impreciseness in homo/bisexuality that it seeks to overwhelm. It is Greenblatt's additional belief that the tension in the play is best encapsulated within the verbalized humour that the characters produce:

> [F]or Shakespeare friction is associated with verbal wit; indeed, at moments the plays seem to imply that erotic fiction originates in the wantonness of language and thus that the body itself is a tissue of metaphors. (Greenblatt 1988, 89)

As I will later go onto argue, Feste's skill at wordplay forms an integral part of his self-fashioning, being at the heart of his verbal and sartorial disguising in the play. Greenblatt does not offer a similar accord in his written views on the character yet clearly regards Feste as a deft exponent of this verbal wit, noting the jester's dialogue with Viola in Act 3, Scene 1 (1-20). Here, Greenblatt looks to Feste's line "A sentence is but a chev'ril glove to a good wit" (3.1.20) which he believes to be a prime example of this verbalized friction. Subsequently, what results is the impression of the elasticity of language as conceived in upturning Shakespeare's "chev'ril glove" (90).[1] In mentioning that something that can be upturned, Greenblatt points to my own belief that I shall expand upon later; that it is Feste himself, a skilled wordsmith, who is capable of perceiving shades of meaning and upturning the scope of language to great (and highly theatrical) effect.

Feste also receives brief attention from Greenblatt within the next chapter of *Shakespearean Negotiations*, the already familiar essay that I outlined in Chapter Two, "Shakespeare and the Exorcists" (94-128). As I have already highlighted, Greenblatt claims to prove in this essay that demonic possession and exorcism were known to be already exposed as fraudulent practices to the Elizabethan audiences of the play. It is within *Twelfth Night*, Greenblatt believes, that Shakespeare's beliefs about exorcism "have darkened" (115). The view of demonic possession is now clearly fraudulent and is witnessed, he claims, in the malevolent jest played by Feste on Malvolio in Act 4 Scene 2. Feste's introduction into the scene serves to build up its "theatrical self-consciousness" (115). Subsequently, Feste's jibes such as "I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown" (4.2.5-6) are clear references, Greenblatt claims, to John Darrell (the Puritan priest and executer of these exorcist practices which I introduced earlier). Ultimately, Greenblatt adds, the scene goes on to mock Darrell while "the tables are being turned on the self-righteous fanatic" (115). The contention espoused by Greenblatt to the scene's inherent theatricality is, in my view, equally applicable to the theatricality ever-present within Feste himself, while the disguise of Sir Topas, which I shall now turn to, is integral to an investigation of those

[1] Greenblatt, more recently, revisited Feste's line from Act 3 Scene 1 in his biography of Shakespeare, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Become Shakespeare* (2010). Again, he perceives in Feste's words the simplicity and "ease with which language can be twisted" (56).

questions regarding my assessment of the psychological and social implications of disguise that I posed at the start of this chapter.

4.2 Feste: A Fool Coloured by Experience

Feste's use of disguise in *Twelfth Night* is nothing short of a virtuoso performance and within it, I intend to show the jester giving full reign to the purposes of constructing identity in a social context, with each of those purposes forming its own, unique link to disguise. Commencing with Feste's disguise of Sir Topas, I will show that despite it being a commissioned and therefore, inauthentic disguise, there remain from a psychological point of view, indications of his inner-fears. Feste also employs other verbal disguises, such as his need for survival which sees the character disguising his fears of demotion, unemployment and non-payment of services provided. In addition, Feste is seen to seek pleasure, which is closely connected with the aim to exert control over others; I will therefore assess the jester's motives in line with the claim that deception, delusion, self-interest and cunning are the driving forces of identity construction.[2] Feste is an accomplished singer and wordsmith. It is his musical command of melody in song and spoken discourse that disguises a fear of boredom, a man now well used to the role of fool played for so many years. Within his songs and a wealth of other verbalized conceits, I will show how Feste also utilizes this disguise with the additional aim to fully exert control over his audience through the

[2] In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Greenblatt emphasizes what he sees as a connection between deception and identity construction while referring to Machiavelli's prince. Here, Greenblatt contends that the "deceptions" the character undertakes, are done so "for one clear reason: to survive" (1980,14). Subsequently, it is the prince, Greenblatt adds, who has to construct the identity of "great feigner and dissembler" (14). Central to my analysis, I also wish to incorporate some highly useful insights outlined by Rhodri Lewis, in *Hamlet and the Vision of Darkness* (2017), ones that challenge Greenblatt's own views on identity construction. Like Greenblatt, the author looks at the correlation between the structure of a Shakespearean character and its social world (in creating *a persona*) and shows how Hamlet tries to reject Ciceronian discourse, borrowing an array of other discourses in the process. Lewis' conclusions ultimately differ from Greenblatt as the former champions individual autonomy in being able to discredit received discourses in constructing their own identity. Subsequently, Lewis sees *Hamlet* as a play which sets out to discredit Cicero's moral philosophy and, instead, emphasizes that the individual is able to identify the best role one can/should play in public in a rejection of the Ciceronian code. In this respect, he adds, it puts Shakespeare "closer to writers like Tacitus and Machiavelli, for whom it is vital to acknowledge that cunning, delusion, and self-interest are simply the currency of human affairs" (102). Despite that initial disagreement on identity construction, Lewis' still places great emphasis, as did Greenblatt in his reading of Hal in the second tetralogy, on deception and deceit as the instigating forces behind the construction of identity. In this chapter I will therefore additionally assess to what extent both Lewis' and Greenblatt's contention is true, that "cunning, delusion and self-interest" lay at the heart of Feste and Autolycus' motives, in their desire to borrow received discourses and construct their own identities with their range of verbal and sartorial disguises.

potency of his performance. In desiring to exercise this control, Feste disguises his own inner anxieties about his ability to accommodate his public status as a servant and his private sense of intellectual superiority. It is other characters who also attest to Feste's ability in this respect as there is frequent reference to the jester's capabilities with language and music which, in turn, engenders a continuing endorsement for his hidden, deceptive practices. As I will depict, such is Feste's growing sensitivity to the reactions of his audience that it is indeed their influence which seems to help shape his construction of identity. Finally, I will investigate the purpose of identity construction relating to Feste exercising a need for advancement. Feste disguises insecurities that he is entrapped by his lowly status. As I will show, his responses to criticisms from others regarding his social status, seem to promote a defensive rebuttal – Feste is often seen trying to champion his status (and persuading others to do this too) ascribing special qualities to his position as a 'licensed fool' in a bid to position himself equally in rank with others in society. At any time, though, Feste is liable to submit to the psychological pressures of others who toy with those insecurities I have just mentioned. There will emerge, within my analysis, an apparent, common pattern – his desire to suddenly seek retreat, a quest for withdrawal, even a submission into silence.

4.2.1 'Thou mightst have done this without thy beard and gown'. Feste's Disguise of Sir Topas

In my analysis of incognito figures in Shakespeare, I have hitherto analysed disguises which have either been forced upon the individual or instrumentally employed. With Edgar, he seeks disguise fearing the loss of his life and with Prince Hal, he uses disguise to seek advancement and success. In the case of Feste's disguise of Sir Topas, we have the case of a commissioned disguise: the one which is to be executed "selectively" at a limited audience to amuse the rest of the on-stage company. It is rather clear that this disguise serves two purposes: revenge and entertainment. It is not a true disguise but a staging of a disguise. From the psychological point of view, however, we may claim that the way Feste plays and improvises the role of the priest, combined with the images that he invokes, are indicative of his inner fears. There is the sense that he threatens Malvolio with what he himself perceives to be dangerous.

At the beginning of Act 4 Scene 2, both Feste and Maria appear – the latter carrying a false beard and gown, the props appearing to be necessary in executing the jester's revenge of Malvolio, exploiting his subject before a selected audience. In his desire to entertain, we are witness to the

virtuosity of Feste's acting ability, in particular to the masterful mode of rhetoric that he displays while concurrently evidencing the mode of mockery in his portrayal of the priest. Karin Coddon perceives this parody to be "the discourse of interrogation he has himself consistently eluded" (1993,321); as I will go onto show, such a view could be seen to be ironic considering how much the interrogations of other characters are seen to help construct his own identity within the social context. Additional emphasis must also be placed on Feste's skills of improvisation as he uses this rhetorical mode in the attempt to manipulate his subject. Despite Feste playing his staged and therefore inauthentic disguise, there is evidence of anxiety emerging into his discourse, generated by his inner-self. These concerns, as I have shown, are often bound up in his own philosophical views on the meaning of language and epistemology. Such an example occurs in this clever use of wordplay:

> FESTE: Well, I'll put it on, and I will dissemble myself in't
> and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such
> a gown. (*TN*, 4.2. 4-6)

On the one hand, Feste desires to 'put on' the act of deception, desiring like Hamlet to adopt at least a "disposition" but one which is not seemingly "antic" (*Hamlet*, 1.5.170-172). However, Feste's own reasoning and logic for the sartorial disguising as Sir Topas is later questioned by Maria, as will shall see.[3] On the other hand though, to "dissemble" can imply that Feste is seeking not only to radically conceal his own identity but to also imagine himself as the willing corrupter of his own self-identity, being able to deconstruct it through his penchant for role-playing and the employment of the verbal and sartorial disguises needed to perform those parts. An emergent sense of negation soon threatens to invade his rhetoric and curtail his disguise before Feste acknowledges that his own self is a composite of the many roles he needs to play as a professional and insecure individual. We are drawn to those insecurities felt within Feste in his role of a fool, characterized by wit and intelligence and yet requiring a restraint of his intellect (disguising his own intelligence) to uphold the illusion of his masters being wiser than himself. In a way, a fool is wisdom in a protective disguise of folly. Finally, to "dissemble" in the gown also implies that he intends to preach his philosophy of a simultaneous affirmation and negation of the discourses,

[3] Keir Elam speculates, that Feste needs the gown to perform the part, and "without it" he "cannot do the voices" (2008,46).

epistemological assumptions and social constructs of the society he finds himself in, complete with his modes of mockery and loathing so typical of his commentary in the play.

Feste continues to outline the paradoxical nature of his function as "dissembling" priest, alluding perhaps to his own inner insecurities while additionally desiring to comment on another of his perceptions of society and its class system:

> FESTE: I am not tall enough to become the function
> well, nor lean enough to be thought a good student, but
> to be said a honest man and a good housekeeper goes
> as fairly as to say a careful man and a great scholar. (4.2.6-9)

Despite such an exploration of the folly of paradox which he uses within his staged disguise to entertain his audience, it is one which, as Keir Elam states "implies the levelling of social differences between men" (2008, 306). Feste alludes to those insecurities of a man of low social rank and is therefore revealing an aim to construct an identity of someone seeking advancement, contesting that a man of his low status is nevertheless as worthy of playing the part as a man of higher status. We are reminded therefore of Edgar, giving the dispossessed a voice as Poor Tom and, as we shall see later, Autolycus seeking social advancement in Florizel's clothes.

The discursive emergence of Sir Topas into the text of *Twelfth Night* continues to teeter on the verge of the mode of nonsense as Feste grapples with the anxieties of his inner-self and the demands of effecting his newly acquired priestly role:

> FESTE: Bonos dies… (4.2.12)

Is it bad Spanish or does this, as Peter Hall suggests, indicate that Feste was trying to remember the discourse as a once failed priest? (quoted in Greif, 68). His struggle to recall that discourse has therefore greatly affected and almost erased any ability to play his staged role convincingly.

Feste continues to preach and yet through the purpose of his staged disguise to entertain, confronting the audience with its mode of nonsense, there remains a recourse to what is typical of his philosophy of truth:

> FESTE: For as the old
> hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very
> wittily said to a niece of King Gorbuduc, 'That that
> is is'; so I being Master Parson am Master Parson, for
> what is 'that' but 'that' and 'is' but 'is' ? (4.2.12-15)

Feste is expressing his convictions regarding the seeming contradictions of the meaning of words and objects, although, the pattern of negation that he utters may mirror the psychological discomfort from playing the role. Nonetheless, we are still reminded of the jester's capability as a self-fashioning subject, able to conceive of the seemingly endless fictive possibilities of his own making. As Jacob Tootalian comments, the initial discourse of Sir Topas makes clear "the distinct social identities mapped around Feste's persona, but in a manner that emphasizes the constructedness of both the fictional chain of authority and of his own false identity" (2013,55). Feste's role of dissemblance is therefore one not only entwined, as I have shown, with a belief that his self is a myriad composite of many roles. It also involves Feste's refutation and deconstruction of societal perceptions on power and authority that are dexterously mocked and ridiculed through the verbal arsenal of his mode of rhetoric.[4]

The implicit nature of paradox evident in the above passage also serves a further purpose of Feste's staged disguise, to torture Malvolio within the aim of revenge. What is more significant though is that Olivia's steward is held captive in darkness and I believe that Feste, in his desire to mock and test Malvolio's sanity, is also self-inflicting torture through a deep exploration of his own mode of darkness. What results in this scene is Feste undergoing an internal battle with his confidence to disguise those insecurities of his inner-self which his mode of darkness tries to conceal. As we shall see, his inner-self is constantly in conflict with his outer-self trying to play its role in public as Feste continues to enact the staged disguise of Sir Topas.

Feste begins his torment of Malvolio through a mockery of the order for the Visitation of the Sick in the *Elizabethan Book of Common Prayer* (Elam, 207; Atkin, 63), "What ho, I say, peace in this prison" (18).[5] From the outset, as Feste desires to entertain his limited audience, he is also desiring some kind of release from his own inner-torment as he alludes to the ultimate goal of the self-fashioning subject – achieving self-content through the liberation of desires and fears. At the

---

[4] Feste's rejection of societal discourse is therefore seen to parallel that of Hamlet's rejection of Ciceronian discourses, analysed by Lewis (see previous footnote).

[5] Graham Atkin cites the original passage:

> In that book there is a particular section giving instructions for the proper form of words to be employed when visiting the sick. The entry reads thus: "The order for the Visitation of the Sick. When any person is sick, notice shall be given thereof to the Minister of the Parish; who, coming into the sick person's house, shall say, Peace be to this house, and to all that dwell in it" (2008, 63).

same time, he reveals those insecurities which stem from the limitations imposed on him by his social status.

Central to Sir Topas' role (and the desired purpose of the disguise, to entertain his audience) is its focus on the theme of exorcism, as is noted by Greenblatt, revealing contemporary society's acceptance of the fraudulent nature of its rituals and practices. Ivo Kamps rightly infers that while Malvolio is very much representative of this acceptance, there is a point to staging the exorcism as "Shakespeare might be telling us that the rise of commoners like Malvolio cannot be stemmed with empty, ineffective, passé ideas and rituals" (quoted in Schiffer, 241). Instead, as I will argue, Malvolio's torture and desired revenge lies at the mercy of Feste's own modes of rhetoric and improvisation. Adopting the discourse of those puritan priests such as John Darrell, Feste proceeds in fact to mock the gentility and politeness that marks the remainder of his play. Like Poor Tom, he names those possessing the victim:

> FESTE: Fie, thou dishonest Satan! I call thee by the most
> modest terms, for I am one of those gentle ones that
> will use the devil with courtesy. (4.2.31-34)

While carrying out his mock exorcism of Malvolio, Feste seems to be attempting to exorcise the restless nature within his inner-self. His penchant for wordplay, the adoption of the myriad roles and discourses, are wearing thin and now, there emerges the expression of a desire to emancipate himself from all the privileges that the "allowed fool" has been heir to. Feste stands here at the precipice of negation as he too confronts his own mode of darkness, although he must simultaneously continue to affirm his existence by playing his role in public. The concurrent desire of Feste as a self-fashioning subject to both affirm and negate his own self-identity through the undertaking of his many discursive and sometimes sartorially disguised roles is therefore re-expressed through his own philosophy – nothing is what it seems to be. Therefore, the jester has to maintain and affirm his public existence in the only way he knows how, through the tried and trusted employment of his modes of behaviour and desires which are used quite dexterously in the malicious, practical joke that unfolds in the treatment of Malvolio.

We are also reminded in this scene that Feste attempts to employ his mode of improvisation to full effect while seeking to exact his revenge on Malvolio. While Malvolio is imprisoned within the dark room, the jester contradicts the view of a darkened 'inner-stage' and injects imaginary images of light into that of the playhouse itself.

FESTE: Sayst thou that
house is dark ?
MALVOLIO: As hell, Sir Topas.
FESTE: Why, it hath bay-windows transparent as
barricadoes, and the clerestories toward the south-
north as lustrous as ebony, and yet complainest thou
of obstruction. (4.2.33-39)

Once again, as we witnessed with the blind Gloucester facing an illusionary fall, the reader / spectator is forced into an uncomfortable position, courtesy of Feste's torment.[6] Shakespeare is trying to get us, the audience, to hold the impression, through Feste, that Malvolio has become separated from sanity. And yet, we know that Malvolio is not mad as Feste would have us believe. The jester, too, is evidencing a struggle of his inner with his outer-self which affects his perception of reality. Melancholia evolves into despair as Feste sketches his dark images at length, becoming a vent of his own feelings, a mixture of irritation at Malvolio coupled with a growing sense of anxiety.

Malvolio continues to be tested by Feste's adroit verbosity as the latter seeks the experience of further pleasure derived from this conceit, aiming to control his victim though his finely tuned modes of rhetoric and improvisation. While the victim refuses to accept the Pythagorean theory of metempsychosis, his tormentor desires, as Alan W. Powers sees it, to "flunk [Malvolio] as a matter of zany theological – and ornithological – correctness" (quoted in Schiffer, 223). Malvolio is then offered his release on the condition that he converts to the views of Pythagoras and thereby reclaims his sanity.

Feste desires to leave Malvolio alone and is initially warmly congratulated for his entertaining disguise. Sir Toby calls the jester "My most exquisite Sir Topas" (61) and this adulation clearly pleases Feste, possibly due to linguistic reasons. In Feste's response, there is a play on the name of the blue Topaz mineral (Elam 2008, 159) as he confidently asserts:

FESTE: Nay, I am for all waters. (4.2.62)

[6] I am indebted to the insights of Joan Hartwig here (1973, 508-509).

Despite the insecurities that have enveloped his inner-self, witnessing the continual emergence of the mode of darkness into his discourse, we see someone who nonetheless believes in the breadth of his own capabilities and a right to be appreciated by everyone in the kingdom of Illyria.[7]

Feste's performance has not, however, met with the entire approval of its progenitor, Maria. She implies that his additional mode of sartorial disguise has been somewhat excessive, thereby prioritizing his verbal abilities:

> MARIA: Thou mightst have done this without thy beard
> and gown. He sees thee not. (4.2.63-64)

Feste fails to respond to Maria and he has resorted to complete silence perhaps overwhelmed by his inner-self's insecurities augmented by flamboyant improvisation.

Feste returns to Malvolio, this time at the request of Sir Toby to continue the entertainment, to appear "To him in thine own voice" (65). His voice quickly turns to the song "Hey Robin, jolly Robin" as he once again revels in his revenging of Malvolio through the mode of musically inspired improvisation. In the song, he alludes to the unrequited love of Olivia who prefers the company of Cesario:

> FESTE: [*As himself: sings.*]
> Hey, Robin, jolly Robin,
> Tell me how thy lady does.
> MALVOLIO: Fool !
> FESTE: [*Sings.*]
> My lady is unkind, pardie.
> MALVOLIO: Fool !
> FESTE: [*Sings.*]
> Alas, why is she so?
> MALVOLIO: Fool, I say!
> FESTE: [*Sings.*] She loves another— (4.2.71-78).

It is unclear whether Malvolio can properly hear and account for the import of Feste's words as he is desiring to catch the jester's attention in order to fetch him "a candle, and pen, ink and paper" (81). However, it is clear that Feste is utilizing his range of voices with great effect: the "Alas why is she so?," is espoused from a different persona to the one in "She loves another."

[7] Keir Elam believes this line to be a variant of the proverb "to have a cloak for all waters." Elam also contends that Feste is conveying satisfaction with his own performance, while "[t]here may also be a play on the topaz-like lustre of *waters*" (2008,311).

Feste's desire to publicly inhabit the voices of alternating personas continues as the jester himself struggles with his internal anxieties which are perhaps even prompted by the growing realization that his taunts are not yet having any effect on the captured subject. This process results in the mode of darkness re-emerging into his discourse – his inner-self once again engaged in conflict with his outer-self attempting to execute his public role. The voice of Sir Topas returns and his comments immediately reference Feste's inner-conflict, demarcated by a short allusion to the mode of nonsense:

> FESTE: [*In the voice of Sir Topas]* Malvolio, Malvolio, thy wits the heavens
> restore. Endeavor thyself to sleep and leave thy vain
> bibble-babble. (4.2.95-97)

There resounds again, as Keir Elam comments, an echo of the sermonising of the Puritan priest John Darrell (2008, 314). What is more significant though, is that the line presages an extraordinary bout of ventriloquism from the mouth of Feste as the jester again attempts to send Olivia's steward to the precipice of his own sanity:

> FESTE: [*as Sir Topas*] Maintain no words with him good
> fellow. [*as himself*] Who, I sir ? Not I, sir ! God b'wi'you,
> good Sir Topas. [*as Sir Topas*] Marry, amen. [*as himself*]
> I will, sir, I will. (4.2.99-102)

Despite Feste's intent to bemuse and confound the entrapped Malvolio through the seemingly tried and trusted arsenal of his modes of rhetoric and improvisation, there emerges the impression that the jester's desire for revenge has failed to hit its mark. Malvolio's sanity clearly emerges as one that is intact despite his ordeal as he repeats his request for more paper, pen and light in his desire to write himself out of trouble.

