

BANISHMENT IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

by

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The gates of Paradise were opened, and Lambajan averted his eyes. I stumbled through them, giddy, disoriented, lost. I was nobody, nothing. Nothing I had ever known was of use, nor could I any longer say that I knew it. I had been emptied, invalidated; I was, to use a hoary but suddenly fitting epithet, *ruined*. I had fallen from grace, and the horror of it shattered the universe, like a mirror. I felt as though I, too, had shattered; as if I were falling to earth, not as myself, but as a thousand and one fragmented images of myself, trapped in shards of glass.

The banishment of Moraes Zogoiby from *The Moor's Last Sigh* by Salman Rushdie

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SYNOPSIS

'Banished' – the word resounds in many Elizabethan and Jacobean plays, particularly in those of Shakespeare. This thesis examines the drama of banishment, that is, the sentence, lamentation, displacement, and metamorphosis of the exile in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *As You Like It*, *King Lear*, *Coriolanus* and *The Tempest*. To appreciate the rich and polysemous nature of 'banished' in Shakespeare's society I have considered a number of legal, historical and literary sources which reveal certain tropes of exile. The poet of Ovid's *Tristia* and Plato's *Republic*, the beast/god of Aristotle's *Politics*, the seventeenth-century colonialist, the Petrarchan lover, are all examples of the archetypes against which Shakespeare's banished characters fashion themselves. For banishment is a process of annihilation and of self-creation, and as such it raises various questions about identity in Shakespeare's plays. The possibility of its destruction and transformation reveals identity to be a fictional construct, based on ideology not inherent nature or right. This suggestion that the social distinctions between men are equally fictional gives a particular frisson to the juxtaposition of the exiled king and the naked beggar, to the transformation of greatness into barbarousness, that is so often staged on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage through banishment.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used

<i>Crit. Q.</i>	<i>Critical Quarterly</i>
<i>ELH</i>	<i>English Literary History</i>
<i>ELR</i>	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
<i>E. in C.</i>	<i>Essays in Criticism</i>
F	First Folio (1623)
<i>HLQ</i>	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
<i>MLQ</i>	<i>Modern Language Quarterly</i>
<i>MLR</i>	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
<i>N & Q</i>	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
Q	Quarto
<i>Ren. D.</i>	<i>Renaissance Drama</i>
<i>Ren. Q</i>	<i>Renaissance Quarterly</i>
<i>RES</i>	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
<i>Sh. Q.</i>	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>
<i>Sh. St.</i>	<i>Shakespeare Studies</i>
<i>Sh. S.</i>	<i>Shakespeare Survey</i>
<i>Sh. Y.</i>	<i>Shakespeare Yearbook</i>
<i>SEL</i>	<i>Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900</i>
<i>Stud. in Phil.</i>	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
<i>YES</i>	<i>Year^{book} of English Studies</i>

All dates given for plays indicate their earliest performance according to the *Annals of English Drama* 975-1700, 3rd ed., unless specified otherwise.

REWRITING EXILE IN RENAISSANCE ENGLAND

According to Stephen Dedalus, exile is central to Shakespeare's life-story and to his life's work:

The note of banishment, banishment from the heart, banishment from home, sounds uninterruptedly from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* onward till Prospero breaks his staff, buries it certain fathoms in the earth and drowns his book.¹

Stephen attributes Shakespeare's flight from Stratford to various dramatic events: his wife's adultery; his brother's betrayal; some crime of his own by which Shakespeare was compelled to leave. Stephen, and perhaps some biographers and critics, advance the theory of the poet's banishment in order to identify themselves with an alienated Shakespeare or to valorise work produced from the margins. In the quest to romanticise Shakespeare, perhaps to remake him in Hamlet's image, the possibility that he experienced the 'outcast state' may be a deeply satisfying one. For the critic concerned to demonstrate Shakespeare's peculiarly anachronistic social conscience, exile might explain his sympathy for the marginalised and alien.² Later we

¹ *Ulysses* by James Joyce (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1992), 272.