Feste finally complies with Malvolio's wish to retrieve those implements with which he desires to amend himself. To the prompt of Malvolio's "I prithee be gone" (4.2.119-120) we are reminded that Feste is once again about to adopt his cloak of darkness, alluding, in song, that his public role is now akin to that of the Vice figure of medieval morality plays:

> FESTE: [*Sings.*]
> I am gone, sir, and anon, sir,
> I'll be with you again,
> In a trice, like to the old Vice,
> Your need to sustain.
> Who with dagger of lath, in his rage and his wrath,
> Cries "aha!" to the devil;

> Like a mad lad, “Pare thy nails, dad!
> Adieu, goodman devil.” (4.2.121-128)

The first two lines clearly outline Feste’s desire for, and belief in, negation and affirmation, the centrifugal forces employed by the anxious subject which propel self-fashioning. These forces determine not only Feste’s own willingness to be involved in the play (and those staged conceits designed to outwit Malvolio, for example) but also his social and philosophical beliefs that underpin his many commentaries. At this scenes’ end, Feste still believes in his importance within the Illyrian world, his function, like the Old Vice, to provide the “need to sustain” and import his virtually nonsensical tirades against his victims, seeking the approval of his evil master through the execution of his rhetorical and improvisational conceits. However, as we have already witnessed the jester in a recurring internal struggle, his inner-self in conflict with the outer-self(selves) he is playing, it remains a matter of intrigue as to who Feste is saying goodbye to in the last line. Is it to the Devil or to Malvolio ? Or is it an internal cry from the soul of Feste himself in a desire to rid himself of his need to disguise, fearing that his purpose to seek revenge on Malvolio, in this staged disguise, has not been realized?

4.2.2 Disguising Fears of Redundancy

Elsewhere within *Twelfth Night*, we witness Feste responding to crises which engender fears of demotion from his rank at the court, even the unnerving prospect of unemployment as well as the possibilities of non-payment of entertainment services he provides to others around him. His response is characterized by a verbal disguise of those fears; in this disguise we witness a mode of rhetoric, featuring a variety of discursive motifs, expressing a need for survival as Feste continues to construct his identity within the social context.

The threat of redundancy and expulsion from the Illyrian court awaits Feste from the beginning of the play. Even before Feste is given the opportunity to make his presence felt in *Twelfth Night*, Maria draws our attention to the fact that he has deserted his post somewhat:

> MARIA Nay, either tell me where thou hast been, or I will
> not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter in way
> of thy excuse. My lady will hang thee for thy absence. (1.5.1-3)

Feste clearly is, prima facie, in deep trouble and as J.W Draper rightly infers, the jester is in "a parlous state" as the statutes enforcing laws against such acts of vagrancy from household staff were harsh (1942, 27). Maria therefore alludes to the potential punishment that may await Feste and yet we remain unaware why the fool has absconded from Illyria for so long.[8]

Feste's initial appearance is not seemingly characterized by any traits of verbal disguising; on the contrary, his opening reply to Maria rather appears to reveal his inner-anxieties as he anticipates the worst kind of punishment in response to his prolonged absence. A need to retreat is glimpsed here and it is one that marks his deft ability at using language:

> FESTE Let her hang me. He that is well hanged in this
> world needs to fear no colours. (1.5.4-5)

The reference to "well-hanged" is clear evidence of Feste's ability at wordplay, a key feature of his mode of rhetoric; he could be alluding to the status of man awaiting his capital punishment, unafraid of the fate awaiting him or to a man so sexually well-endowed that he need fear no one.

Upon deeper inspection though, there is evidence that Feste is starting to form a mode of rhetoric relating to his perceived status as an "allowed fool," which he believes can exonerate his absence from the court. This rhetorical mode is seen to be part of a frequently recurring verbal disguise helping to mask any fears and anxieties he may have about any potential challenges to his perceived status. Therefore, by arming himself with the verbalized conviction of his status, Feste masks those fears of demotion and expulsion in a desire to convince himself and others that he has the right to survive being dismissed from the court. As he continues to avoid providing Maria with an explanation for his absence, it feels, as Karen Coddon contends, that Feste's "refusal of interrogation risks a coerced expulsion from discourse entirely" (1993, 316). We are immediately drawn to the irony inherent in the disguise of Sir Topas that Feste is going to play; the role of

---

[8] Draper offers his own quite plausible explanation for Feste's long absence:

> Such folly would strike Elizabethans at once as strange, especially in a competent and settled fool. Surely he must have ample reason to desert the lucrative semi-sinecure that he enjoyed amidst the creature comforts of Olivia's amply provided household. Why then did Feste, who clearly valued the fruits of good living and was, moreover, a house-keeper in the community, jeopardize himself by running off ? The Elizabethans doubtless saw the reason without being told: Orsino's suit had been pending for some time; and Feste soon decided that the charming and lovesick Duke would win his mistress' hand; at least, he hints as much. Professional policy required that he visit this Duke, take measure of his tastes, and if possible curry his favor: thus he risked the present to insure the future (1942, 28).

interrogator willingly inhabited. It is his discourse, as I shall shortly elucidate, that will indeed be deemed (by Olivia) to remain free from the threats of such expulsion, an important conferral of the status that Feste so earnestly seeks. In the meantime, Feste feels he must begin to outline his own defence of fools:

> FESTE: Well, God give them wisdom that have it: and
> Those that are fools, let them use their talents. (1.5.13-14)

Feste is clearly aggrieved with what he perceives to be a dim view accorded to fools by society. The jester, he claims, is capable of much more and is therefore denied by others in exercising those abilities.[9] Feste may be evidencing signs of a withdrawal from his public role but when required to perform it, he remains (as I will go onto show) in masterful control of his mode of rhetoric enabling him to maintain his verbal disguising of his inner-anxieties, those threats to his status and fears of demotion, while imparting his bitter and ironic social commentaries with great effect.

Olivia's appearance alongside her steward, Malvolio, clearly arouses further anxieties within Feste's inner-self and seeking to enter the role of jester, he aims to construct his identity with the aim of survival and to disguise his fears of banishment: "Wit, an't be thy will, put me into good fooling!" (30). It is his wit that Feste depends on in order to arm himself and potentially save himself from Olivia's wrath. What follows next is I believe Feste struggling to accommodate his public and private persona, which results, via the mode of nonsense, in a verbal disguise in the form and appearance of comedic fiction. Here, Feste creates his own illusion, a nonsensical construction of an invented Latin authority:

> FESTE: Those wits that think they have thee do very oft prove
> fools, and I that am sure I lack thee may pass for a wise
> man. For what says Quinapalus? "Better a witty fool
> than a foolish wit." (1.5.31-34)

Feste is trying to employ (as we shall often see in this jester) such nonsensical construction which enters and disrupts his discourse while helping to disguise his real, innermost feelings.

Feste faces a flurry of continued disapproval from within the court which forces the jester to intensify his defence of fools, employing a verbal disguise of his fears of demotion, with the aim

[9] Keir Elam also points to a potential pun here, where 'talents' becomes 'talons' – and so we may conclude, Elam adds, that "let those who have no wisdom use their claws" (2008,185). Given that Feste's foolery does indeed become one invested with the modes of slander, loathing and aggression (as I shall later contend), Elam's interpretation seems quite apt.

to exonerate himself and survive. Olivia is equally, if not more so displeased at seeing Feste again than Maria is; her orders are to ‘Take the fool away” (35). Accusations now begin to fly at Feste – his jokes are no longer funny (“you’re a dry fool” 37) and like Maria, his absence has proved him unreliable in the service of her court (“Besides, you grow dishonest” 38). This prompts Feste to begin his attempt to exonerate himself through his fooling. In doing so, he not only turns to the mode of rhetoric but also the mode of improvisation to mask his feelings of anxiety as he designs his manipulation of Olivia in an attempt to forgive his long absence. Despite these surfacing anxieties, Feste remains convinced that he is possessed of the intelligence necessary to successfully plead his case, to prove his master the fool. It is through the rhetorical device of his “simple syllogism” (46) – which I shall comment on later as it relates to a different aim within the construction of Feste’s identity within the social context – which finally attains Olivia’s consent in trying to do so.

Feste, it seems, never fails to impress us with the range of devices employed within his mode of rhetoric (as well as the scheme of his improvisational mode) and armed with this verbal disguise, battening down his fears of expulsion or demotion, he turns to a catechism in the desire to attain Olivia’s approval. In doing so, a fascinating insight appears as the jester seems to be in the throes of anticipating and rehearsing the future part of Sir Topas, a typical feature of the individual immersed within self-fashioning. In this scene you sense that Feste is entering a priest-like role, while actually performing what Keir Elam calls “a mock-religious interrogation of Olivia” (2008,188). In his desire for his own personal survival, to retain his services in Olivia’s court, his mode of priestly mockery surfaces into his discourse:

> FOOL: Good madonna, why mourn’st thou?
> OLIVIA: Good Fool, for my brother’s death.
> FOOL: I think his soul is in hell, madonna.
> OLIVIA: I know his soul is in heaven, Fool.
> FOOL: The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your
> brother’s soul, being in heaven. (1.5.62-67) [10]

At this point Olivia seems to offer a sign of exoneration – “doth he not / mend ?” (69-70) while inviting an opinion from Malvolio. His response (“Infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool” (71-72)) is not one Feste hopes to hear. It seems also to allude to the fact that Feste

[10] Alan S. Downer feels that Feste is mocking also the very beliefs of Christianity here, describing his catechism as the presentation of “the common-sense view of a sentimental and un-Christian attitude” (1952, 262).

is a man of advanced years, and now we realise that his bitter observations have resulted from a wealth of experience. Despite such a confronting of his inner-fears, it is clear that Feste must have taken some satisfaction with the outcome of his conceit and it is one, as I contended, that he desires to re-employ in that later role of Sir Topas.

Indeed, it is the continuing import of Malvolio's accusations in this scene which probably help necessitate the return of Feste's priest-like character in the desire to seek revenge. At this point in the play, Feste does appear have retreated into his mode of darkness, a silence that characterized his emergence into the play. And yet, it is Olivia who actually saves Feste, accusing Malvolio of going too far with his accusations, being "sick of self-love" (86). Soon, she delivers the line which re-stamps Feste's passport to entering her court while re-approving his performing licence:

> OLIVIA: There is no slander
> In an allowed fool though he do nothing but rail;
> nor no railing in a known discreet man though he do
> nothing but reprove. (1.5.89-92)

Feste is pleased to hear Olivia's defence and ends with "thou / speak'st well of fools" (93-94). It seems now that the jester's integrity and standing with the court have been restored and Olivia is now prepared to forgive Feste for his past transgressions. However, Olivia sounds a cautionary note towards Feste that "your fooling grows old and / people dislike it" (106-107).[11] It seems that Feste is not exactly the most popular member of Olivia's entourage despite his recent forgiveness and this opinion can only add to those deeper anxieties within Feste. Olivia is making Feste aware that his position at court could well be under threat and that he had better polish up his act in order to regain what appears a somewhat lost reputation. Clearly, there remains a need for the jester to maintain his verbal disguising, but this time masking those fears relating to his age. Feste's original

[11] Peter Hall encapsulates not only the sense of unpopularity of Feste within the court but also his overall significance to the plot of *Twelfth Night*. Subsequently, Feste is viewed as:

> bitter, insecure. . . his jokes now tarnished and not very successful. He is the creation of a professional entertainer, and we may perhaps relate him to John Osborne's Archie Rice, or to that fearful misanthropy which overtakes most comics when they begin to despise their audiences. He is suffered by all, and liked by few. He is the most perceptive and formidable character in the play (quoted in Greif 1988, 67).

aim to survive in the court, while constructing his identity within it, is re-awakened because of this need to restore a lost reputation.

Feste is now pardoned but has nonetheless to secure those necessary financial compensations in assuring his continuing survival within the court. The jester therefore calls upon a persuasive rhetorical mode to extract payment from those around him, disguising those fears of a man who potentially faces a life of destitution in the latter stages of his life. In being persuasive, much attention is given to his mode of improvisation and the guiding conviction within Feste that he is, foremost, the constructor of his own identity within his social context. Moreover, Feste's own construction here is seen to be motivated by the ideas of self-interest and cunning.[12] When goaded into performing his first song of the play in Act 2 Scene 3, Feste desires payment for these services. His way of persuading his audience to give payment is contrived, as Keir Elam notices, through the jester admitting an extravagant fondness for beer ("and the Myrmidons are not bottle-ale houses" (26-27)) which generates Feste's need, "for another *gratility* [gratuity] from his companions" (2008,214). As a result, Sir Toby is happy to oblige the performer with a sixpence. Later attempts in the play, to extract payments are marked in the scene where Viola (as Cesario) is quick to respond to Feste's own jibe that she too is one of those fools who "walk about the orb like the sun" (37), her "wisdom" (40) discredited as only foolishness:

> VIOLA: Nay, an thou pass upon me, I'll no more with thee.
> Hold, there's expenses for thee. [*Gives coin.*] (3.1.41-42)

Viola desires to bid Feste farewell, hoping to do so with such a payment. She doesn't succeed and he strongly hints for further recompense in "Would not a pair of these have bred, sir?" (48).[13] Allied to his masterful mode of rhetoric is this mode of improvisation and Feste uses this rhetorical device to not only disguise his fears of potential destitution but to provide him with the necessary means to live. In fact, his professedly nonsensical conundrum that "I would play Lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to / bring a Cressida to this Troilus" (50-51) only is a further, clever ruse to beg for another coin. Feste also extracts further payment in a scene where he seems convinced that Sebastian is really Cesario. The jester appears agitated at first and this activates within the

[12] I refer to Rhodri Lewis' assessment of the motives governing identity construction that I outlined earlier (2017, 102).
[13] I would therefore disagree with A.C. Bradley's contention that Feste is seen to be offended at taking money for his services (1916, quoted in Ed. Wells, S. 1986, 19) as he clearly relishes in maximizing his return from his performances as his later goading of money from Duke Orsino in Act 5 will testify.

disguising of his inner-anxieties, a mode of slander ("I am afraid this great lubber the world will prove a cockney" (13-14)) and then an outright plea for compliance, "I prithee now ungird thy strangeness" (14). Sebastian responds with a further gratuity for Feste as the jester slanderously comments that such "wise men that give fools money get themselves a good / report, after fourteen years' purchase" (20-22). The commentary remarks at those who seem to gain societal distinction at such a high fee.[14] In the play's final act, we see Orsino clearly impressed by Feste's verbal wizardry, offering him monetary reward for his services. This prompts the jester to re-employ both his modes of rhetoric and improvisation in the extracting of further rewards:

> FESTE: Put your grace in your pocket, sir, for this once,
> and let your flesh and blood obey it. (5.1.29-30)

Clever wordplay abounds as Feste toys with the expression "your grace," as Keir Elam notes, which is generally considered to be an appropriate address towards a duke (Elam 2008,322). Donald Hedrick also notes an important link here between Feste's insistence for more payment and the need for the jester to quickly and adroitly re-invent his role, where "each escalation of income for Feste requires his own opalescent persona, continually forming variety and novelty" (2012, 34). In the verbal disguising of a further role in the hope of a further coin, Feste is clearly seeking to capitalize on the duke's generosity:

> FESTE: *Primo, secundo, tertio* is a good play, and the old
> saying is, the third pays for all. The triplex, sir, is a
> good tripping measure, or the bells of Saint Bennet,
> sir, may put you in mind—one, two, three. (5.1.33-36)[15]

Orsino initially denies Feste his third reward but hints at its prospect if the jester can arrange a meeting between himself and Olivia. Feste may also be hinting here, as Karin Coddon perceives, that he is naming his price while demanding payment for his services rendered. Feste is looking beyond "the mythic, feudal world of loyal service" to remind us that "festivity itself is purchased at the same outlandishly inflated rate that swells Orsino's plaints of love or Olivia's grandiloquent

---

[14] Keir Elam notes this is "a reference to the economic laws of the Elizabethan land market in which the purchase value of land was equivalent to twelve years' rent" (2008,301). So, the implication is, Elam continues, that Sebastian (amongst the others) who have provided Feste with gratuities, "have paid more than the market rate for his gratitude" (301).

[15] Paul Dean mentions Feste's act of begging for a third coin as one of many references in the play which he believes "reveals a marked interest in triads and their resolution into monads" (2001,51).

self-denial" (1993, 317). Despite the feeling of entrapment he experiences, Feste nonetheless is noted here for his entrepreneurial opportunism in the attempt to maximise his revenue with the resources available to him.

4.2.3 Disguising Fears of Boredom

Feste's appearance in the play, as Thad Logan comments, is marked somewhat by an apathetic nature and indicates someone who is now "disillusioned, cynical and bored" (1982, 229). The image of the traditional court jester, the source of merriment and mirth, is instantly shattered and replaced with its negation, the presence of a man carrying the scars from his long absence, still clearly affected by the desire to retreat from his role because it appears that he has finally outgrown it. To verbally disguise his fears of boredom, there has to be a way for Feste to gain pleasure from the experience, not only through those compensations of monetary rewards; there is a reminder that in desiring this pleasure that he remains an exemplar of Rhodri Lewis' conviction that self-interest is one of the prime forces underpinning human affairs, the heart of one's motives in constructing identity within the social context (2017,102). The methods he uses to derive this personal pleasure are through his musical command of melody in song and spoken discourse afforded through his professional trade. Within his songs and a wealth of other verbalized conceits, I will show how Feste also utilizes them with an additional aim in mind; to fully exert control over others through the potency of his performance. The intent to apply this control disguises his own inner-fears which concern the self-fashioning subject's ongoing struggle with suppressed self-identity. Other characters also attest to Feste's ability to possess this controlling force. There is frequent reference to the jester's capabilities with language and music which, in turn, engenders a continuing endorsement for his hidden, deceptive practices. As I will depict, such is Feste's growing sensitivity to the reactions of his audience that it is indeed their influence which seems to help shape his construction of identity in the social context.

Feste's appearance alongside Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek in Act 2 Scene 3, shows the jester employing humour into the proceedings, a man seeking to derive pleasure while masking the fear of boredom from entering his tried and tested life. He greets the two knights, and elicits a curious and enigmatic reply from Sir Toby:

FESTE: How now, my hearts ? Did you never see the
picture of 'we three'? (2.3.15-16).
SIR TOBY: Welcome ass. Now let's have a catch.[16] (2.3.16-17)

Sir Toby appears to identify Feste as this third player in a group of fools[17] although Keir Elam contends that "the implication seems to be that the third loggerhead is the audience – us – witnessing and trying to make sense of the joke . . . there can be little doubt that Feste's gaze goes out beyond the bounds of the stage" (2008,11). The feeling remains therefore that Feste is not only directing his modes of mockery and loathing towards society's fools within Illyria but also to those witnessing the spectacle of Illyria itself.

We are reminded that others help construct Feste's identity within his social context as we witness Sir Andrew's subsequent recollection of Feste's performance the previous evening. It is one filled with lavish praise and it seems that, finally, someone is vocally appreciative of the fool's talents:

SIR ANDREW: I had rather than forty shillings I had such a leg, and
so sweet a breath to sing as the fool has. (2.3.19-20)

We have yet to hear Feste's singing voice, although we are about to be acquainted with it as Sir Toby has demanded "a catch" from him. The remainder of Sir Andrew's recollection is revealing as he recalls what appears to be a further enactment of Feste's nonsensical comedic fictions:

SIR ANDREW: In sooth, thou
wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou
spok'st of Pigrogromitus of the Vapians passing the
equinoctial of Queubus. (2.3.20-23)

Once more we are reminded that Feste is trying to utilize a nonsensical construction to help disguise his real, innermost feelings as he contends with the struggle to assimilate his private and public

[16] Keir Elam believes that this picture "alludes to a painting or inn sign representing two asses or loggerheads; the caption 'we three' implicated the spectator – here presumably Feste himself – as the third ass or loggerhead" (2008, 212).

[17] Paul Dean, in his essay '*Twelfth Night* and the Trinity' (2001, 500-515) picks up on this mention of a triadic structure amongst what he believes to be a series of such references throughout the play. It is these structures, triads, which he believes Shakespeare wishes to resolve into nomads (500). In this example, the "we three" later resolves itself in Sir Toby's proposal to sing "a catch that will draw three souls out of one weaver" (2.3.56-57).

persona. Indeed, when Feste responds to Sir Andrew's comments, trying to explain why he pocketed Sir Andrew's gratuity, the jester's discourse appears to proceed in a similar vein:[18]

> FESTE: I did impeticos thy gratility – for Malvolio's nose
> is no whipstock, my lady has a white hand and the
> Myrmidons are no bottle-ale houses. (2.3.25-27)

Sir Andrew is delighted with this response ("Why this is the best fooling, when all is done" (28-29)) as its discourse appears to him like a seamless and worthy conclusion of Feste's fooling and characterization from the previous night.

What proceeds after the rendition of the song, is indeed the feeling that Feste is literally getting those around him to dance to his tune as he desires to disguises his fear of boredom through the wielding of his mode of improvisation, gulling both Sir Toby and Sir Andrew. The music of Feste is marked by its "contagion"[19] and soon the two knights are willing to continue the musical extemporizing with the jester holding a conductor's baton, the realization that his desire to exert control over others is complete. J.W. Draper reminds us that Feste "is the most musical of Shakespeare's jesters" (1942, 25) and in this and other scenes in the play, there remains a wealth of evidence to support this view. Taking the musical analogy a little further, Gareth Lloyd Evans believes that such are the skills of his ability to orchestrate others, that Feste is nonetheless responsible for conducting the plot of *Twelfth Night* itself: "He is on stage virtually all the time, not as the usual wry observer but as a kind of conductor of the action. You feel they dance to his tune and he dispenses destiny" (quoted in Grief 1988, 76).

Later, Duke Orsino is another character seemingly beguiled by Feste's conductor's baton. As we witnessed at the beginning of the play, Duke Orsino again requests, in Act 2 Scene 4, that the air of Illyria be filled with music. His muse is of course, Feste, and a song he had sung the previous evening although Orsino initially believes it was Cesario who had originally performed it.[20] Orsino recalls the song as "old and plain" (43) and "is silly sooth / And dallies with the innocence of love / Like the old age" (46-48). Feste is called for and re-appears with Orsino's

---

[18] Keir Elam picks up on this passage and offers an explanation for what "has usually been taken as pure nonsense" (2002, 214). He contends that Sir Andrew's comment in line 28 "may suggest, instead, that there is an overall meaning, namely that the clown needs money, and neither Malvolio nor Olivia gives him any" (214).

[19] Elam points to a further reference here to the black plague, thought to be carried amongst its victims "through the breath" (2008,216).

[20] Curio's comment (including the only time that Feste is actually named in the play) that Feste is "a fool that the Lady Olivia's father took much delight in" (2.4.10-11) is, in my opinion, a confirmation that the jester is in his advanced years.

gentleman, Curio. Expecting to hear a simple, innocent love song, Feste proceeds to sing something quite to the contrary. The opening lines "Come away, come away death, / And in sad cypress let me be laid" (2.4.51-52) witness Feste in full flow in his mode of mockery, where in Alan Downer's words Feste is seen to be "mocking, indirectly, the Duke's passion" to show that along with his previous mocking of Olivia that both of "their loves are sentimental and foolish" (1952, 263). Once again, Feste is seeking to invert our assumptions and this time, he cuts off any sympathies the audience may have had for the Duke's unrequited love. Orsino is also clearly aggravated by Feste's continued presence and attempts to match the jester at wordplay with "Give me now leave to leave thee" (72), punning quite cleverly between the use of "leave" as a noun and secondly, as a verb. Feste is left to confront his inner-anxieties, perhaps sensing a challenge to his role as traditional dispenser of wordplay in the court. This prompts a response, a verbal disguise of these fears armed with his customary mode of mockery, targetting the Duke's rather moody behaviour:

FESTE: Now the melancholy god protect thee and the
tailor make thy doublet of changeable taffeta, for thy
mind is a very opal. I would have men of such constancy
put to sea, that their business might be everything and
their intent everywhere, for that's it that always makes
a good voyage of nothing. Farewell. (2.4.73-78)

As Keir Elam perceives, Feste is also seeming to express some adoration towards Orsino, while addressing a comparison of the Duke to the luxurious objects of taffeta and the opal (2008, 231). However, the desire to ensure Orsino remains a subject for mockery remains paramount as Feste wishes the Duke cast away to sea in the attempt to establish something from an ostensibly meaningless voyage.

At the beginning of Act 5, Feste emerges with Malvolio's letter and as he once again affirms his presence, we are privy to yet another of the jester's "paradoxical logical games" as Keir Elam names them (2008,320) which have become a defining cornerstone of his mode of rhetoric and typical of a verbal disguise characterising his bid to seek pleasure and exercise control over others:

FABIAN: Now, as thou lov'st me, let me see his letter.
FESTE: Good Master Fabian, grant me another request.
FABIAN: Anything.
FESTE: Do not desire to see this letter. (5.1.1-4)

Karin Coddon believes that Feste's comment here is "motivated simply by a characteristic deflection of interrogation for its own sake" (1993, 321-322). The jester's insecurities are therefore again addressed as we wonder why he is avoiding being questioned – is this another instance where to openly address and confront his inner-anxieties would prove too traumatic as he seeks urgent protection within the motley of an "allowed fool"? Olivia also helps to exacerbate those insecurities within Feste as she later stops him reading the letter aloud, seemingly dissatisfied by his request to "perpend, my princess, and give ear," (294-295). Malvolio himself appears with the letter purportedly written by Olivia, only to discover that Maria is the director behind the conceit. Feste is keen to assert his own role within Maria's scheme although we are reminded that in doing so that he had not always been so willing at each step to involve his full participation. In a series of taunts[21] designed at re-employing those insults originally hurled at him, Feste is adamant that his revenge on Malvolio is complete, one that Cynthia Lewis believes is marked by a "passive aggressive" tone (quoted in Schiffer, 267):

> FESTE: And thus the
> whirligig of time brings in his revenges. (5.1.369-370)

Malvolio is seemingly revenged but Feste hardly emerges in the guise of a glorious avenger. Instead, he has emerged as a tentative participant in Maria's schemes while again appearing to be cast aside from Olivia's affections.

4.2.4 Disguising Fears of Entrapment

It is Malvolio's taunts regarding Feste's social status (particularly that he is "gagged" (1.5.83) that prompts the jester to mount a strong case in his defence of fools, that I outlined earlier. That defence is not only geared to support Feste's aim of attaining survival in the court which I have already showed. Also, this defence becomes a basis for Feste to emphasise the importance of a licensed jester to society (and persuading others to do this too) while arguing that his profession should command equal social status in relation to other professions in society. What is more, Feste is equipped with a belief that he, as man of low status, is a subversive force, able to advance the

[21] These are "Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them" (364-365) originally spoken by Malvolio in Act 3 Scene 4 and "Madam, why laugh you at such a barren rascal, and you smile not, he's gagged?" (368-369) originally the basis of Malvolio's insult of Feste from Act 1 Scene 5 (79-83).

cause of those capable of advancing in society. The irony is not lost on those kings in the second tetralogy that only they could be seen as the subversive and containing force in society. As we will see (and have seen with the disguise of Sir Topas), it is the very discourses of those superior in rank that he seeks to appropriate in the desire to subvert authority. In doing so, Feste seems to be a parallel case to Rhodri Lewis' Hamlet outlined in *Visions of Darkness* (2017, 43-111), a figure actively denunciating received discourses in a desire to advocate his own philosophy of life where the fool receives recognition and its deserved equal rank in society. The aim of constructing his identity here is therefore to seek advancement from the generally perceived lower status that Feste's rank in society affords. In turn, Feste needs to verbally disguise those insecurities related to others' perceptions of himself as someone of lower status in the court.

In the play's first act, Feste is drawn to making his first comments on the topic of professional rank and social status, seeking advancement of his role within society. This comes directly after he displays another example of his dazzling array of rhetorical devices, what he defines as a "simple syllogism" (46) in the attempt to convince Olivia that she herself is the fool and should therefore be taken away.[22] Olivia is initially unmoved by Feste's device and this prompts Feste to strongly object with "Misprison in the highest degree!" (51). This line is revealing as we also glimpse a further reason for Feste's silent retreat prior to the beginning of the play – not only has he become a little jaded with the role but he is also revealing his frustrations and anxieties at the social status that his role as jester affords him. This view is supported by his proceeding line, "*cucullus / non facit monachum*" (51-52)[23] which is firstly revealing in that Feste uses Latin in his desire to appropriate and subvert the discourses of those higher in status. Secondly, this statement indicates that there is more to a fool than merely the apparel that contains him. Such a belief is soon reiterated in "that's as much to say as I wear not / motley in my brain" (52-53) – his mental capacities are superior, he believes, to those associated with typical fools. The overall impression

---

[22] FESTE: Two faults, madonna, that drink and good counsel
will amend. For give the dry Fool drink, then is the fool
not dry. Bid the dishonest man mend himself; if he
mend, he is no longer dishonest; if he cannot, let the
botcher mend him. Anything that's mended is but
patched; virtue that transgresses is but patched with
sin, and sin that amends is but patched with virtue. If
that this simple syllogism will serve, so; if it will not,
what remedy? As there is no true cuckold but calamity,
so beauty's a flower. - The Lady bade take away the Fool.
Therefore, I say again, take her away. (1.5.39-49)

[23] Elam provides the translation as "the hood does not make the monk" (2008, 187).

therefore is of a man believing that his intelligence in performing the role deserves more social recognition and status while simultaneously expressing his anxiety at being powerless to do anything to resolve the dilemma.[24] As Karen Greif sees here, Feste is "entrapped, or at the very least defined, by his role – a hired clown who sports his mask because it is the only sanctioned outlet for his insights. His self-containment is now a sign of alienation" (1988,77). It is important to realise, too, that the mask Feste is sporting is one very much defined by its rhetorical mode. It is a verbal disguise whose discourse can at any moment be compromised by the anxieties of Feste's inner-self, resulting in the expression of that alienation.

No more is that feeling of isolation felt within the jester when subject to the import of Malvolio's comments. This usually provokes great anxiety with Feste as we witness in this encounter with Malvolio. Feste initially states the conviction that it is Malvolio who should be afraid of the infirmity of authentic foolishness. Malvolio's response to this, is:

> MALVOLIO I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a
> barren rascal. I saw him put down the other day with an
> ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone.
> Look you now, he's out of his guard already. Unless
> you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged.
> I protest I take these wise men that crow so at these set
> kind of fools no better than the fools' zanies. (1.5.79-85)

Malvolio's comments have clearly touched a raw nerve as they stab right at the heart of Feste's insecurities that he has been hitherto trying to disguise with his verbal dexterities. Firstly, his ability as a jester is questioned as Malvolio feels that the jester very much remains at the mercy and perceptions of those around him. Furthermore, in saying that Feste is "gagged," Malvolio is addressing those anxieties which Feste feels are inherent in performing his public role, namely, the sense of entrapment within the fool's social status. Furthermore, Malvolio's final parting insult attacks the category of intelligent fool that Feste feels he belongs to and which this jester deems more deserving of recognition and social status.

I have already touched upon the "catch" that Feste performs with Sir Toby and it is important to revisit it as it also references the jester's aim to seek advancement. Verse one of the

[24] Karin Coddon provides a useful summary of the "copious propaganda [which] exhorted a minutely classified, divinely ordained social hierarchy" that Feste desires to reject (1993, 310). As Coddon goes onto add, pointing to the desire for social mobility later shown by Malvolio, Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek in particular, such propaganda "was belied by actual social practice [where] . . . rampant title-mongering would further erode the primacy of blood and birth as sole determiners of social rank" (310).

requested catch begins "O mistress mine, where are you roaming?" (38) soon alludes to a "true love . . . / That can sing both high and low" (39-40). As Feste arms his mode of rhetoric with this verse, he appears to confidently state the range of his vocal abilities.[25] A second glance at the line however reveals something more within his verbal disguising employed through song. Initially I claimed that the song is used to disguise boredom and the conflict of identity, with the aim to seek pleasure and exert control over others. Also, the medium is equally used to disguise his fears relating to his low status, while the reference within to singing high and low shows Feste seeking advancement of his status, claiming his profession possesses an ability to appeal to audiences compromised of many societal ranks.

The three proceed to invent another "catch," which further references Feste's verbal disguising of the fears related to his low status and the aim to seek advancement. This catch Sir Andrew entitles "Thou knave" (62-63) and Feste is quick to pick up on Sir Andrew's label, replying:

> FESTE: 'Hold thy peace, thou knave', knight? I shall be
> constrained in't to call thee knave, knight. (2.3.64-65)

Aside from the comedic opportunities afforded by three men about to repeat the potentially bawdy phrase, Karin Coddon perceptively infers something that would sit comfortably within the scheming so indicative of Feste's mode of improvisation. Coddon contends that "'Hold thy peace, thou knave', knight?" is a moment when Feste "playfully reminds [Sir Toby and Sir Andrew] that his own cooperation in the song entails a transgression of rank" (1993, 317). It is as though Feste is trying to show that what is foolish in this scene is not exemplified by the three men performing the lewd and suggestive song in the street. Instead, it is the very notion of social order itself which is subject to ridicule and it is supported by Coddon's additional belief that Feste is very much commenting on "the knights' complicity in the deconstruction of social order" (317). As Coddon concludes, Feste's subsequent line – "Beshrew me, the knight's in admirable fooling" (2.3.79) – "places his social superior in the role of servant, jester, *player*" (318). It seems that through his verbal disguise, Feste has the power and vision to show how a seeming truth or assumption may

[25] Elam notes that the apparent vocal range in Feste was written with Robert Armin in mind, a versatile actor within the Lord Chamberlain's men: "Since Armin appears to have been a counter-tenor, moreover, his high-pitched voice was an appropriate substitute for the unbroken voice of the boy actor" (2008,135).

be inverted; Sir Andrew, a man of supposedly higher rank, is being shown as a performer of lower status which therefore instantly deconstructs the delineations of social class.

At the beginning of Act 3 we see Feste stating some tenets within his philosophy of language, particularly looking at the relation of words to their meaning. This relationship, he believes, is too binding and it is a theme which Feste feels is mirrored in the perceived social order where his rank is deemed low. Disguising his own fears of his low status, he seeks not only an advancement of his status but also for the advancement for words, ascribing both himself and his use of language with an ability to subvert and escape rigid definition. Feste's view on language is one not dissimilar to the more contemporary beliefs of the linguist and founding father of semiotics, Ferdinand de Saussure: [26]

> FESTE: To see this age! A sentence is but
> a cheverel glove to a good wit: how quickly the wrong
> side may be turned outward! (3.1.11-13)

As Keir Elam points out, without specifically referencing de Saussure, Feste questions the relationship between words and the objects they signify (as de Saussure would much later do), thereby scrutinising "the reliability of language as a representation of truth" (2008, 251). Soon, Feste's views on language and meaning acquire a broader, cultural definition within the contexts of both oral and written discourse:

> FESTE: But indeed words
> are very rascals, since bonds disgraced them. (3.1.19-20)

Feste seems to launch a cynical attack here on the cultural and societal attempts to replace oral agreements with written ones in the attempt, as Randall Martin puts it, "to fix a one-way relationship between words and referents and restore the integrity of public language" (quoted in *Twelfth Night: A Critical Reader*, 137). Feste is drawing a parallel here to the frustrations at the seeming imprisonment he suffers within the confines of his social position, contending that it is

---

[26] See in particular de Saussure's 1916 *Cours de linguistique générale*, Ed. Bally, C. and A. Sechehaye, with the collaboration of A. Riedlinger. Lausanne and Paris: Payot; Trans. Baskin, W. *Course in General Linguistics*, Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1977. Keir Elam points out Shakespeare's more immediate influence: "linguistic skepticism was increasingly prominent in Shakespeare's time, and found its most authoritative expression in [Michel de] Montaigne" (2008,252).

also words that he believes have suffered a similar sense of incarceration. The "bonds" as Keir Elam points out, can also be seen as another of Feste's clever puns on those "shackles" that have begun to entrap words within written discourse which has somewhat rendered those words as something "made disreputable by being too often broken" (2008, 252). And so, Feste imagines himself in decline with a kindred spirit – embodied in the words which are seen to lose their social recognition within the meaning of oral discourse. The public jests of a man that have grown wearisome and tired, a brand of fooling captivating fewer audiences, are seen to be congruent, in nature, with the similarly acquired characteristic of society's oral discourses.

Feste's continuing lack of admiration within Illyrian society is noted in the same scene and sensing this, it affects his ability to disguise his intense jealousy and anxiety at Viola's newfound status. The results of this spur the jester onto making another case for his advancement. Viola's assumption that Feste "car'st for / nothing" (25-26) jolts the jester into his mode of loathing, prompting "I do care for something; but in my / conscience sir, I do not care for you" (27-28). Feste's response threatens to unmask that intense jealousy and anxiety he feels at Viola's newfound status having been chosen as the preferred go-between between Olivia and Orsino. His mode of loathing reaches out again when Feste responds to Viola's "Art not thou the Lady Olivia's fool?" (30) to which the jester shortly replies:

> FESTE: I am indeed not her fool, but her
> corrupter of words. (3.1.34-35)

In his continued state of resistance and unkindness to Viola, Feste aims to seek advancement of his status, attempting to accentuate some potential subversive qualities which he affords to himself. These qualities enable him to adopt a new role which Karin Coddon believes to be a degenerator of language (1993, 319). In fact, what Feste has just done to Viola in lines 27 and 28, is in Coddon's view, a demonstration of this degenerative viewpoint as he seeks to apprehend the language of the nobility to undermine them while "exposing the semiotic and political slipperiness of ostensibly stable categories and values" (1993, 319). Ultimately, Feste's aim to seek advancement of his social status emphasises his desire to adopt verbal disguising. This disguising must, in turn, include a mode of rhetoric which borrows and then incorporates the discourses of those superior in rank.

Feste continues to uphold his defence of fools as is evidenced at the end of his appearance in this scene. What follows this exit, though, is Viola's apparent supporting statement strengthening

the jester's claim to social advancement, as it becomes clear that others are often responsible for constructing the identity of Feste within Illyrian society. Feste departs the stage with:

> FESTE: The matter, I hope, is not great sir, begging but a
> beggar: Cressida was a beggar. (3.1.53-54)

The implication, as Keir Elam puts it, is that there cannot be much difference, socially, between Viola/Cesario and Feste – a noble and a jester - as both clearly have to beseech those superior in rank (2008, 254). Then follows an expression of Viola's admiration for the jester. Her speech almost takes on the form of a paean to Feste's modes of rhetoric and improvisation, a clear show of praise for his perceived virtuosity in his verbal disguising, a testament to his skill, wit and intelligence:

> VIOLA: This fellow is wise enough to play the fool,
> And to do that well craves a kind of wit.
> He must observe their mood on whom he jests,
> The quality of persons, and the time,
> And, like the haggard, check at every feather
> That comes before his eye. This is a practice
> As full of labor as a wise man's art:
> For folly that he wisely shows is fit,
> But wise men, folly-fallen, quite taint their wit. (3.1.58-66)

While Viola's conclusion to her eulogy presages the arrival of two such folly-fallen men, Sirs Andrew and Toby, we are left with the impression in A.C. Bradley's words that Feste is clearly "superior in mind to his superiors in rank" (1986, 20).[27] This idea of a super intelligence behind the desire to seek social advancement is not lost as the play enters its next act.

Feste re-engages us with his presence at the beginning of Act 4[28] while engaged in conversation with Sebastian. It is a scene that witnesses Feste's belief in himself as a subversive force, armed with his tried and tested use of wordplay, masking his fears of low status while appropriating the discourse of epistemology, guided by his aim to seek advancement. As Keir Elam claims, the two characters "have apparently been discussing the question of [Sebastian's] identity" (2008, 299) before the scene has begun. Feste appears perplexed by this issue, seeming unable to

[27] Karin Coddon investigates the often received critical view that Viola's tribute to Feste is a thinly disguised tribute of Shakespeare's own, directed toward his own actor of fools, Robert Armin. Coddin concludes that there is much merit in this claim despite reading "Feste's function as strictly metadramatic" (1993, 320), citing one of Armin's own *Quips upon Questions* [which] articulates a similar theme" (320).
[28] Feste's absence (throughout the remainder of Act 3) from the company of those who seek to ridicule Malvolio (through the false construction and delivery of Olivia's letter) is notable.

deduce whether Sebastian and Cesario are one and the same. His puzzlement is reflected in a continual production of a comical excess of negatives:

> FESTE: No, I do not know you, nor
> I am not sent to you by my lady to bid you come speak
> with her, nor your name is not Master Cesario, nor this
> is not my nose neither. Nothing that is so is so. (4.1.5-8)

The allusion passes our eyes that Sebastian may not be Master Cesario although we need to pay attention to Feste's double negative. Feste has already brought to our attention how the meaning of words can easily be undermined, questioning language as a reliable representative of truth. Also, he has tried to show, through his own teasing of Olivia, Viola and the two Sirs (Andrew and Toby), that the underlying assumptions of a social class system can also be undermined. What he does here, through the wordplay so characteristic within his mode of rhetoric, is to don his cheverel glove and apply its inversion to the realm of epistemology. The overriding message here is 'nothing is as it seems' and we are reminded that there is always more than meets the eye. Such a conclusion is quite apposite for a character whose presence on the stage is frequently marked by (and noted for) his own absence from it.

In the plays' final act, Feste again seeks to disguise the effect that other character's derogatory perceptions of his social status have had upon him, prompting a further defence of fools within his aim to seek advancement. Duke Orsino appears, accompanied by Cesario and Curio. Feste greets the duke with the reply that "we are some of (Olivia's) trappings" (8) – on the one hand meaning his master's ornamental dispensations and yet also conveying the jester's frustrations at being encaged with his own social status. Feste proceeds to dazzle the duke with his penchant for paradoxical riddles:

> FESTE: Marry, sir, they praise me and make an ass of me.
> Now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass; so that by my
> foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself, and by my
> friends I am abused. So that, conclusions to be as kisses,
> if your four negatives make your two affirmatives, why
> then the worse for my friends and the better for my
> foes. (5.1.15-21)

The first two lines evidence continuing insecurity in the jester's mind as he recalls how his audiences (and indeed, his so-called friends) are capable of emitting seemingly contradictory responses to his performances. The conclusion seems to indicate that Feste best operates in

opposition to others as the jester tries to impose his own vision of the world where opposition and difference is reflected in everything we encounter – in the meaning of words, in the enforcement of the class system, in the appearance of objects.

As the play draws to an end, Feste is about to confront a bitter reality, one that begins to wash away his belief in his own subversive powers, disputing his claim to seek advancement. The realization of this reality is one that pervades his disguising, threatening to compromise it with devastating, dramatic effect. Feste briefly re-emerges and comments on the state of Sir Toby's drunkenness (5.1.194-195) to then later re-appear, clutching Malvolio's letter, with Fabian, Olivia and Viola in attendance. Asked how Malvolio is faring, Feste appears to reply in the tone of Sir Topas as "he holds Beelzebub at the / stave's end as well as a man in his case may do" (280-281). Olivia requests Feste to open and read the letter but is alarmed when the jester proceeds to enunciate its contents in a somewhat lunatic voice. Feste pleads his case that the delivery of the letter requires its "*vox*", (291) an appropriate and suitable form of delivery. As he is about to re-commence reading the letter, Feste is dramatically silenced by Olivia's intervention, handing the paper to Fabian. As Karin Coddon rightly infers, this is a significant moment in the play as it "serves to refigure – temporarily, at any rate – the intractable lines of social hierarchy heretofore overturned by playing" (1993,322). Feste is reminded quite starkly of the confines of his social position, the source of the considerable anxieties governing his inner-self and the struggle that continues within his self-fashioning.

The very final scene of the play serves as an apposite summary and conclusion to my study of Feste's uses of sartorial and verbal disguises as his final song indicates the fates of those aims the jester desired to seek in the construction of his identity in Illyrian society. Before I comment on these outcomes, it is worth noting the extent to which it is not only Feste but others within his society that help construct the jester's identity within his social context. Therefore, despite Feste believing himself to be at the driving seat of his identity construction, we are reminded how much of that construction does depend and rely on others' perceptions; the spectre afforded by Greenblatt of those power relations determining identity construction seems to be present here. With his final song we firstly reflect on the outcome of his first aim, to exercise survival within the court, masking fears of demotion and unemployment. In these final moments, it appears that his fears are realized. Feste appears to be again a subject cast in isolation, again remaining out of favour with his master, Olivia. Hugh Hunt hints that not only is the jester out of work but "his successor has probably

already been found" (quoted in Greif, 66). His isolation has also taken away the belief that he could control others with the power of his performance; there are no characters on the stage to witness his song and what remains is Feste's lyrical plea for a silent retreat, the domain of inwardness often coveted by the self-fashioning subject. The final song beginning "When that I was and a tiny little boy" (382) becomes a lamentation on Feste's life itself, as its different stages and encountered experiences flicker in front of him. We, the audience, wonder where Feste is heading, what the next stage of his life will be. Feste has also confronted a harsh reality. His aim to seek social advancement, armed with the desire to appropriate discourses of superior rank, employing a verbal disguise of his fears of low status, has just been crushed by Olivia's intervention in the reading of Maria's crafted letter. Within the song, echoes of his frustrations with social class emerge in "'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate" (388). Soon, he appears to even cast a forlorn glance at his own marriage, "By swaggering could I never thrive" (392) – there remains, as Keir Elam notes, the impression that Feste "could not get away with bullying or making empty boasts to his wife" (2008, 353). There is a sense that each stage of life is faced and then reconciled with the refrain "With hey, ho, the wind and the rain" as Feste is now leading us towards an acceptance of his own fate, potentially facing banishment and subjection to the natural elements which he had been protected from in his time as an "allowed fool". There remains the impression, rather like Prospero at the end of *The Tempest* that he is prepared to drown his book, his reference manual of verbal disguising and improvisations. The play "is done" (400) and so is he. From the beginning of the play Olivia had remarked that his jesting had grown old and, in the end, Feste realizes this too. His parting legacy, as Anne Barton rightly sees it, is that Feste "has kept us continually aware of the realities of death and time" (quoted in Schiffer, 24). Perhaps now it is Feste who is personally contemplating both, preparing to turn his back on a life of self-fashioning, realising perhaps like *Richard II*, that only death can bring a release from the pressure in playing all of those roles that life presents you with.

4.3 Autolycus in Greenblattian Criticism

Greenblatt has very briefly commented on Autolycus during his academic career[29] and in doing so, he did not connect his assessment of the character with early modern subjectivity or political subversion. In 2010's *Will in the World*, it is Shakespeare himself who Greenblatt lies behind the mask of Autolycus (2010b, 371). Like the playwright, the rogue in the play has been "stripped of the protection of a powerful patron and hence revealed for what he is: a shape-changing vagabond and thief" (371). It is the rogue, Greenblatt adds, that illustrates Shakespeare's own awareness of his own trade, where money is extracted from the spectating public who are left "gaping at the old statue trick stolen from a rival" (371).[30] In 2016, while accepting an honorary degree from the University of Alicante, Greenblatt briefly references Autolycus as one of those "traveling entertainers, minstrels, jugglers, and hawkers" that arose from the social mobility that occurred during the time of Shakespeare and Cervantes (2016,7). It is now my intention to assess the social mobility to be found within the construction of Autolycus' flexible identity – one that is shaped very much by the people that he encounters along life's way.

4.4. Autolycus: The Rogue as a Lynchpin of Society and a Reformulator of Artistic Truth

Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale* provides a further opportunity to examine how self-fashioning creates reciprocity between a Shakespearean character and the social structure in which that character inhabits. As I did with Feste, I will examine Autolycus' construction of identity within his social context again focusing on the aims of that construction. I will contend that although Autolycus' aims of identity construction are similar to Feste, there is sometimes a marked difference to the nature of those fears that are being disguised. In addition, I wish to investigate the psychological impact of disguising on Autolycus, to assess the extent to which his anxieties and fears are surfacing into his discourse, such as we witnessed with Feste. As Shakespeare's rogue is more often in a change of costume than Feste, I will not devote two, separate analysis to Autolycus' sartorial and then verbal disguises. Instead, it is more apposite to show how both forms of disguise

[29] Indeed, Greenblatt has scarcely visited the play at all during his career with the notable exception of the introduction to the Norton Shakespeare (2000) where he makes a handful of references to the play (2000,1-59).

[30] Greenblatt is referring here to Shakespeare's own borrowing from Ovid's *Metamorphosis* and the story of Pygmalion, as well as Eurypides' *Alcestis*, of a female statue being made alive.

are clearly connected to the aims of Autolycus' identity construction within this social context., especially as this character consistently and swiftly operates in and out of costume. Central to Feste's construction of identity were the perceptions of others in influencing it and therefore I will look at Autolycus to assess to what extent this is true; is he also to be seemingly "gagged" by the power relations of his society as we witnessed with Feste?

As I did with Edgar in *King Lear*, my investigation will additionally contend that Autolycus performs a highly significant function in the execution of the plot within this play. In performing this function, it is misleading to view him, adopting the myriad of verbal and sartorial disguises as he does, as a mere representative of light entertainment, seemingly embodying a much-needed jollity and revitalization that had been sorely lacking throughout the play's initial meditation on the trials and tyrannies facing the kingdom of Sicilia. Autolycus' arrival, somewhat late into the action of *The Winter's Tale*, demands us to ask what exactly his purpose in the play is, and in doing so, we are drawn to providing an answer to Sir Arthur Quiller Couch's question, where he challenges "anyone to read the play through, to seat himself at table, and write down what Autolycus does to further the plot" (1931, 238-239).[31] Autolycus' function in *The Winter's Tale,* I will argue, is beyond that of a parody figure and there is nonetheless, important significance attached to his performance.

Central to this thesis is how any re-examination of Autolycus' function with *The Winter's Tale* connects itself to the character's employment of self-fashioning within disguise. As with Feste, Autolycus is fully able to appropriate self-fashioning by borrowing a dazzling array of discourses, forming a mode of rhetoric not only rivalling the jester in its verbal dexterity but also a distinct penchant for the love of role-playing itself as evidenced in particular by Edgar in *King Lear*.[32] As we shall see, there begins to emerge in his borrowed discourses, evidence of Autolycus' own submission to Protestantism and an apparent rejection of Catholicism that ultimately governs his self-fashioning. The seemingly confident rogue is also subject to the intense anxieties that propel the self-fashioning subject to disguise both verbally and sartorially. In addition, Autolycus' self-fashioning is seen to enlist those other modes of behaviour – improvisation and nonsense – in

[31] R.A. Foakes also captures the perception of other twentieth-century critics who make short-shrift of the value of Autolycus to the play. See especially Foakes (2005, 137-138).

[32] Joan Hartwig comments on Autolycus' adoption of his many disguises during the play, contending that the complex nature of his character "manifests itself most directly in his disguises. He is a Protean figure who seems to be undergoing a continuous metamorphosis, at least in his relationships with the other characters in the play" (1970, 22).

effecting his verbal disguises, while the expressions of desires and fears within this character as a self-fashioning subject are often felt in his modes of mockery and sometimes, inwardness.

Like Feste, Autolycus also is a figure concerned with an examination of perceived social truths while the rogue is able to direct our attention to the supposed truth outlined in art itself. He is the teller of the greatest number of tales within the play (Cox 1969, 285) and his role as a trickster supreme often makes us reflect on the believability of the play itself, which may well be seen to deceive the audience through its miraculous restoration of Hermione to life and the reunion of Leontes' family.

4.4.1 Disguising Fears of Destitution, Capture, Punishment and Execution

As Shakespeare often does throughout the canon of his plays, there is clear evidence of a prefiguring of the arrival of a character about to enter and irreversibly alter the chain of events. In Act 3, Scene 3, the Shepherd references the plight of the lower-classes, a world of "getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting" (3.3.60-62). The Shepherd's later reference to "things newborn" (3.3.111) not only directs our attention to the plight of Perdita but also anticipates that something, yet unknown, is about to enter the scene and engender a new understanding in the play. By the time of Act 4, Scene 1, the Chorus, Time, turns his glass upside-down and there remains a conviction, as John Pitcher feels, that "everything will be turned upside down . . . that all things could me made topsy turvy" (2010,245). The individual to be ascribed with such a power, to turn situations on their heads, is Autolycus.

Shakespeare's rogue is a figure more significant to the plot than just being a mirror that inverts and expresses the repressed perversions of Leontes, as Anne Marie Drew perceives him (1989,101). Autolycus, I will argue, as that rogue, is able to execute his tricks and conceits with great skill, cunning and craft, all to upgrade his positioning in whatever company he happens to find himself. Unlike Feste (who feared the continual threat of unemployment from the court) Autolycus has already found himself to be out of service, a previous employee at the Bohemian court. Within his aim to survive, there is a need to conceal his identity as he has already become, in a way, wanted. His existence is governed by a necessary fleeing from any previously constructed identities. Autolycus needs a source of income to survive and it is to the realms of crime, extraction, begging and thievery that he turns to. Within the responses of his inner-self to fears of destitution,

capture, punishment and execution, Autolycus employs a verbal disguise littered with continual references to the vocabulary of thievery, a discourse that borrows heavily from Robert Greene's own mythologizing of this knavish profession, *Second Cony-Catching*. However, it is not the case as Barbara A. Mowat perceives (1994, 58-71) to see Autolycus in any way limited or typecast by his roguish role. Instead, I will argue that in his quest for survival (and indeed those other aims of identity construction that I will investigate), he takes on the significant role of performative agent in this play, reminding us that his inclusion enables a significant reparation and reconciliation.[33] Unlike Feste, Autolycus is therefore not an outsider condemned to spend the rest of his days at a distance from the society he comments upon. He becomes involved and instead, remains, at the very heart of the play's desire to achieve a social good while extolling himself as a valid representative of a desire to view art through a broader appreciation of human nature – whatever licentious behaviour and discourses there are to be reflected in it.

During his opening song, he expresses allegiance, as we saw with Sir Jack Falstaff, to the mistress "the pale moon" (16) by whose countenance he steals. At its conclusion, Autolycus feels that it is apposite to provide the audience / reader with a fuller autobiography:

> AUTOLYCUS: My traffic is sheets. When the kite builds, look to
> lesser linen. My father named me Autolycus, who,
> being, as I am, littered under Mercury, was likewise a
> snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. With die and drab
> I purchased this caparison, and my revenue is the silly
> cheat. Gallows and knock are too powerful on the
> highway. Beating and hanging are terrors to me. For
> the life to come, I sleep out the thought of it. A prize,
> a prize! (4.3.23-31)

Autolycus' goes to great lengths to convince himself and the audience that he is at the heart of his identity construction, proudly confirming in his verbal disguising that he is a thief, a trafficker of sheets on the lookout for any item considered to be of use to him. He gambles too – his caparison earned from such exploits. And yet the passage at the same time reveals his deepest anxieties, references to "gallows," "beating" and "hanging" emerge and compromise his verbal disguise of those fears of being caught, punished and then executed. I would agree with Lee Sheridan Cox

[33] I would agree with B.J. Sokol (1994,167) that Autolycus' link with performative agency ensures that *The Winter's Tale* achieves its reparation through the re-united family of Leontes. Secondly, I also agree with Jeffrey Knapp (2002, 181) that Autolycus enables a further reconciliation in this play by being able, through his art (whether by thieving, story-telling or singing), to unite the once-disparate factions of society represented in the play.

(1969, 288) that there is a hint of boastfulness in the rogue trying to dismiss these anxieties, sleeping out the thought of the life to come (or end). However, as John Pitcher plausibly sees, Autolycus could well be rejecting the orthodox Christian belief in eternal life here (2010, 253) and so it is tempting to view his braggadocio as a mode of mockery of Christian doctrine itself. At the end of this passage, Autolycus has already signalled his intent on his next source of profiteering, "the prize" alluded to turns out to be a Clown counting out the contents of his purse.

Such is the influence of self-fashioning that Autolycus, motivated by his survival instincts and continuing a desire to thieve from those around him, immediately conceives and then launches quite dramatically from his role as the singer of ballads into his next reincarnation, one not dissimilar to the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37). In doing so, there remains the impression from his verbal disguise that the rogue's mockery of Christian doctrine finds a further outlet in this scene. We need to remember too, that in the design of his role and its mode of rhetoric (essential to the masking of his inner-fears), Autolycus is very much employing his mode of improvisation as he desires to extract some financial recompense. The rogue seeking charity opens his gambit with:

> AUTOLYCUS: O, help me, help me! Pluck but off these
> rags, and then death, death. (4.3.52-53)

The references to "death" emphasise the emerging fears of Autolycus into his discourse, the spectre of execution and punishment threatening to undo his disguise. This passage is also revealing for it points to those inner anxieties of someone seeking reinstatement to his former status (a frequent pattern within Autolycus' disguising that I will devote specific attention to shortly) as the clothing of his lowly-cast state proves too burdensome. Autolycus (if theatrically) reminds us here of the need of the self to lay itself exposed to the extremes of the human condition, to be prepared to descend to its depths in the desire for social advancement and reinstatement, rather as we saw with Edgar's similarly crafted agency as Poor Tom in *King Lear.*

Subsequently, Autolycus continues to invent his own fictional role to the Clown; he has been "robbed" and his "money / and apparel ta'en from me, and these detestable things put upon me" (64-66).[34] However through this verbal disguise, his mode of rhetoric as the Good Samaritan,

[34] Jill Phillips Ingram argues that in this and other roles in the play, Autolycus "embodies the traditional ritual culture that encouraged both almsgiving and marketing on church property." What's significant in this scene, she argues, is that Autolycus "represents the implicit demand for charity that preys on the sympathy of those attending festive events" (2012, 65).

we clearly are able to glimpse at his deeper anxiety that he has been demoted from service. Now, he is forced to live life as an itinerant thief and beggar, disguising fears of destitution. Despite such fears, Autolycus' mode of improvisation achieves its desired end – the Clown's empathy and desire to assist the rogue is prompted as he announces that "my shoulder blade is out" (72-73). Here, as Maurice Hunt contends, this seems to signify that Autolycus is somehow an agent of a "resurrectional quality" while invocating the memory of Antigonus who's shoulder blade had been torn out by a bear (2004, 338). The Clown's pocket is picked and the rogue ironically concludes:

> AUTOLYCUS: You ha' done me a charitable office. (4.3.75)

Autolycus words of endearment are also seen to mask his aim to survive, the underhand taking of monies essential to supporting himself. What follows is a further testament to Autolycus' cunning at the heart of his improvisational mode of behaviour, a ruse to stop the Clown from discovering that he has just been robbed:

> CLOWN: Dost lack any money? I have a little money for thee.
> AUTOLYCUS: No, good sweet sir, no, I beseech you, sir. I have a kinsman not past three-quarters of a mile hence, unto whom I was going. I shall there have money or anything I want. Offer me no money, I pray you; that kills my heart. (4.3.77-83)

Autolycus is now crafting yet another tale – as we draw nearer to finding out the identity of the rogue's robber, the kinsman, we soon discover it is none other than himself.

The increasing sense of anxiety within our Bohemian rogue is further intensified with the clown's charge that there's "Not a more cowardly rogue in all Bohemia" (103) to which Autolycus replies (seemingly under disguise but clearly alluding to himself) that he is "no fighter" (105). All of these fears therefore seem to indicate that despite his frequent bragging and selling of the Autolycus brand, that he is, according to Lee Sheridan Cox, "a frightened man" (1969, 288). It is the anxiety stemming from his fear of destitution which, of course, drives him to execute his many roles in the pursuit of people to steal from and to profit by, so when the Clown indicates he is to attend the sheep-shearing festival, Autolycus immediately envisions further opportunities to make a living:

AUTOLYCUS: If I make
not this cheat bring out another, and the shearers prove
sheep, let me be unrolled and my name put in the book
of virtue. (4.3.118-121).

The rogue remains confident that he will profit from the event although we will discover that not only does he gain on a material level but also becomes an unwitting entrant into the book of virtue that he denies himself.

When he appears at the festival, Autolycus shows us that he is forever conscious of the need to renew his mode of sartorial disguise. We are reminded that in doing so, Autolycus views a frequent change of costume as essential to his aim to survive. The desire to be sartorially incognito is essential in assuring the continuation of his life as a thief and beggar, trying to evade recognition and capture. And so, a costume change is necessary at the festival as the Clown will be present and would instantly recognize Autolycus following the pickpocketing incident. Sartorial disguise is also vital as a tool within his self-fashioning – Autolycus' survival is dependent on the need to continually re-invent himself through sartorial disguise but this must involve a continual dependence on the verbal disguising characteristics of the modes of behaviour which are invariably compromised by the emergence of his fears of capture within his inner-self.

And so Autolycus is now present before us as a peddlar, a seller of wares for the festivities about to commence. He lists such wares as "Gloves as sweet as damask roses, / Masks for faces and for noses, / Bugle-bracelet, necklace amber, / Perfume for a lady's chamber" (222-225). In doing so, Autolycus is anticipating, as David Kaula contends, a more comprehensive rejection of the Catholic adoration and sanctifying of everyday objects that we witness later in this scene.[35] Therefore, it appears that the exercising of yet another mode of sartorial disguise carries with it a continuing mode of mockery of Catholic practices on Autolycus' part. If the rogue is asking us to buy his wares, the whole enactment of Autolycus as the peddlar is designed to pose the question to the audience the notion that Catholicism may well be fraudulent itself. The Clown again fails to recognize the fraudulent motives of Autolycus' disguising as the rogue remains incognito. Nonetheless, he is willing to purchase "ribbons and gloves" (234) from the disguised rogue who

[35] Kaula believes that Autolycus' later lines in this scene (4.4.602-609) align themselves to "the verbal arsenal of anti-Catholic writing in Reformation England" (1976, 289). Paying particular attention to Autolycus' use of the terms "trumpery" (602), and "trinkets" (606), Kaula goes onto analyse the recurring usage of these words among Protestant writing (diatribes against what were considered the mercenary and idolatrous practices of selling indulgences, crucifixes, rosaries, medals, candles and other devotional objects" (289-292).

must now feel satisfaction with not only securing a purchase from the Clown but also from receiving an endorsement from somebody who had previously called Autolycus a coward. This engenders a belief that we are witnessing someone becoming increasingly adroit in the adopting of new roles and disguises. Soon, we are presented with the confirmation that Autolycus is not merely a purveyor of material items for the festival – he also proclaims himself as a seller of ballads.

> AUTOLYCUS Here's one to a very doleful tune, how a
> usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags
> at a burden, and how she longed to eat adders' heads
> and toads carbonadoed. (4.4.262-265) [36]

In Autolycus' attempts to sell his lyrical wares and re-brand himself, his products must come replete with a verbal disguise comprising fantastical tales; Anne Marie Drew characterizes these as "a fragmented sexuality which is one of the marks of the trickster" (1989, 98). The tales could well also be Shakespeare's way of debating "the nature of art and its relationship to life" as Joan Hartwig sees it (1970, 23). Ultimately though, when we come to analyse Autolycus' self-fashioning at this point, it is apparent that the nature of these tales, replete with its fantastical constructions, is bordering on the nonsensical and is therefore largely the product of the mode of nonsense. Autolycus' role is not pre-scripted, it is extemporized – therefore it is the demands placed on his inner-self during this process which creates afresh further anxiety, evidencing itself in the struggle to accommodate his private persona with his newly invented public persona. The scene becomes extraordinary because it firstly displays Autolycus as a complete, total personification of a self-fashioning subject – employing his modes of rhetoric and improvisation as a peddlar who attempts to trick his public into giving him payment. While doing this, we are also aware that Autolycus is teetering at the precipice of his own sanity, constructing fantastical truths, virtually nonsensical, as a basis for a disillusioned view of reality which everyone is prepared to believe and subscribe to. No more is Autolycus' view of reality and art more contrived than in his next invocation of a ballad:

> AUTOLYCUS: Here's another ballad, of a fish that
> Appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the fourscore
> of April, forty thousand fathom above water, and sung

[36] Joseph Ortiz quotes J.H.P. Pafford on Autolycus' descriptions of ballads in this scene, where Pafford argues that the rogue's descriptions are so contrived that Shakespeare's audience would probably be "moved to laughter both by theridiculous extravagances themselves and by the ridiculous credulity of the peasants" (2005, 205).

> this ballad against the hard hearts of maids. It was
> thought she was a woman, and was turned into a cold
> fish for she would not exchange flesh with one that
> loved her. The ballad is very pitiful, and as true. (4.4.275-281)

Within his aim to survive, Autolycus implores his audience to accept his fiction as the truth. In doing so, he extends the range of verbal disguising, masking fears of destitution which await the unsuccessful salesman. The increasing length of the fantastical tale mirrors the intensifying of the anxieties of an inner-self which is becoming more acutely focused on extracting the necessary financial means to ensure that survival.

Autolycus reappears in Act 4 Scene 4 with the proud boast that he has "sold all his trumpery" (602).[37] His aim of survival is therefore seemingly attained along with the successful masking of his fears pertaining to a destitute state. Within his bragging we are again witness to his recurring critique of the Catholic adoration and sanctifying of everyday objects. His discourse now outlines the rejection of those religious beliefs so instrumental to his self-fashioning:

> AUTOLYCUS: Not a counterfeit stone, not a
> ribbon, glass, pomander, brooch, table book, ballad,
> knife, tape, glove, shoe tie, bracelet, horn ring, to keep
> my pack from fasting. They throng who should buy
> first, as if my trinkets had been hallowed and brought
> a benediction to the buyer; by which means I saw
> whose purse was best in picture, and what I saw, to
> my good use I remembered. (4.4.602-609)

What Autolycus is also doing, according to Walter Lim is connecting faith "to superstitious belief and ignorance" (2001, 331). Therefore, the rogue is content to play on this ignorance, highlighting the workings of his mode of improvisation, as it provides Autolycus with two sources of revenue – one, the direct sale of the item so desired and the other source, the opportunity to pick the pockets of those doing the buying. Ultimately, too, we are left here with Autolycus' rather disparaging view of society, focusing in particular on the susceptibility and gullibility of those as all too willing consumers within the commercial trading zone of religious practices. Autolycus' discourse is also littered at this point with references to thieving terminology, particularly to the terms outlined in Robert Greene's *Cony Catching* series of pamphlets.[38] He is seen to revel in the success of his

---

[37] I refer to David Kaula's interpretation of this line from the previous footnote.

[38] John Pitcher quotes a modernized passage from Greene's *The Third and Last Part of Cony-Catching* (1592) which Shakespeare heavily borrows from in the construct of Autolycus discourse in 4.4.600-623.

improvisational mode and his verbal disguising as he had attracted "the rest of the herd … all their senses stuck in ears" (4.4.612-614).[39] He, too, is clearly proud with the outcome that he had "picked and cut" most of the festival goers "purses" (619) and "had not left a purse alive in the whole army" (622-623).

Soon after he speaks, Camillo, Florizel and Perdita enter the action. What follows are the perceptions of others cast on Autolycus, helping to shape the rogue's identity within his social context. Camillo's confident assertion that they can "make an instrument" of Autolycus (4.4.629) seems to limit the audience's perception of the rogue's abilities, that he may not be so gifted at negotiating his way through any social situation. Autolycus listens to the three and is convinced they have overheard his boastful exploits at the sheep-shearing festival. This, in turn, creates a crisis within his inner-self. In an aside, in a brief expression of the mode of inwardness, he confesses "If they have heard me now – why, hanging!" (631). Those fears of execution which Autolycus is painstakingly trying to disguise immediately surface and he struggles bitterly to contain them. Seeing Autolycus, Camillo notices that the rogue is shaking and tries to instill calm. At this point, we see how Autolycus is able to swiftly respond to such an inner-crisis and still profit from a potentially savage assault on his psyche – he quickly employs a verbal disguise, exercising his skill at begging, succeeding in earning some more money with the recurring use of "I am a poor fellow, sir" (634, 642). As these words echo, Autolycus addresses his fears of destitution and we are drawn to similar words used by another Shakespearean character in a beggar's disguise, Edgar and the role of Poor Tom. In Autolycus we are again reminded of the ability of a self-fashioning subject, as we saw in Edgar, to be able to quickly metamorphosise into a myriad of roles and borrowed discourses in response to the crises addressing their inner-anxieties.

[39] David Kaula believes that Autolycus' ability to attract those around him confers the rogue with a "sacred power" which he firstly "injects into his wares" and is also to be "suggested . . . by his Orpheus-like ability to mesmerize his customers with his songs and make them part with his money" (1976, 288). The impression that remains, therefore, is with the ease that Autolycus can extract money for his services – with Feste, despite his ability to extract a little more for his own services, we recall the greater effort he had to make to increase his income.

4.4.2 Disguising Sexual Frustration and the Conflict of Self- identity

We have already seen Autolycus in full flow as a seller (and singer) of ballads, turning songs into commodities and ensuring his aim to survive is attained. Elsewhere in *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare's rogue is seen to add more tuneful and vocal additions to his already impressive repertoire. In doing so, he is seen to also employ further aims in constructing his own identity within the social context, the aim to seek pleasure and exercise control through his art. We are reminded how Feste employed similar aims and in both characters there is an overwhelming impression given, within the aim to exercise control, of the verbal disguising of their inner-anxieties related to self-identity. Feste's desire to exercise that control had somewhat failed to be realized as he encountered his fears of expulsion from the court, his music unable to bind himself to the affections of his peers and secure his employment. With Autolycus, the impact generated by his musicality on his society is seen to have very different outcomes in terms of endearing himself to his audience. Within the rogue's aim to seek pleasure, the inner-fears that he wishes to disguise are somewhat more markedly different than Feste. The jester partly used song to disguise fears of boredom, to distract himself from the contemplation of his over-rehearsed life as an entertainer of the court. Such fears are not applicable to Autolycus as he desires reinstatement in the court of Florizel (which I will focus on later). Instead, his lyrics are littered with a stream of bawd and innuendo forming an expression of sexual desire, an eroticism that helps shape his verbal disguising of sexual frustration. In the expression of that sexual desire, Autolycus is the play's lone advocate, conferring the need for society to integrate the topic of sexuality into its discourses, turning away its own disguising of repression.

During Autolycus' opening song in Act 4, Scene 3, there are, firstly, signs of his inner-fears of destitution (which I have already shown to have frequently erupted into his discourse elsewhere) emerging into his lyrics:

> AUTOLYCUS: When daffodils begin to peer,
> With heigh, the doxy over the dale,
> Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year,
> For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale. (4.3.1-4)

The referent to "doxy" as John Pitcher points out is already marked by the discourse of the professional beggar, a slang term for the beggar's partner (2010, 250). "Heigh" is also used as a wordplay, firstly meaning a term to shout while it also references the barren image of the dried

grass of the dale. As Joseph Ortiz notices, Autolycus' songs are those which firstly address images of pastoral innocence and rebirth and yet, at the same time, are often bawdy, containing "a smutty eroticism" (2011, 203). It is this eroticism that characterizes the verbal disguising of his sexual frustration. And so, we are soon acquainted with "The white sheet bleaching on the hedge" (4.3.5)[40] and are drawn to the fact that "hedge" is also a reference to a prostitute (Pilcher 2010, 250). Autolycus' "pugging tooth" (7) may also reference his desire for prostitutes while his later reference to "we lie tumbling in the hay" (12) is a clear reference to the desired act itself. Overall, the effect, as Marjorie Gerber, sees it, is to provide a release of "sexual energies [not previously] acknowledged or accepted" by the Sicilian world which had been so impressed upon the reader and audience (quoted in Sokol, 180). The song also witnesses a verbal disguising of those inner-fears that govern his self-identity; Autolycus confidently asserts that he is most comfortably at ease where by wandering "here and there" (17) on his errant missions he can firmly locate his self-identity, his inner self-content, a place where he mostly goes "right" (18).

Autolycus' re-emergence in Act 4, Scene 4 is prefigured by a short summary of his virtues by another character that is nothing short of lavish praise for the rogue's services to society, a seeming confirmation that the desire to exercise control as a skilled, adroit performer has been realized. This is no Feste, someone seemingly at the end of his career and admired by no-one, clearly cast aside from the society in which he frequently criticises. Instead, the servant, in a voice helping to construct the self-identity of a Shakespearean character in his social context, confers on Autolycus almost a divine status of hero worship:[41]

> SERVANT: He sings
> several tunes faster than you'll tell money. He utters
> them as he had eaten ballads and all men's ears grew
> to his tunes. (4.4.185-188)

Autolycus is therefore seen to be revered, and unlike Feste, provides a role and the means, his ballads, which enable people to be brought together – he is capable of providing, as Katherine Brokaw comments, a "social glue" (2016,218) to Bohemia. The idea is borne, therefore, of a

[40] Jeffrey Knapp sees that this reference to white sheets is quite typical of Autolycus' continual mocking of Catholicism throughout the play (2002, 181). As I shall go onto argue, Autolycus' appears to display frequent discursive evidence of a submission to Protestant beliefs within his model of self-fashioning.
[41] Joseph Ortiz comments on the perception that Autolycus' songs generally find an enthusiastic reception in the play, which in his opinion, "seems only to confirm the susceptibility of the average listener" (2011, 204).

performer bringing cohesion to a society through the exploits of sartorial and verbal disguise, enabling the release into the rogue's discourse, influencing others, of a need to celebrate sexuality and thereby end its repression.

Despite the confidence that others bestow on Autolycus' powers of performance, there remains evidence, during the execution of a ballad with two shepherdesses, of a struggle to contend with the psychological implications of disguising, such as we witnessed with Edgar and Duke Vincentio. Mopsa and Dorcas encourage Autolycus to join in on the ballad he offers to the pair, 'Two Maids Wooing a Man.' The rogue then contends that:

> AUTOLYCUS: I can bear my part. You must know 'tis my
> occupation. (4.4.296-297)

The immediate inference is that he can sing his part in the catch he is about to involve himself in, although subtler innuendoes abide of a man celebrating his sexuality and his continuing desire to engage in it. However, there is a more pressing reference to his life as a role-player and the imposing strain on his inner-self that his life of self-fashioning and need to disguise is exerting. Indeed, he appears to recognize that his occupation in life is governed by his self-fashioning and that he can confidently, at least at the utterance level of his public persona, handle its power. However, Autolycus' next line "Have at it with you" (4.4.297) seems to reveal the rogue's desire to initiate sex with the shepherdesses resulting in the exposure of his verbal disguising of sexual frustration. This release of inner-anxiety into his discourse is reflected in his token contribution to the catch that follows, the recurring use of "Neither" (308, 310) conferring the need for retreat and the expression of inwardness so typical of the self-fashioning subject in response to external crises. What is also significant as this musical catch breaks down is that Autolycus, aiming to seek pleasure and exert control over others through his ballads, is selling society as its transformative agent, a fraudulent art form. In this scene, Joseph Ortiz appositely perceives an example of Shakespeare initiating "a conflict between musical performance and verbal context, in this case by framing the performance of a traditionally mourning song as 'merry entertainment'" (2011, 206). Dorcas can remember the tune and not the words and so Shakespeare, Ortiz reminds us, is "subtly remind[ing] his audience of the promiscuity of song settings, suggesting . . . that musical scores may illuminate very little about any particular text" (207). Autolycus' part in this catch, or indeed his reluctance to participate in it, has seemingly bestowed him with an alternative title to that bestowed on Feste

– a “corrupter of song,” willing to reperform songs that have been wrestled from their verbal context.

As Autolycus’ intentions become more firmly fixed on regaining favour with his former master, aiming for advancement and reinstatement (which I will shortly focus on) it is noted that his additional aim to exert control over others continues to govern his self-fashioning and verbal disguising. As we see in the following scene, having employed a courtier’s disguise (adapting his exchange of costume with Florizel that I will return to later), he returns to an employment of lies and fabrication (key tenets within his own mode of improvisation) to discourage the Clown and Shepherd from returning to Polixenes and revealing Florizel’s flight from Bohemia. Like the fantastical ballads he has previously woven and performed, Autolycus now proceeds to sound out the truth, delivered through yet another narrative, that Polixenes is not at home:

> AUTOLYCUS: He is gone
> aboard a new ship to purge melancholy and air himself;
> for, if thou beest capable of things serious, thou must
> know the King is full of grief. (4.4.766-769)

Autolycus continues to weave his tale and proceeds to depict the “tortures” that Florizel will experience, which “will break the back of man, the heart of monster” (4.4.773-774). As this depiction unfolds, we are made to reflect on the torment that Autolycus is disguising, particularly of the intense inner-anxieties generated by his fear of capture and the consequent acts of torture that an ensnared criminal could well experience. Furthermore, inner-torment is generated within him in trying to effect the role of courtier and trying to appropriate the discourses he feels he needs to borrow. As we saw with Feste and Sir Topas, perhaps the psychological strain in effecting this disguise is also proving tiresome. The resulting pressures then seem to induce, as we witnessed in Prince Hal/Henry V, an emergence of the mode of violence into Autolycus’ discourse as the rogue tries to assimilate and fashion his own self-identity:

> AUTOLYCUS Not he alone shall suffer what wit can
> make heavy and vengeance bitter; but those that are
> germane to him, though removed fifty times, shall all
> come under the hangman—which, though it be great
> pity, yet it is necessary. An old sheep-whistling rogue,
> a ram tender, to offer to have his daughter come
> into grace! Some say he shall be stoned, but that
> death is too soft for him, say I. (4.4.776-783)

Forever possessing the gift of telling a fantastical narrative, Autolycus continues to outline the grisly, imaginative projection of his own inner-fears that seem to emerge into his discourse, compromising their disguise, as he forecasts his former master's fate:

> AUTOLYCUS: He has a son, who shall be flayed alive; then
> 'nointed over with honey, set on the head of a wasps'
> nest; then stand till he be three-quarters-and-a dram
> dead, then recovered again with aqua vitae or
> some other hot infusion; then, raw as he is, and in
> the hottest day prognostication proclaims, shall he
> be set against a brick wall, the sun looking with a
> southward eye upon him, where he is to behold him
> with flies blown to death. (4.4.788-795)

Autolycus delivers his lines in a manner typical of the self-fashioning subject bound in its theatricality. He then evidences a desire to depart from his current role, forming an image of a rogue such as he, "these traitorly rascals" whose crimes are "so capital" (797-798). Designs to then trick the Shepherd and the Clown are born as Autolycus wishes to send them both onto Florizel's ship (under the pretence that it is Polixenes' ship). The continued attempt to effect the role of a passable courtier still proves somewhat of a challenge but Autolycus does enough not only to persuade the two to abide by his plan, but also to enable them to start constructing the rogue's identity within the social context as someone above his rank:

> CLOWN: He seems to be of great
> authority. Close with him, give him gold; and though
> authority be a stubborn bear, yet he is oft led by the
> nose with gold. Show the inside of your purse to the
> outside of his hand, and no more ado. Remember,
> "stoned," and "flayed alive." (4.4.805-810)

Autolycus masterful hoodwinking of the Clown is complete when demanding half of the gold promised to him. In doing so, he has not, however, shown his intent to depart from the image of himself as a "traitorly rascal" that he had so recently stated. He may have deceived the Clown but he has not deceived the audience; Autolycus remains governed by the motives of delusion, self-interest and cunning as he attempts to ingratiate himself with those around him.

4.4.3 Disguising Fears of Entrapment

I have already noted Autolycus' aim to seek advancement in his society, a frequently emergent desire within his self-fashioning and use of disguise which he often expresses in tandem with those other aims of identity construction which I have just outlined. Subsequently, there are passages in *The Winter's Tale* where Autolycus devotes a more exclusive meditation on his aim to seek social advancement. Marked by his entrance into the play, we learn that Autolycus has served at court and is now "out of service" (14). His desire to pursue betterment, to return to his former state of employment is intensified throughout his appearance on stage. Regarding the nature of the fears that Autolycus disguises within his aim to advance, a parallel can be drawn to Feste as both characters are disguising those inner-fears of entrapment afforded by their roles in society. As we saw, Feste's desire to elevate his status was closely connected to his defence of fools which argued for a higher social status. On the other hand, Autolycus' desire for social upgrading is linked to his aim to be reinstated at royal court. In expressing this desire, he verbally disguises fears relating to his own sense of entrapment as a rogue, the vagabond state that he currently finds himself in. Despite their being clear discursive evidence of Autolycus' wishing to depart a life of crime and admitting to the psychological pressures involved in his verbal and sartorial disguises, there will remain the impression, as it did with Edgar and Poor Tom, that this particular identity will be difficult to depart from.

In the early scene with the Clown, we are left to reflect on the inner anxiety felt at Autolycus' recognition of his former status, exacerbating a fleeting mode of loss into his behaviour, as he reveals that he was "once a servant of the Prince" (86-87). Also, there is clear recognition within himself of the role-player he has become, the actor forever adapting to the shifting network of verbal and sartorial disguises which comprise his self-fashioning, spurred on by the anxieties generated from his inner-self:

> AUTOLYCUS: Vices, I would say, sir. I know this man
> well. He hath been since an ape-bearer, then a process-
> server, a bailiff. Then he compassed a motion of the
> Prodigal Son, and married a tinker's wife within a mile
> where my land and living lies, and, having flown over
> many knavish professions, he settled only in rogue.
> Some call him Autolycus. (4.3.92-98) [42]

[42] Barbara A. Mowat believes that Autolycus' charting of this progress in his life points to a particular "infracontext" which alludes to "sixteenth-century picaresque tales that recount the adventures of the antihero who moves from

As we shall see during the course of his time on stage, Autolycus is quite prepared to offer us his own version of the truth, a narrative construct of his past life. At this point, we have no means to disprove that Autolycus had undertaken these roles despite the audience being entertained with a potentially fictitious construct as we know Autolycus cannot possibly be robbing himself. Throughout the play, Autolycus goes onto show us how such narratives not only lie at the heart of his self-fashioning, governing his modes of behaviour, but also how they are purported as means of confirming the truth. Like Feste in his quest to invert the cheveril glove, turning the meaning of words and objects on their heads, Autolycus is now exploring the relationship between art and fiction in a desire to show that what appears as given artistic truth is merely the construct of uncorroborated stories themselves – in the domain of the narrative, nothing is what it seems to be.

In recounting his many roles in life, Autolycus is also seeming to express his own inner-desire to end his role-playing and aspire to self-fashioning's illusory goal of self-content at the end of the rainbow of verbal and sartorial disguising. However, he must contend with his own reputation which precedes him – the Clown is startled to hear of his name and claims that "He haunts wakes, fairs and bearbaitings" (99-100). Autolycus' response that he himself is "the rogue that put me into this apparel" (101-102) becomes, in Lee Sheridan Cox's words, an expression where "clothes may signify bondage" (1969, 290) – the rogue feels anxiously trapped within his attire and somewhat condemned to the status afforded by what he wears.

Following the completion of a ballad sung with Mopsa and Dorcas, Autolycus is left alone to formulate his soliloquy into yet another song. It concludes with the lines:

> AUTOLYCUS: Come to the peddler.
> Money's a meddler
> That doth utter all men's ware-a. *Exit*. (4.4.326-328)

John Pitcher perceives a critique from Autolycus on the topic of money here – it is the root cause of many troubles, confusing and necessitating that anything and everything we own is then offered for sale. Also, Pitcher believes here that Autolycus is of the opinion "that money confuses ranks (would the Clown be chased by girls if he weren't rich?) (2010, 279). Arguably therefore, Autolycus may be offering us a unique critique into the use of money within a society's economy.

---

profession to profession, celebrating himself and being celebrated by others for his quick wit and ability to survive" (1994, 69).

The implication, it seems, is a view which supports an economy based more on a bartered system of exchange. As we see very soon, these views seem to prefigure the rogue taking part in his own exchange of costume with Florizel, which sees Autolycus desiring social advancement, an opportunity to sartorially and verbally disguise his fears of entrapment as a rogue in society.

It is during the aftermath of the sheep-shearing festival when Autolycus is provided with this disguising opportunity. This arises in the exchanging of clothes that needs to be made with Florizel (accompanied by Camillo and Perdita), the Prince also needing to enter a sartorial disguise, along with Perdita, to board the ship sailing back to Sicilia so that she can be reunited with Leontes. In a series of asides where the rogue clearly indicates his familiarity with Camillo from his days as a servant at court ("I know ye well enough" – 4.4.642), Autolycus, the master of cunning and deception, senses foul play at work in their scheme ("I smell the trick on't" – 646). Despite Autolycus' reservation that he "cannot with conscience take it" (649-650), the disguised fears of the status he feels bound by emerging into his discourse, the exchange of clothes still takes place.

Upon their departure, the newly acquired sartorial disguise seem not to have masked Autolycus' previous and long-standing belief in the importance of thievery:

> AUTOLYCUS: I understand the business; I hear it. To have
> an open ear, a quick eye, and a nimble hand is necessary
> for a cutpurse; a good nose is requisite also, to smell
> out work for th' other senses. I see this is the time that
> the unjust man doth thrive. What an exchange had
> this been without boot! What a boot is here with this
> exchange! (4.4.674-680)

Autolycus is further convinced that dishonesty and unjust practices are alive and well in all of the ranks of society as he witnesses dishonesty at work among the schemes of Camillo. Sensing delusion and cunning, Autolycus will not play his part in revealing the plan to Florizel's father, Polixenes. Instead, he confirms that "I hold it the more knavery to conceal it, and therein am I constant to my profession" (684-686).

It is during the course of the ensuing action, however, that Autolycus' constancy to his profession is somewhat dramatically reiterated. Upon seeing the Clown and the Shepherd carrying a bundle and a box, Autolycus is quick to identify a further opportunity to profit, concluding that "Every lane's end, every shop, church, session, hanging, yields a careful man work" (687-689). The rogue remains careful to stay aside from the action and listens intently to the two men as they discuss the contents of the bundle. Soon, it is clear to Autolycus that the bundle (or fardel) contains

the items used to wrap the baby Perdita and that the Shepherd is not, after all, her father. Sensing that the two men are about to return to Polixenes and inform him about Florizel's "pranks" and that he "is no honest man" (703), Autolycus responds with:

> AUTOLYCUS: I know not what impediment this
> complaint may be to the flight of my master. (4.4.712-713)

As John Pitcher rightly infers, Autolycus quickly seizes upon the opportunity to seek reinstatement as Florizel's servant (2010, 303) and in doing so, enters yet another verbal and sartorial disguise as a type of courtier, retaining Florizel's clothes but removing his false beard ("my peddlars excrement" – 717).

Playing the courtier's role proves difficult for Autolycus as he struggles to effect the disguise, his inner anxieties surfacing into his discourse through an initial slip.[43] He starts by interrogating the men regarding the contents of the fardel and immediately contradicts himself – he begins to say that "tradesmen . . . often give us soldiers the lie" (727-728) and later that "they do not give us the lie" (729-730). The error is picked up by the Clown and the Shepherd soon queries whether Autolycus is a courtier by profession. Rather comedically, the rogue proceeds to insist that he is indeed a courtier but what actually transpires carries with it the hallmarks of a speech resembling something not dissimilar to Autolycus' mode of mockery (for the higher echelons of society if nothing else):

> AUTOLYCUS: Whether it like me or no, I am a courtier.
> Seest thou not the air of the court in these enfoldings?
> Hath not my gait in it the measure of the court?
> Receives not thy nose court odor from me? Reflect
> I not on thy baseness court contempt? Think'st thou,
> for that I insinuate and toze from thee thy business, I
> am therefore no courtier? I am courtier cap-a-pie; and
> one that will either push on or pluck back thy business there. (4.4.734-742)

The impression may be comedic, but as William Carroll perceptibly notices, echoing perhaps the intentions of Feste in his disguising as Sir Topas, Autolycus is striving for something quite significant. Carroll believes that Autolycus' discourse as the courtier represents "a socio-political

[43] Lee Sheridan Cox states that the clothes exchange with Florizel heralds "the beginning of a change in Autolycus" (1969, 292) but I believe that any change in the rogue's character is somewhat illusionary and temporary at best. I will clarify this point particularly in Autolycus' final scenes in the play.

inversion which impersonates the voice and values of those above them, but also to be that force which naturally seeks to *rise*, and therefore constitutes a politicised energy" (1992,24). Autolycus has been forever the opportunist and this trait has trained and guided his life as a thief and, indeed, as a self-fashioning subject, informing the choices of his myriad verbal and sartorial disguises throughout his life's journey. The chance eavesdropping on the Clown and Shepherd has given Autolycus the means for seeking reinstatement to his former service, yet another opportunity where the rogue sees benefit. The chance does seem to inspire him and he literally rises to the challenge although he faces the immediate task, as we see in struggling to effect the courtier's disguise, in trying to effect the necessary verbal and sartorial disguises that will enable him to achieve his desired end of reinstatement. This is evidenced in the mixed responses to his courtier role; Autolycus' sartorial and verbal disguising seems to woo the Clown, again assuaged by the rogue's charms ("This cannot be but a great courtier" (752) but the Shepherd still remains unconvinced, as he "wears not" his garments "handsomely" [753-754]).

Following this scene, Autolycus is left alone and there is clear evidence that his exchange into the courtier's robes has only served to further increase his desire on attaining his former social status. His newly found clothes have also made Autolycus become possessed by his own fictive illusion, constructing a verbal disguise which he uses in the delusional pretence that he is now a figure of authority. Coupled with his own perceived act of performative agency, he now feels he has a moral case to finally abandon his former life as a rogue:

> AUTOLYCUS: If I had a mind to be honest, I see Fortune
> would not suffer me. She drops booties in my mouth.
> I am courted now with a double occasion: gold, and a
> means to do the Prince my master good; which who
> knows how that may turn back to my advancement?
> I will bring these two moles, these blind ones, aboard
> him. If he think it fit to shore them again and that the
> complaint they have to the King concerns him nothing,
> let him call me rogue for being so far officious, for I am
> proof against that title and what shame else belongs
> to 't. To him will I present them. There may be matter
> in it. (4.4. 836-847)

It is clear, however, that Autolycus' verbal disguising as the courtier sees the re-emergence of those modes of improvisation acquired to support his roguish practices and therefore, they have refused to desert him. Autolycus shows here that he is incapable of discarding his self-fashioning as it is still at the forefront in the governing of his own behaviour. Furthermore, he offers us a vision of

the truth which we know to be another fabrication – his actions and words are no proof that he is anything but a rogue.

Autolycus re-emerges in the final act of the play trying to effect his verbal disguising as a changed man. The impression that he is indeed a reformed character remains in doubt, however, while hearing his soliloquy following the departure of the Gentleman, Rogero and Steward. His discourse reveals his aim of advancement and an acknowledgement that it is the rogue who remains within the courtier's clothing:

> AUTOLYCUS: Now, had I not the dash of my former life
> in me, would preferment drop on my head. (5.2.111-112)

Autolycus admits that he still retains the modes of behaviour so essential to the life of the rogue that he is trying to publicly reject. Nonetheless, he attempts to enforce the belief to the audience that his roguish character is now a matter of fiction as the story is "all one" to him, the newly self-anointed official courtier. He then tries to support his claim by revealing that had he discovered the truth about Perdita's plight "it would not have relished among my other discredits" (119-121). However, as the soliloquy ends, the Shepherd and the Clown appearing before the rogue, Autolycus is reminded that he has "done good to" the pair "against my will" (122). The aims of that will, to seek advancement, are therefore prevalent in his mind and are proving impossible to escape from.

The Shepherd and the Clown contend that they now have as much right to be called gentlemen as the rogue in gentlemen's clothing who had tricked them. Autolycus then appears to ingratiate himself to the Shepherd:

> AUTOLYCUS I humbly beseech you, sir, to pardon me all
> the faults I have committed to your Worship and to give
> me your good report to the Prince my master. (5.2.146-148)

Within his verbal disguising, Autolycus continues to use a rhetoric that tries to convince others he is turning over a new leaf, desiring an abandoning of his roguish practices. However, he continues to reveal his designs on advancement that have been with him from the start. Despite all the seemingly contrite and apologetic rhetoric that ensues,[44] there remains an overwhelming suspicion

[44] I would disagree wholeheartedly with Jill Phillips Ingram's perception that Autolycus' is genuinely adopting a tone of reconciliation in this scene (2012, 70). Instead, it is Autolycus who is satirizing it – he remains firmly committed to, and therefore is verbally disguising, his plan to advance in society.

that he is leading us astray as the gullible victims of his own fantastical conceit, even promising to amend his life – "Ay, an it like your good worship" (152).

Autolycus now stands at the verge of reinstatement into Florizel's service. Furthermore, it is the Clown that holds the key to it, intending to give a glowing character reference to Autolycus' former master:

> CLOWN: I'll swear to the Prince thou art a tall fellow of thy hands
> and that thou wilt not be drunk; but I know thou art no
> tall fellow of thy hands and that thou wilt be drunk;
> but I'll swear it, and I would thou wouldst be a tall
> fellow of thy hands. (5.2.160-165)

Despite appealing to the audience to accept this glowing testament to Autolycus, reminding us that others are vital in constructing the rogue's identity within his social context, we are drawn to the conclusion that the Clown's words of support are themselves fantastical. There is a recurring reminder that the rogue (in his new sartorial and verbal disguising) is no more than a "tall fellow" – a teller of those poetical lies that have continually seduced the shepherd's son throughout the play. Moreover, he is associated with the use of his hands, those instruments with which Autolycus has profited and will continue to profit throughout his life.

As the rogue exits, he leaves us with the pledge that he will prove to be such a tall fellow of his hands to the best of his ability, to his "power" (166). With the utterance of this word, Autolycus draws his and our attention back to the fundamental goal of those in society who seek social advancement – to achieve and play their part within the scheme of power. With this parting reference, the rogue also affirms that he is still the character we largely came to identify him with. His power lies at the heart of his craft as a teller of extraordinary tales, a master of verbal and sartorial disguise, forever trying to alleviate his inner-anxieties through the extraordinary range of roles he creates. Within that craft resides Autolycus' desire for us to accept his fiction as the truth.

Conclusion

It has been my aim within this dissertation to conduct an analysis of the self-fashioning of incognito figures in Shakespeare, particularly those characters who are or become sartorially disguised, using the conceptual notions and tools proposed in Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*. Within Greenblatt's intrinsically theatrical concept, we find an abundant source of inspiration for the interpretation of Shakespeare's incognito figures, regarding their masking strategies and the psychological conditions which make their disguises advantageous, maintained or discarded. Self-fashioning is largely to be found within language and it emphasizes that we are free to select and borrow discourses in which to conduct our way in the world. It is this process of selection which also enables the reality, appearance, illusion, psychology and role-playing within disguise. It is my belief that within Greenblatt's founding work, along with his later studies of subversion and containment, he develops analyses which appear greatly significant to the study of disguise in the early modern social and literary context. Neither Greenblatt's later oeuvre or any further developments from New Historicism and Cultural Materialism offer an analytical model which would seem more fascinating than the idea of self-fashioning as their emerging theories do not really privilege the realm of discourse (language).

Consequently, in Greenblatt's study, disguise appears to be an element or in fact an underlying strategy used in various modes of behaviour: rhetoric, nonsense, loss and improvisation. Not only do these modes serve to advocate a particular version of the self, they also call for the opposite, for example, for concealing, masking, using camouflage and therefore ultimately disguising the competing identities. Essentially from the interpretative viewpoint, these modes of behaviour are subject to the modes of desire and fear within the self-fashioning subject. Therefore disguise, is linked to the pursuit of the self (and the self-fashioning subject) to achieve, in Greenblatt's view, an erroneous belief in the realization of self-knowledge. It is the modes of desire and fear that are both verbally and non-verbally communicated by the self-fashioning subject, becoming subversive as they appear within discourse. Finally, these analyses of disguise also produce effects which are pertinent to a wider-ranging context; to psychology, politics and society. These concern the relationship between the self and its culture, the subversion of a dominant ideology and the understanding of power relations.

The rationale for my initial choice of case studies, Edgar from *King Lear* and Duke Vincentio from *Measure for Measure*, was to explore the emphasis on the psychological dimension

of disguise in all stages of the characters' struggle to conceal their identity. While both plays reflect some tensions caused by the arrival of James I, it is apparent that the ingrained political change must have also affected the modes of self-fashioning, intensifying the discord between the self and its public projection(s) in a more ambivalent and questionable reality. Both Edgar and Duke Vincentio are court representatives and require that disguise is adopted effectively, with a flexibility and nimble imagining of new varieties of camouflage to interact with fellow characters. Edgar appears to be forced to adopt disguise while the Duke does it out of his own free will, remaining mostly in control of the course of events. However, it is the Duke who is unable to resolve situations and the rising tide of depravity within his kingdom, conferring a fundamental importance to his disguise. Both characters also employ their disguise to manipulate others whom they seemingly love most or whom they suspect most. Witnessing the two in situations which raise questions about their ethicality, both are seen to adopt the role of confessors or metaphysical councilors, interfering others' spiritual confidentialities, sometimes perpetrating acts of sacrilege. Disguise therefore becomes somewhat characterized as a manipulative device although it would enforce the deep-seated darkness of their psychological motivations. In both cases, we also see that disguise appears in the context of death: Edgar offers his father the counterfeiting of suicide while the Duke prepares Claudio for execution. And so, disguise seems to permit access to others in highly confidential situations (for example, prayer) and thus appears never completely virtuous. Ultimately, these powerful depictions of disguise do not serve to reinforce a coherent image of early modern subjectivity. In contrast, the assortment and momentum of embracing new forms of camouflage affirms the increasing realization of the complexity of the human psyche, far exceeding the complexities of mediaeval psychomachia or the introspective epiphanies of some tragic figures. It can be argued that Shakespeare's uses of disguise in his mature plays become a substitute or replacement of the usage of soliloquy, a convention he himself had masterfully developed in plays such as *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*. Therefore, Greenblatt's well-diagnosed "inwardness" gives place to an antithetical tendency where the knowledge about the self is acquired by dynamic incognito performance rather than pensive disengagement. The disguisers are incognitos to others and to themselves: they learn who they are by inventing and practicing their roles.

My subsequent choice of case studies, centred on Shakespeare's presentation of royal figures from the Second Tetralogy of history plays (*Richard II, Henry IV Parts One and Two and Henry V*) to explore the emphasis on the political dimension of disguise. Stephen Greenblatt and

New Historicism has brought into our understanding of historical plays that they are not merely a traditional celebration of a legitimate law and order, but rather, the belief that kingship continually involves the creation of subversion and disorder to contain and maintain power over its subjects. Subsequent critics of Greenblatt, targeting his interpretive framework of subversion and containment within their own analysis of Shakespeare's second tetralogy of history plays, offer, at best, only slight amendments to this interpretational means. Approaching my own reading using Greenblatt's terminology, I have argued (and not alone in my conviction) that Shakespeare's own subversion is deployed in the showing of kingship as a form of disguise.

As I have shown, disguised kingship is characterised in a number of ways and this evident in kings Richard II and Henry V. Both of them are prime examples of self-fashioning subjects, keen to anticipate, rehearse and then immerse themselves into their new fictive identities. They relish the parts they play and are both aspiring actors, drawing on the mode of inwardness which underpins self-fashioning, to ensure they harness its theatricality. Both kings (Richard up to the point of his final deposition) desire to augment a disguise as divine monarch to confront the inevitable crises that a ruling monarch will endure. Richard's rule initially is characterised by a strict allegiance to the use of objects and protocols to help enforce his kingly disguise but it is clear that his allegiance to his divine protector has wavered from the beginning. The growing presence of Bolingbroke unsettles and eventually undoes Richard's belief as a divine monarch and so the disguise as a divinely sanctioned monarch becomes increasingly transparent and tentative. Hal's seeming rise to the heavens as king, achieving its confirmation in his "star" like status after Agincourt, is characterised by what appears to be a firmer and more consistent belief in seeking divine protection and assistance. He appears to initially reject Richard's own system of divine ritualistic practices only to eventually sanction his own in memory to those who have died in battle. God is upheld by Hal as the arbiter and executor of the king's aims; their purpose is one and the same, their identity, this king perceives, is inseparably one and the same. The key to retaining and maintaining power, it seems, is to possess an unquestioning belief in such divine protections.

Using sartorial disguise is one of two forms of kingly (and princely) disguise unique to Hal. This is a means of deception to test and record the discourses of his subjects in order to know them better, evidenced by Hal's changing of costume in *Henry IV Part 1* at Gads Hill and at Eastcheap in *Part 2*. Hal pledges at the end of these plays to reject his former self but, nonetheless, deceives the audience by retaining his penchant for deception, role-playing and disguise in *Henry V*. The

deceived figure of Falstaff in *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2* becomes that of the soldier Williams in *Henry V* as Hal seeks to contain the subversion of his own initiating.

The redeeming of authority to the throne, as perceived in Hal by Greenblatt, is characterised very much by the other kingly disguise unique to Hal, that of the warrior, utilised and fashioned from an admiration of the defeated Hotspur. Without the effect of this rhetoric on his soldiers it is debatable whether the French would have been defeated. It is a rhetoric which at once calls upon his men to fight for the king's (and God's) cause but at the same time is peppered by the frequent emergence of the modes of aggression and violence, threatening to compromise Hal's political ambitions. As the epilogue to the play suggests, those ambitions were perhaps ultimately compromised by the eventual defeat of the English under the reign of Henry VI. And yet, what remains undefeated at the end of *Henry V* is the image of Hal of anything other than a self-fashioning subject relishing in the glories of victory.

However, as we are reminded with Edgar in *King Lear,* the goal of the self-fashioning subject in disguise appears to be to the release from disguise and it is debatable whether Hal, in particular, has achieved or shown any awareness of this. There remains in Hal, at the end of the second tetralogy, the image of a subject still very much immersed within self-fashioning, his inner-self trying to seek partnership in the arms of Princess Katherine, the tempting form of another fictive self that Hal will need to enter, the role of lover and husband. In pursuing his new love there is no evidence of turning away from any version of his former self. Bearing in mind that Hal had deceived us after his accession, there remains no belief in the audience's mind to allow in him a life free from deception and dispel the need for him to continue to role-play, to disguise himself as his deceptive practices dictate. Significantly, in Richard II's case, in his final moments in captivity there appears a self-awareness that there is an end to self-fashioning and the need to disguise. The realisation that his life had been played by an actor of many parts seemingly paves the way for Richard to cease playing them and live a life cognito. His untimely death robs us of the opportunity to see him living free of disguise, death seemingly becoming an important disguiser in itself.

In my examination of Feste and Autolycus, desiring to explore the social implications of disguise, I have investigated the idea that self-fashioning (and its ensuing contention about the inherent theatricality of life), creates great reciprocity between the interpretation of Shakespeare's characters and Elizabethan and Jacobean social structures. In addition, I have explored how this reciprocity draws attention to the construction of these characters' identities within the social

context and enables us to see the aims of their construction which can range from survival, pleasure, advancement to control. In my wish to establish Feste and Autolycus' motives to construct their identities within the social context, I have sought to incorporate some highly useful insights outlined by Rhodri Lewis, in *Hamlet and the Vision of Darkness* (2017). Lewis' work offers a generally more conservative reading of Renaissance man than Greenblatt but is very much written in the spirit of New Historicism, proving to be a very insightful examination of the shaping pressure of the Ciceronian heritage which permeated humanist moral philosophy. Like Greenblatt, the author looks at the correlation between the design of a Shakespearean character and its social world (in creating *a persona*) and shows how Hamlet tries to reject the Ciceronian model of civic existence, by questioning, and ultimately denying the motivations behind the adoption of desirable social roles by an individual. "The roles one plays [in *Hamlet*] are not measured by reasons, virtue, propriety, verisimilitude, or even the pleasure they might give to an audience" argues Lewis, "[i]nstead, one acts to mislead one's predators or one's prey and, just as frequently, to mislead oneself about the appetitive nature of one's existence" (10). In this respect, he adds, it puts Shakespeare "closer to writers like Tacitus and Machiavelli, for whom it is vital to acknowledge that cunning, delusion, and self-interest are simply the currency of human affairs" (102). Despite some differences in the overall conceptual framework, both Lewis and Greenblatt (in his reading of Hal in the second tetralogy in particular), place great emphasis on deception and deceit as the instigating forces behind the construction of identity.

It is my belief that in the case of Feste and Autolycus, their motives for identity construction indeed utilize fallacy, deception, self-importance and dexterity, and, with time, the fear of exposure and revelation of former transgressions or crimes. Within their desire to create fictive selves they need to borrow received discourses in composing a range of verbal and sartorial disguises. In seeking survival within their respective societies, both characters disguise quite similar fears. Attitudes of bitterness and irony towards their own roles in society are born out of a fear that they are entrapped within their low-status, living under the continued threat of being unemployed, pursued or captured. The urgency to survive is greater felt with Autolycus as he is already seen needing to resort to a life of begging and crime, having been demoted from service. Feste has also been absent from his own service to Olivia and feels the impending spectre of punishment, the fear of dismissal, which propitiates his inner anxieties as a self-fashioning subject. Within their aim to survive are both similar and differing strategies that emphasise the character's motives in terms of

cleverness, self-interest and fallacy. Autolycus resorts to direct acts of thievery in a bid to support himself while there is nothing of the kind within Feste's desire to raise funds. However, both employ fantastical and delusional conceits to further their financial gain; Autolycus tricks his audience into payment by becoming a seller of wares and ballads while Feste cleverly coerces his audience to part with their monies from his extemporized performances. Feste's aim of survival extends greater still as he must continue to enhance his reputation with his society to maintain a place in the court – his extraordinary defence of fools is constructed and indeed, willingly corroborated by others until it is rendered meaningless by Olivia's treatment and rejection of the jester at the end of the play.

Both characters also construct an identity, enlisting the help of others in its construction, where they seek pleasure and exercise control. There are differences in those fears being masked, the rogue disguising sexual frustration in aiming to seek pleasure through the delivery of his songs and fantastical ballads, the jester disguising boredom while seeking pleasure through the performance of his songs and verbalized conceits. In their aims to exercise control, both disguise the psychological strain resulting from the continuing exposure to their inner-fears as self-fashioning subjects struggling to exercise control of their own self-identity while trying to accommodate public and private personas. Both characters also desire to use their performances, whether in song or verbalized conceit, as part of this control mechanism, to coerce others in achieving their aims. In doing so, it is important to consider that the ultimate picture of Feste in performance is often free of the air of profound personal failure. In fact, his melancholy, irony, and certain estrangement from Olivia's court, position him not so much on the margins of society (as banished, dismissed or altogether rejected) but as if outside the frame of the story, in the privileged realm of metatheatrical reflection. He is a wise fool, and therefore, a free intellectual of all time. Nonetheless, there is a solemn air surrounding the jester at the play's end which seems to deny him a conductor's baton, a directorship of artistic license in Illyria – he's alone on stage, without anyone in his society to appreciate his performance. Otherwise, Autolycus continues to gain support for his art, however deceptive its premises may be. The combination of the rogue's songs and ballads expressing a release of sexuality into societal discourse, coupled with the myriad of his extemporized, imaginary analogies, serves his public well and provides them with a much-needed entertainment seemingly absent within the Hellenic world depicted prior to Autolycus' Apollonian appearance.

Finally, there resides in both characters a desire to seek advancement and the disguising of fears of entrapment, that both men fear they cannot escape the limitations of the roles afforded to them by society. As a licensed fool, Feste decries the incessant type-casting that others project onto his role and this frustration forms the basis for his own bitter views towards society. Autolycus, despite appearing to revel in his new-found lifestyle of beggar and thief, expresses an increasing desire to seek social advancement and reinstatement under the employment of his former master, Florizel. As we saw, it is important to that desire to seek advancement that other characters are enlisted to help secure that aim. It is particularly pertinent in the case of Autolycus who secures a glowing character reference from the Clown which appears to grant his return to the court. Feste has tried to find such an equivalent stamp of approval but he cannot find anyone to convince Olivia that he is worthy of being retained in service.

At the conclusion of these plays, it is undeniably Autolycus who is seen to have survived the better of the two while both characters have had to endure an intense confrontation of their inner-anxieties in confirming themselves as bona-fide self-fashioning subjects. They have proved themselves clearly capable of executing a range of extempore performances, verbal and sartorial disguises which fully harness the range of self-fashioning's modes of behaviour. It is arguably Feste who has been the greater exponent of the mode of rhetoric, evidenced by his recourse to song, ventriloquism (in the case of Sir Topas), paradoxes, riddles and wordplay. Autolycus verbal arsenal is also impressive – he infects the world of Bohemia with his tuneful take on nature, replete with bawdy references which he feels rightly inclusive. His imaginative range is also impressive, evidenced by his fantastical ballads and by the sheer range of sartorial disguises which he effects during the play. However, there are times, particularly when trying to effect the courtier's role, when Autolycus ability to effect the verbal disguising of the role remain tenuous. The Shepherd and Clown almost succeed in seeing through the disguise whereas Feste, as Maria concludes, need not have resorted to the sartorial disguise as his verbal disguise had been so effective as Sir Topas. Autolycus is a greater exponent of the mode of improvisation – his life as a thief is dependent on the success of being able to trick others and profit. He is also the modus operandi of his schemes where Feste is not – it is perhaps Maria who helps Feste the most, particularly in the design to catch the woodcock that is Malvolio. In addition, there is actually the impression that Feste's verbal dexterities as the Puritan parodied priest have failed to achieve their aim as Olivia's steward retains his sanity throughout the scene. Feste is, however, adroit at extracting payment for his services but

then he is duly outshone by the Bohemian rogue who is continually and almost effortlessly, it seems, able to steal and profit from those around him. Finally, there is distinct recourse to the mode of nonsense within both characters' behaviour, particularly Feste, who experiences the greater anxiety at being able to effect his public role.

As a pair of undoubtedly proficient exponents of self-fashioning, Feste and Autolycus through their sartorial and verbal disguises, become both expressive and provocative social commentators on the plays themselves. Feste despairs at the treatment given to himself as a licensed fool and feels aggrieved that a fool's status is not more highly recognized by society. His conclusion, it seems, is that society's ruling classes are not inhabited by intelligent people, rather that they subjugate the wiser populace. This view helps to form Feste's modes of mockery and loathing of those occupying higher status and is particularly directed at Malvolio and the Sirs Toby and Andrew. The idea of social ranking is absurd to Feste as he intends to show through such mockery that there is proof that the system is itself a sham, its concrete distinctions at best rendered blurred and indistinguishable. Feste also despises those who think they can purchase their way into the system. Subsequently, if Feste wishes to turn given social truths on their heads, he is keen to do the same with the operation of meaning within the language we speak. The jester turns his focus to the slippery association of words to objects and to epistemological dilemmas, trying to rectify truth with our own perceptions. He leads us to the illusion that nothing is what it seems to be, an interplay of affirmation and negation that Feste himself embodies within his own self-fashioning. Autolycus, too, is a keen investigator of the truth and he conducts it through the frequent singing and recitation of his fantastical ballads, purported to be truthful representations of life. While upholding the seeming verity of his art, which itself is idolized by those around him and seems to help unite the once-disparate factions of society represented in the play, Autolycus is quick to mock those who show unquestioning belief in submitting and paying for a continued reverence to religious practices, particularly that of Catholicism. Autolycus' view of society, outlined in his art, should be seen to accept and embrace the sexual energies that such a religion would seem to suppress. Furthermore, it is a society which should encourage opportunism, to support those prepared to seek profit at every turn. It is as though Autolycus has become the embodiment of a Robin Hood figure, someone seemingly unjust, stealing from the rich to then disperse his wares upon the poor. However, I believe that in seeking such a profit and becoming a focal point of the

redistribution of wealth within the society he lives,[1] Autolycus is not advocating a money-based economy as he is convinced that it is the root cause of all society's problems. Instead, the depicted exchange between the rogue and his former master points to perhaps the need of society to adapt to an exchange-based economy, to counter the rise of crime and poverty that Autolycus himself wants to escape from.

Both characters therefore leave the audience with significant matters to contemplate regarding the nature of society and its construct of social status. It is imperative, they feel, that whether you are a beggar, thief or entertainer, each one of us has a rightful role to play within society and that there should therefore be a system of social equality, irrespective of the part we have to play in it. The resulting action leaves us with the undeniable impression that Feste has however been cast aside by the power relations of society. Interestingly, Autolycus is confidently asserting his own accession to that power system at the end of *The Winter's Tale.* Pertinent to the rogue's success over the jester in achieving his aim of advancement is his ability to have won over his public with his musical performances. The images of his illusory art, filled with sexual desire, have seemingly united a society in much need of it. Autolycus has sold his audience a fictive lie, and in doing so, has risen above his rank. The key to advancement, it seems, lies within the ability for a self-fashioning subject to fully invest in convincingly presenting an illusory world to its public, espoused by someone willing at every stage to engage with the fictive world of identity creation and the need to verbally and sartorially disguise your fears of participation in it.

Through my application of the analytical tools related to a theory of disguise, derived from Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* and the resulting assessment of Shakespeare's incognito figures, we see a repeated challenge to the conceptions of early modern subjectivity which had privileged disguised figures as passive and disengaged individuals, contemplating their tragic fate in isolation and only able to form knowledge about themselves within the confines of their own company. Through the lens of self-fashioning, self-knowledge can only be attained (if at all) through others and the incognito figure is required to begin his journey via a dynamic series of performances, probing into the challenges of the new role. The incognito figures can therefore only hope to learn who they are by inventing and practicing their roles within the public domain. In learning who they are, the disguised figures are frequently exposed to the psychological effects of their masquerade as they strive to reconcile the relationship of the inner-self to others and the

[1] I am indebted to Jill Phillips Ingram's perceptions at this point (2012, 70-71).

forever-changing cultural forces they live by. My study of incognito figures in Shakespeare also shows that the psychological demands of disguising resulting from social interaction equally apply to figures considered the arbiters of those societal and cultural forces, namely monarchs. Shakespeare's kings are required to interact with their subjects in their desire to disguise kingship. Finally, my investigations have shown figures in society of lower status heavily dependent on social interaction. It is the relationship to others that enforces the construction of their identities amid their desire to disguise a range of fears relating to the social perceptions of their status.

Greenblatt's contentions about identity construction do not also allow for the acquisition of a religious consciousness which could be viewed as a way of ultimate appeasing the fears of the inner-self. To admit that would confer the self-fashioning subject with a potential path to freedom from disguise. Greenblatt's views are therefore contrary to those advocated by Kierkegaard, for example, who regarded the attainment of religious consciousness as a means to enable the dismantling of social, aesthetic and ethical roles along with an appeasement of the self's anxieties. In Greenblatt's writings there is of course ample evidence of self-fashioning subjects veering towards a religious consciousness but they are always viewed as anchored in and conditioned by society and culture. For Greenblatt, the goal of self-knowledge, and thus the passage into the domain where inner-fears and anxieties are alleviated and disguise is abandoned, remain illusory. Any attempt of the individual (via seeking self-knowledge or religious assurance) to free themselves of the anxieties generated from the relationship to culture and society, is impossible. It is perhaps a view held by Shakespeare, too, whose consistent and fascinating portrayal of subjects driven by these anxieties, desiring to be incognito, makes us aware of the seemingly never-ending roles and discourses we need to borrow and adopt in order to co-exist with each other.

Bibliography

Adamson, S. 2010. 'Questions of Identity in Renaissance Drama: New Historicism Meets Old Philology,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 61, No. 1 (Spring): 56-77.

Althusser, L. 1971. 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,' *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Trans. Brewster, B. London: Monthly Review Press: 127-186.

Apolloni, J. 2017. 'Local Communities and Central Power in Shakespeare's Transnational Law,' *Studies in Philology*. Vol. 114, No. 1 (Winter): 124-147.

Atkin, G. 2008. *Twelfth Night: Character Studies.* New York and London: Continuum.

Bahktin, M.M. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays.* Ed. Holquist. M. Trans. Emerson. C. and M. Holquist. Texas, USA: University of Texas Press.

Baker, S. 1992. 'Personating Persons: Rethinking Shakespearean Disguises,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 43, No.3 (Autumn): 303-316.

Barry, P. 1995. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Battenhouse, R. 1975. 'Falstaff as Parodist and Perhaps Holy Fool,' *Modern Language Association*. Vol. 90, No.1: 32-52.

Belsey, C. 1980. *Critical Practice.* London: Methuen.

_______. 1991. 'Making Histories Then and Now: Shakespeare from *Richard II* to *Henry V*,' *Uses of History: Marxism, Postmodernism and the Renaissance*. Ed. Hulme, P., F. Barker and M. Iverson. Manchester: Manchester UP: 24-46.

_______. 2005. *Culture and the Real.* New York and Oxford: Routledge.

_______ . 2006. 'The Role of Culture,' *Human Nature: Fact and Fiction.* Ed. Headlem Wells, R. and J. McFadden. London: Continuum: 111-127.

_______. 2007. 'Historicizing New Historicism,' *Presentist Shakespeares*. Ed. Grundy, H. and T. Hawkes. New York and London: Routledge: 27-45.

_______ . 2008. *Shakespeare in Theory and Practice*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Berry, E. 1984. *Shakespeare's Comic Rites*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Bevington, D., ed. 2015. *Henry IV, Parts I and II: Critical Essays.* Oxford and New York: Routledge.

Bloch, M. 1973. *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France.* Trans. Anderson, J.E. New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul and McGill-Queen's University Press.

Bloom, H. 1998. *Shakespeare and the Invention of the Human*. New York: Riverhead Books.

________. and Loos, R. eds., 2008. *Bloom's Shakespeare Through the Ages*: *Twelfth Night.* New York: Infobase Publishing.

________ . 2017. *Falstaff: Give Me Life.* New York, Scribner Press.

Booth, S. 1979. 'Speculations on Doubling in Shakespeare's Plays,' *Shakespeare: The Theatrical Dimension*. Ed. McGuire, Philip C. and D. A. Samuelson. New York: AMS.

Bradbrook, M.C. 1941. 'Authority,Truth and Justice in *Measure for Measure*,' *The Review of English Studies*. Vol.17, No.68 (October): 385-399.

_____________. 1955. *The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy*. London: Chatto and Windus.

_____________. 1962. 'Shakespeare and the Use of Disguise in Elizabethan Drama,' *Essays in Criticism*. Vol.2: 159-168.

Bradley, A.C. 1904. Reprinted in 1929. *Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth.* London: Macmillan and Co.

___________. 1916. Reprinted in 1986. 'Feste the Jester.' *Twelfth Night: Critical Essays*. Ed. Wells, S. Abingdon: Routledge: 17-24.

Braidotti, R. 1991. *Patterns of Dissonance*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Brokaw, K.S. 2016. *Staging Harmony: Music and Religious Change in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Drama*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Brotton, J. 2006. 'Shakespeare and Islam,' paper presented at *Global Perspectives in Shakespeare*. British Council video-conference: London, Cairo, Karachi, Tunis. 4th December.

Brown, C.E. 1997. 'The Homoeroticism of Duke Vincentio: "Some Feeling of the Sport,"' *Studies in Philology*. Vol.94, No.2: 187-220.

Bruster, D. 2003. *Shakespeare and the Question of Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Buchanan, I. 2010. *A Dictionary of Critical Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bulman, J.C. ed., 2008. *Shakespeare Re-dressed: Cross-gender Casting in Contemporary Performance.* Madison and Teaneck, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Calderwood, J.L. 1987. 'Disguise, Role-Playing and Honor', *Shakespeare and the Denial of Death*. Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press: 33-45.

Callaghan, D. 2000. *Shakespeare Without Women. Representing Gender and Race on the Renaissance Stage*. London: Routledge.

Carroll, W.C. 1985. *The Metamorphoses of Shakespearean Comedy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
__________. 1987. 'The Base Shall Top Th'Legitimate'; The Bedlam Beggar and the Role of Edgar in *King Lear,' Shakespeare Quarterly.* Vol. 38, No.4 (Winter): 426-441.
__________. 1992. "Language, Politics and Poverty in Shakespearian Drama." *Shakespeare Survey 44*: 17-24

Cavell, S. 1969. 'The Avoidance of Love,' *Must We Mean What We Say?: A Book of Essays*. Cavell, S. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 267-356.

Cetera, A. 2012. '"Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers": Shakespeare's Language(s) of Disguise.' *Shakesplorations. Essays in Honour of Professor Marta Gibińska*. Ed. Limon, J., M. Grzegorzewska and J. Fabiszak. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego: 80-88.

Chambers, R.W. 1939. *Man's Unconquerable Mind.* London: Jonathan Cape.

Childs, P. and Fowler, R. 2006. *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford: Routledge.

Clare, R. 1997. 'Quarto and Folio: A Case for Conflation,' *Lear from Study to Stage: Essays in Criticism*. Ed. Ogden, J., A.H. Scouten and A.H. Mendison. USA and London: Farleigh Dickinson University Press and Associated University Presses: 97-108.

Clegg, C. 2008. '*King Lear* and Early Seventeenth Century Print Culture,' *King Lear: New Critical Essays.* Ed. Kahan, J. New York and Oxford: Routledge.

Clemen, W. 1972. *Shakespeare's Dramatic Art: Collected Essays*. London: Routledge.

Coddon, K. S. 1993. 'Slander in an Allow'd Fool": Twelfth Night's Crisis of the Aristocracy,' *Studies in English Literature*. *1500-1900*. Vol. 33, No. 2, Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (Spring 1993): 309-325.

Cohen, D. 2002. 'History and the Nation in *Richard II* and *Henry IV, Studies in English Literature. 1500-1900*. Vol. 42, No. 2, *Tudor and Stuart Drama* (Spring): 293-315.

Coleridge, S.T. 2017. *Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Shakespeare, The Drama and the Stage.* Musaicum Books, OK Publishing.

Colvin, D.L. 2007. '(Re)covering the Self: Hal and the Psychology of Disguise,' *Staging Shakespeare: Essays in Honor of Alan C. Dessen.* Ed. Orlen, L.C. and M. Johnson-Haddad. Newark: University of Delaware Press: 45-59.

Cosgrove, B. 1977. '*The Winter's Tale* and the Limits of Criticism,' *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review.* Vol. 66, No. 262/263: 176-187.

Cox, L.S. 1969. 'The Role of Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale,' Studies in English Literature.* Vol. 9: 283-301

Davis, L. 1993. *Guise and Disguise: Rhetoric and Characterization in the English Renaissance*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.

Dawson, A.B. 1978. *Indirections: Shakespeare and the Art of Illusion*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

___________. 1988. '*Measure for Measure*, New Historicism, and Theatrical Power,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 39, No.3 (Autumn): 328-341.

Dean, P. 2001. '"Comfortable Doctrine": *Twelfth Night* and the Trinity,' *The Review of English Studies. New Series*. Vol. 52, No. 208 (November): 500-515.

Dessen, A.C. 1995. *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dessen, A.C and Thomson, L.1999. *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580-1642.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dollimore, J. and Sinfield, A. eds., 1985. *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Downer, A. S. 1952. 'Feste's Night,' *College English.* Vol.13, No.5: 258-265.

Draper, J.W. 1942. 'ET IN ILLYRIA FESTE: Better a witty foole, then a foolish wit. — Quinapalus,' *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin.* Vol. 16, No. 4: 220-228.

Drew, A.M. 1989. 'A Sigh into a Looking Glass: The Trickster in *The Winter's Tale* and *Happy Days*,' *Comparative Literature Studies*. Vol. 26, No. 2: 93-114.

Duncan-Jones, K. 1977. 'Stoicism in Measure for Measure: A New Source,' *The Review of English Studies*. *New Series*. Vol.28, No.112 (November): 441-446.

Eliot, N. 2018. 'Shakespeare's World of Science,' *The New Atlantis*. No. 54 (Winter): 30-50.

Eve, M.P. 2010. 'Review of *Local Transcendence: Essays of Postmodern Historicism and the Database*,' *Textual Practice*. Vol. 24, No.6: 1117-1119.

Felperin, H. 1990. *The Uses of the Canon: Elizabethan Literature and Contemporary Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Ferrell, L.A. 2011. 'New Directions: Promised End? *King Lear* and the Suicide Trick,' *King Lear: A Critical Guide*. Ed. Hiscock, A. and L. Hopkins. London and New York: Continuum Books: 99-117.

Findlay, A. and Oakley-Brown, L. eds., 2014. *Twelfth Night: A Critical Reader*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Flower, A.C. 1975. 'Disguise and Identity in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 26, No.1 (Winter): 30-41.

Foucault, M. 1973. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage.

__________. 1975. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Random House.

Freeburg, V.O. 1915. *Disguise Plots in Elizabethan Drama: A Study in Stage Tradition*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Fry, Prof. P. March 31st 2009. *Lecture 19 – The New Historicism. Engl 300: Introduction to Theory of Literature.* Open Yale Courses. Yale University. https://oyc.yale.edu/english/engl-300/lecture-19.

Frye, N. 1967. *Fools of Time: Studies in Shakespearean Tragedy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Gajowski, E. 2016. 'Identity and Subjectivity,' *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare*. Part XXV. Ed. Smith, B.R. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1781–1790.

Gajowski, E. ed. 2020. *The Arden Research Handbook of Contemporary Shakespeare Criticism.* London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Gallagher, C. and Greenblatt, S. 2000. *Practising New Historicism*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Gless, D.J. 1979. *Measure for Measure; the Law and the Convent.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Goddard, H.C. 1951. *The Meaning of Shakespeare, Volume 1*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Goldberg, J. 1981. 'Review of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* by Stephen Greenblatt,' *MLN*, Vol. 96, No. 5, *Comparative Literature* (December): 1201-1204.

_________. 1983. *James I and the Politics of Literature*. Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press.

Golder, J. 1992. *Shakespeare for the Age of Reason; the Earliest Stage Adaptations of Jean-François Ducis, 1769-1792*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grady, H. 2020. 'New Historicist Studies,' *The Arden Research Handbook of Contemporary Shakespeare Criticism.* Ed. Gajowski, E. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic: 82-94.

Greenblatt, S. 1973. *Sir Walter Raleigh: The Renaissance Man and his Roles.* New Haven, Connecticut, USA: Yale University Press.

___________. 1980. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

___________. 1982. "Introduction to *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance,"* reprinted in *The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends,* Ed. Richter, D.H. Boston, USA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

___________. 1988. *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Los Angeles, USA: University of California Press.

___________. 1990. *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture*. London: Routledge.

___________. 1993. 'Introduction: New World Encounters,' *New World Encounters*. Ed. Greenblatt, S. Berkeley and Los Angeles, USA: University of California Press Ltd.

___________. 1997. 'What is the Historical of Literature?' *Critical Inquiry* 23 (Spring): 460-481.

___________. ed., et al. 2000. *The Norton Shakespeare: Third Edition*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.

___________. 2001. *Hamlet in Purgatory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

___________. 2004. *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. London and New Work: W.W. Norton and Company.

___________. 2004. 'The Death of Hamnet and the Making of Hamlet,' October 21. *The New York Review of Books*. www.nybooks.com/articles/2004/10/21/the-death-of-hamnet-and-the-making-of-hamlet/

___________. 2007. 'Shakespeare and the Uses of Power,' April 12. *The New York Review of Books*. www.nybooks.com/articles/2007/04/12/shakespeare-and-the-uses-of-power/

___________. 2010. *Shakespeare's Freedom*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

___________. 2011. *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern*. London and New Work: W.W.Norton and Company.

___________. 2016. *Speech for investiture as Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Alicante.* https://web.ua.es/en/protocolo/documentos/events/honoris/greenblatt-stephen-2016/speech-gratitude-sr-greemblatt.pdf.

___________. 2017. *The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve.* London and New Work: W.W.Norton and Company.

___________. 2018. *Tyrant: Shakespeare on Power.* London: Penguin Random House UK.

Greene, R. 1591. *The Second Part of Conny Catching*. London: Printed by John Wolfe for William Wright.

________. 1592. *A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.* London: Printed by Thomas Scarlet for Thomas Nelson.

________. 1592. *A Defence of Conny-Catching or A Confutation of Those*. London: Printed by A.I. for Thomas Gubbins.

________. 1592. *The Third and Last Part of Conny-Catching: With the New Desired Foolish Art of Foole-taking*. London: Printed by T. Scarlet for C. Burby.

Gregory, J. 2011. 'Review of Shakespeare's Freedom,' *The Review of English Studies, New Series*. Vol. 62, No. 256: 650-651.

Greif, K. 1988. 'A Star is Born: Feste on the Modern Stage,' *Shakespeare Quarterly.* Vol. 39 No.1: 61-78.

Gualberto, R. 2019. 'Unmasking Romance in *The Tempest*: Politics, Theatre and T.S. Eliot,' *Brno Studies in English*. Volume 45, No. 1: 111-128.

Gurr, A. 2000. *Staging in Shakespeare's Theatres*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

_______. 2017. *Shakespeare's Workplace: Essays on Shakespearean Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hardman, C.B. 1994. 'Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* and the Stuart Golden Age,' *The Review of English Studies*. Vol. 45, No. 178 (May): 221-229.

Harper, C. 1998. *Twixt Will and Will Not: The Dilemma of Measure for Measure.* Niwot, Colarado: University of Colorado Press.

Hartwig, J. 1970. 'The Tragicomic Perspective of *The Winter's Tale,*' *ELH*. Vol. 37, No. 1 (March): 12-36

________. 1973. “Feste’s “Whirligig” and the Comic Providence of *Twelfth Night,” ELH.* Vol. 40, No.4: 501-513.

Hayne, V. 1993. ‘Performing Social Practice: The Example of *Measure for Measure,’ Shakespeare Quarterly.* Vol.44, No.1 (Spring): 1-29.

Hazlitt, W.1817. *Characters of Shakespeare’s Plays.* London: John Templeman.

Hedrick, D. 2012. ‘Too Much Fun: Shakespeare's Entertainment Unconscious,’ *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*. Vol. 45, No. 2 (Fall): 17-39.

Hillis Miller, J. 1998. *Reading Narrative*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Hoensalaars, T. and Delabastita, D. 2015. *Multinlingualism in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Holly, M. 1973. ‘*King Lear*: The Disguised and Deceived,’ *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 24, No.2 (Spring): 171-180.

Howard, J.E. and O’Connor, M.F. eds., 1987. *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*. London and New York: Routledge.

Howard, J.E. 1983. ‘Review: The Cultural Construction of the Self in the Renaissance: *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* by Stephen Greenblatt,’ *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 34, No.3 (Autumn): 378-381.

__________. 2012. ‘Marxism and Shakespeare,’ *Marx and Freud: Great Shakespeareans Volume X*. Ed. Bartolovich, C., J.E. Howard and D. Hillman. London and New York: Continuum.

Hunt, M. 1987. ‘Comfort in *Measure for Measure,’ Studies in English Literature*. *1500-1900.* Vol.27, No.2 (Spring) *Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*: 213-232.

_______. 1995. ‘The Tragicomic Perspective,’ *The Winter’s Tale: Critical Essays.* Ed. Hunt, M. New York: Routledge. 174-199.

_______. 2004. ‘“Bearing Hence” Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale,’ Studies in English Literature*. *1500-1900*. Vol. 44, No. 2 (Spring) *Tudor and Stuart Drama*: 333-346

Hutton, V. 1985. ‘*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: Tragedy in Comic Disguise’, *Studies in English Literature*. Vol.25, No.2 (Spring): 289-305.

Hyland, P. 1985/6. ‘Disguise and Renaissance Tragedy,’ *University of Toronto Quarterly.* Volume 55, No.2 (Winter): 161-171.

________. 2011. *Disguise on the Early Modern English Stage.* Surrey: Algate Publishing Limited.

Ingram, J.P. 2012. '"You Ha'Done Me A Charitable Office": Autolycus and the Economics of Festivity in *The Winter's Tale,' Renascence*. Vol. 65, Issue 1: 63-74.

Jameson, F. 1979. 'Marxism and Historicism,' *New Literary History*. Vol. 11, No.1: 41-73.

Janik, V.K. ed., 1998. *Fools and Jesters in Literature, Art and History: A Bio-Bibliographical Sourcebook*. Westport, USA: Greenwood Publishing Group Inc.

Jardine, L. 1996. *Reading Shakespeare Historically*. London: Routledge.

Jardine, L. and Brotton, J. 2000. *Global Interests: Renaissance Art between East and West*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd.

Jensen, P. 2004. 'Singing Psalms to Horn-Pipes: Festivity, Iconoclasm, and Catholicism in *The Winter's Tale,' Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 55, No. 3 (Autumn): 279-306.

Jowett, J. 2017. 'Shakespeare's Metamorphosis', *Shakespeare*. Vol. 13, No. 4: 318-332, DOI: 10.1080/17450918.2017.1402816.

Kahan, J. ed., 2008. *King Lear: New Critical Essays.* New York and London: Routledge.

Kamps, I. 1995. 'Ruling Fantasies and the Fantasies of Rule: "The Phoenix and Measure for Measure,"' *Studies in Philology*. Vol.92, No.2 (Spring): 248-273.

Kantorowicz, E. 1957. *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kaula, D. 1976. 'Autolycus' Trumpery,' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. Vol. 16, No. 2, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama* (Spring): 287-303.

Kierkegaard, S. 1985. *Fear and Trembling: Dialectical Lyric by Johannes De Silentio.* Ed. and Trans. Hannay, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

____________ . 1992. *Either / Or: A Fragment of Life*. Ed. Eremita, A. Trans. Hannay, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

____________ . 2009. *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to the Philosophical Crumbs*. (Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy). Ed. and Trans. Hannay, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kirschbaum, L. 1957. 'Banquo and Edgar: Character or Function?' *EIC*. Vol. VII, No.2 (January): 1–21.

Knapp, James A. 2014. 'Beyond Materiality in Shakespeare Studies,' *Literature Compass.* Vol. 11, No. 10: 677-690.

Knapp, Jeffrey. 2002. *Shakespeare's Tribe: Church, Nation, and Theater in Renaissance England*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, USA.

Kott, J. 1967. *Shakespeare our Contemporary*. Second Edition. London: Methuen.

Kreider, P.V. 1934. 'The Mechanics of Disguise in Shakespeare's Plays,' *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin*. Vol. 9, No.4 (October): 167-180.

Lacan, J. 1977. 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,' *Écrits: a selection.* Trans. Sheridan, A. London: Tavistock: 1-7.

Le Goff, J. and Nora, P. 1985. *Constructing the Past: Essays in Historical Methodology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lerer, S. 2001. 'Review Essay of *Hamlet in Purgatory*: Greenblatt in Purgatory,' *Huntington Library Quarterly*. Vol. 64, No. 1/2 (2001): 251-252.

Lewis, C. 1983. '"Dark Deeds Darkly Answered": Duke Vincentio and Judgment in *Measure for Measure,' Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 34, No.3 (Autumn): 271-289.

Lewis, R. 2017. *Hamlet and the Vision of Darkness.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Lim, W.S.H. 2001. 'Knowledge and Belief in *The Winter's Tale,' Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. Vol. 41, No. 2, *Tudor and Stuart Drama* (Spring): 317-334.

Linley, K. 2015. *King Lear in Context: The Cultural Background*. London and New York: Anthem Press.

Liu, A. 1989. 'The Power of Formalism: The New Historicism,' *ELH*. Vol. 56, No.4 (Winter): 721-771.

Logan, T.J. 1982. '*Twelfth Night*: The Limits of Festivity,' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. Vol. 22, No. 2, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama* (Spring,1982): 223-238.

Longstaffe, S. ed., 2011. *1 Henry IV: A Critical Guide*. New York and London: Continuum.

Loomba, A. '"Delicious Traffick:" racial and religious difference on early modern stages,' *Shakespeare and Race*. Ed. Alexander, L.M.S. and S. Wells. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Macherey, P. 1978. *A Theory of Literary Production*. Trans. Wall, G. London: Routledge and Keegan Paul.

Mack, M. 1965. *King Lear in Our Time.* Berkeley and Los Angeles, USA: University of California Press.

Magedanz, S. 2004. 'Public Justice and Private Mercy in *Measure for Measure,' Studies in English Literature*. *1500-1900*. Vol.44, No.2 (Spring) *Tudor and Stuart Drama*: 317-332.

Magnusson, L. 1999. *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue: Dramatic Language and Elizabethan Letters.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McDonald, M.A. 1990. 'Review of Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England by Stephen Greenblatt,' *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*. Vol. 22, No. 3 (Autumn): 480-483.

McLean, H. 1960. 'Disguise in *King Lear*: Kent and Edgar,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 11, No. 1 (Winter): 49-54.

Meek, R. 2006. 'Ekphrasis in *The Rape of Lucrece* and *The Winter's Tale.' Studies in English Literature. 1500-1900*. Vol. 46, No. 2, *Tudor and Stuart Drama* (Spring): 389-414.

Milner, A. 2002. *Re-imagining Cultural Studies: The Promise of Cultural Materialism*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Montrose, L.A. 1989. 'Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture,' *The New Historicism*. Ed. Veeser, H. A. Oxford and New York: Routledge: 15-36.

________ 1996. *The Purpose of Playing: Shakespeare and the Cultural Politics of the Elizabethan Theatre*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Mooney, M.E. 1985. 'Edgar I Nothing am': Figurenposition in *King Lear,*' *Shakespeare Survey 38*: 153-166.

___________ .1990. *Shakespeare's Dramatic Transactions*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Mowat, B.A. 1994. 'Rogues, Shepherds, and the Counterfeit Distressed: Texts and Infracontexts in *The Winter's Tale*,' *Shakespeare Studies*, Vol. 22: 58-76.

Murfin, R.C. and May, S.M. 2008. *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms. Third Edition.* Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martins.

Mullaney, S. 1996. 'After New Historicism,' *Alternative Shakespeares Vol. 2*. Ed. Hawkes, T. London and New York: Routledge: 17-37.

__________. 1989. 'Review of Shakespearean Negotiations,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No.4 (Winter): 495-500.

Norton, J.J. 'New Directions*: King Lear* and Protestantism*,' King Lear: A Critical Guide*. Ed. Hiscock, A. and L. Hopkins. London and New York: Continuum Books: 138-155.

Orgel, S. 1975. *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

_______. 2002. *The Authentic Shakespeare and Other Problems of the Early Modern Stage*. New York and London: Routledge.

Ortiz, J. M. 2011. *Broken Harmony: Shakespeare and the Politics of Music.* New York: Cornell University Press.

Orwell, G. 1947. 'Lear, Tolstoy, and the Fool,' reprinted in *Bloom's Shakespeare Through the Ages: King Lear*. Ed. Bloom, H. New York: Infobase Publishing. 2008: 195-199.

Owen, M.B. 2017. '"Of Here and Everywhere": Dynamic Spatial Perspectives in *Twelfth Night,' Shakespeare*. Vol.13, No.3: 258-270, DOI: 10.1080/17450918.2017.1298664.

Palfrey, S. 2011. *Poor Tom: Living King Lear*. London and Chicago: The University of Chicago Press Ltd.

Palmer, D. 1981. 'Kierkegaard on the relation between selfhood and ethics,' *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*. Vol. 8, No. 2 (Spring/Summer): 94-109.

Parker, P. 1996. *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture, Context*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Parrott, T.M. 1949. *Shakespearean Comedy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Parvini, N. 2012a. *Shakespeare and Contemporary Theory: New Historicism and Cultural Materialism*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

________. 2012b, *Shakespeare's History Plays. Rethinking Historicism.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Patterson, L. 1987. *Negotiating the Past: The Historical Understanding of Mediaeval Literature*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Payne, M. and Barbera, J.R. eds., 2013. *A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory: Second Edition.* Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Pechter, E. 1987. 'The New Historicism and Its Discontents: Politicizing Renaissance Drama,' *PMLA*. Vol. 102, No. 3 (May): 292-303.

Peck, R.A. 1967. 'Edgar's Pilgrimage: High Comedy in *King Lear*,' *Studies in English Literature*. Vol.7, No.2, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama.* (Spring): 219-237.

Pertile, G.J. 2016. 'King Lear and the Uses of Mortification,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 67, No.3 (Winter): 319-343.

Poole, K. 2002. 'Hamlet in Purgatory: Review,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 53, No.4 (Winter): 557-561.

Quarmby, K. 2012. *The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*. Surrey: Aldgate Publishing.

Quiller Couch, Sir A. 1931. *Shakespeare's Workmanship.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rosenberg, M. 1972. *The Masks of King Lear*. Newark: University of Delaware Press.

___________. 1992. *The Masks of Hamlet*. Newark: University of Delaware Press.

Ryan, K. ed. 1996. *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism: A Reader*. London, Arnold.

Saussure, F. de. 1977. *Cours de linguistique générale*, Ed. Bally, C. and A. Sechehaye, with the collaboration of Riedlinger, A. Lausanne and Paris: Payot; Trans. Baskin, W. *Course in General Linguistics*. Glasgow: Fontana/Collins.

Schiffer, J. ed. 2011. *Twelfth Night: New Critical Essays.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Schanzer, E. 2008. *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare: Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure, Anthony and Cleopatra*. Transferred to digital printing. Oxford: Routledge.

Shakespeare, W. *Henry IV Part One. Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2002. Ed. Kastan, D. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

____________. *Henry IV Part One. The New Cambridge Shakespeare Edition*. 1997. Ed. Weil, H and J. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

____________. *Henry IV Part Two. Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2016. Ed. Bulman, J. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

____________. *Henry IV Part Two. The New Cambridge Shakespeare Edition*. 1989. Ed. Melchiori, G. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

____________. *Henry V. Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 1995. Ed. Craik, T. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

____________. *Henry V. The New Cambridge Shakespeare Edition*. 1992. Ed. Gurr, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

____________. *King Lear,. Arden Shakespeare Third Edition. 2005.* Ed. Foakes, R.A. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

_____________. *King Lear*. 2000. The Oxford Shakespeare. Ed. Wells, S. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

_____________. *The Tragedy of King Lear.* 2005. Ed. Halio, J.L. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____________. *King Richard II. Arden Shakespeare Third Edition,* 2002. Ed. Forker, C. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

_____________. *King Richard II. The New Cambridge Shakespeare Updated Edition*, 2003. Ed. Gurr, A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

______________ . *Measure for Measure*. 2020. *Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* Ed. Braunmuller, A.R. and R.N. Watson. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

______________ . *Measure for Measure*. 1967. *Arden Shakespeare Second Edition.* Ed. Lever, J.W. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

______________. *Measure for Measure*. 2006. Ed. Gibbons, B. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

______________. *Twelfth Night. Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2008. Ed. Elam, K. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

______________ . *Twelfth Night. The New Cambridge Shakespeare Edition*, 1985. Ed. Donno, E.S. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

______________. *The Winter's Tale. Arden Shakespeare Third Edition.* 2010. Ed. Pitcher, J. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

______________ . *The Winter's Tale. The New Cambridge Shakespeare Updated Edition*, 2007. Ed. Snyder, S. and D.T. Curren-Aquino. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shapiro, J. 2015. *The Year of Lear: Shakespeare in 1606.* New York: Simon & Schuster Inc.

Sherman, D. 2014. '"What more remains?": Messianic Performance in *Richard II*,' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 65, No. 1 (Spring 2014): 22-48.

Siemon, J.E. 1975. 'Disguise in Marston and Shakespeare,' *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*. Vol. 38, No.2 (February): 105-123.

Sinfield, A. 1982. *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

_________. 1985. 'Power and Ideology. An Outline Theory and Sidney's *Arcadia,' ELH*. Vol. 52, No.2 (Summer): 259-277.

_________. 1985. 'Review of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* by Stephen Greenblatt,' *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*. Vol.2: 324-328.

_________. 1992. *Faultlines*: *Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press.

_________. 2006. *Shakespeare, Authority, Sexuality: Unfinished Business in Cultural Materialism.* New York and London: Routledge.

Slights, C. 1982. 'The Principle of Recompense in *Twelfth Night,' The Modern Language Review*. Vol. 77, No. 3 (July): 537-546

Sokol, B.J. 1994. "Autolycus Tale and *The Winter's Tale*: The Rogue in Shakespeare's Reparative Play," *Art and Illusion in The Winter's Tale*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press: 167-181.

Stern, T. and Palfrey, S. 2013. *Shakespeare's Theatres and the Effects of Performance*. London and New York: Bloomsbury.

Sterrett, J. 2012. *The Unheard Prayer: Religious Toleration in Shakespeare's Drama*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV.

Strier, R. 2015. 'Mind, Nature, Heterodoxy, and Iconoclasm in *The Winter's Tale,' Religion and Literature*. Vol. 47, No.1 (Spring): 31-59.

Tate, N. 1681. *The History of King Lear. Acted at the Duke's Theatre. Reviv'd with Alterations*. London: E.Flesher, and are to be sold by. R.Bentley and M.Magnes in Russell Street near Covent Garden.

Taylor, G, and Warren, M. eds., 1983. *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare's Two Versions of King Lear.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tennenhouse, L. 1986. *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare's Genres*. New York and London: Methuen.

Thatcher, D. 1995. 'Mercy and "Natural Guiltiness" in *Measure for Measure*,' *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. Vol. 33, No.3 (Fall), *Shakespearean Combinations*: 264-284.

Tillyard, E.M.W. 1959. *The Elizabethan World Picture: A Study of the Idea of Order in the Age of Shakespeare, Donne & Milton.* London: Vintage.

Tootalian, J. 2013. "Without Measure: The Language of Shakespeare's Prose," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*. Vol. 13, No. 4, *The Digital Turn* (Fall): 47-60

Traversi, D.A. 1947. '*Henry IV, Part 1*: History and the Artist's Vision,' *Henry the Fourth, Part One*, Ed. Sanderson, J.L. New York: W.W. Norton and Company: 327-31.

Urkowitz, S. 1980. *Shakespeare's Revision of King Lear*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Van Laan, T.F. 1978. *Role-Playing in Shakespeare*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Veeser, H.A. ed., 1989. *The New Historicism.* Oxford and New York: Routledge.

Vickers, Sir B. 2016. *The One King Lear*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press.

Vitkus, D. 1997. 'Turning the Turk in *Othello*: The Conversion and Damnation of the Moor,' *Shakespeare Quarterly.* Vol. 48: 145-176.

Warren, M.J. 1978. 'Quarto and Folio *King Lear* and the Interpretation of Albany and Edgar,' *Shakespeare, Pattern of Excelling Nature: Shakespearean Criticism in Honor of America's Bicentennial.* Ed. Bevington, D. and J.L Halio. London: Associated University Presses: 95-107.

Weimann, R. 1994. 'Textual Authority and Performative Agency: The Uses of Disguise in Shakespeare's Theater,' *New Literary History.* Vol. 25, No. 4, *25th Anniversary Issue* (*Part 2*) (Autumn): 789-808.

Weiser, D.K. 1997. 'The Ironic Hierarchy in *Measure for Measure*,' *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. Vol. 19, No.3 (Fall), *An Issue Devoted to the Renaissance*: 323-347.

Wells, S. and Taylor, G. eds., 1986. *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wheeler, R.P. 1971-72. 'History, Character and Conscience in *Richard III*,' *Comparative Drama.* Vol. 5, No. 4 (Winter): 301-321.

Whitmarsh, T. 2017. 'Review of the Rise of Fall of Adam and Eve.' Viewed 28 September 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/sep/28/rise-and-fall-adam-and-eve-by-stephen-greenblatt-review.

Williams, S. 1990. *Shakespeare on the German Stage, Volume 1: 1586-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson Knight, G. 1930. *The Wheel of Fire: Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy*. London: Methuen.

Wittgenstein, L. 1958. *Philosophical Investigations.* Trans. Anscombe, G.E.M. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.