² I am not here concerned with Shakespeare's depiction of the stranger per se or with the foreign exile in Early Modern England. Leslie A. Fiedler's *The Stranger in Shakespeare* (London: Croom Helm, 1973) argues that the dramatist mainly subscribed to the public mythology regarding women, Jews, blacks and Indians. Whilst Shakespeare invokes these prejudices, the complex sympathies that Othello for one inspires must problematize this question of ideological stance. Moreover, Fiedler fails to make a connection between Shakespeare's depiction of alienation through banishment and that incurred through race or gender. Although the exiles with whom I am concerned all occupy positions of some eminence and centrality in their societies before banishment, their sufferings may inform an audience's attitude to Shakespeare's other aliens. The passages in *Sir Thomas More* attributed to Shakespeare include a defence of the resident foreigners in London. More asks the people to imagine themselves as banished men and thus to sympathise with the inhuman treatment afforded England's 'strangers', ll 137-55.

will examine the assumption that Shakespeare's art could only have been produced from society's outposts. But irrespective of personal experience, Shakespeare and his contemporaries evidently found the depiction of exile to be rich in dramatic possibilities. This, rather than any experience of exile, may be the reason why that drama was so frequently presented on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. Fourteen out of Shakespeare's thirty-eight plays represent the banishment of one or more central characters. When we include minor characters and self-imposed exile that number increases considerably. Among his contemporaries, Marston and Webster are notable devotees of this device. *Antonio and Mellida* (1599), *Antonio's Revenge* (1600) and *The Malcontent* (1604) all feature banishment as a tragic fate, to be variously lamented or Stoically endured, whilst Webster sees fit to open *The White Devil* (1612) with Lodovico's cry of 'Banished!' In Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London* (1600), a father, his four sons and one daughter are all banished from France. Two of the sons are then banished again during this exile. Banishment was dramatic almost to excess. The proclamation is a climactic moment on the stage whether mimed, as in *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614), or vocally performed. The words 'I banish you' have a direct performative power which reflects on the eminence of kings and upon language in general. The exile's response to his or her fate provides an opportunity for a highly wrought, highly emotional lament. The exile may express grief, anger, despair or resignation. His fate may provoke revenge or even madness but it will almost certainly require the adoption of disguise and a journey into an alien environment. Banishment expands the horizons of the play itself, perhaps allowing for a change of location and of society, whilst the absences and separations it creates in the exile's place of origin alter the dynamics of that world.

There are abundant reasons for the dramatist's deployment of exile. Yet I would suggest that what Shakespeare returns to again and again is the drama of self-annihilation and of self-creation that banishment encapsulates. The man cast out from society is deprived of the roles by which he has known himself. He becomes the antithesis to social role-playing for he is identified as uncivilised, unnatural and inhuman. He is the wolf snarling in the wilderness beyond the city walls. He is the scapegoat, thrust beyond the town's limits with all its evils on his back. In Elizabethan and Jacobean England, the exile may be a Catholic, gypsy, vagabond or strolling player. Society may use the exile to redefine its own limits but this does not leave the victim himself with any positive definition by which to live. Indeed, the fracturing or dissolution of identity attendant upon exile seems to be expressed in the conventional association of banishment with death.³

In response to this threat, the Shakespearean exile must rewrite him- or her- self. This usually begins with the throwing off of the stigma of exile. Thus, the enforced journey will be imagined as liberty, pleasure, self-fulfilment or revenge. By redefining the experience of exile, the victim finds a new role to play. This sense of theatricality is inherent in many representations of exile on the Renaissance stage, as we will later see in Anthony Munday's play *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington* (1598). The exile who survives invariably does so because of the ability to take control of his identity by adopting disguise, language and gesture to recreate himself. Banishment in Shakespeare can be an experience of self-fulfilment. The performance of another role paradoxically develops and externalises the

³ This may also be a legal convention. In T. E. Tomlins' *Law Dictionary* (London: C. Baldwin, 1820), 3rd ed., 2 vols., vol 1, banishment is described as 'a kind of civil death'.

character's sense of self whilst the landscape of exile may assist in the realisation of his most worldly ambitions.

To say that Shakespeare is primarily interested in banishment because of the possibilities it offers to explore dramatic character and human subjectivity is to leave oneself open to attack from those critics who insist that subjectivity at this time is an anachronism. Catherine Belsey argues that we impose upon these characters a unity and a continuous selfhood that they do not possess, for no such meaning is available to the sixteenth- or seventeenth-century subject.⁴ She suggests that the self-affirmatory speeches one might cite as examples of an inviolable identity can be taken as ironic, if not pathetic or even monstrous:

Antony's assertion of his identity also marks the loss of it, and here too it is clear that identity is not distinct from political place in a world of meaning where public and private, social and personal, are not yet fully differentiated [...] The loss of political place finally entails the dissolution of the self: 'here I am Antony,/ Yet cannot hold this visible shape' (IV.xiv.13-4).⁵

But if, as Kay Stockholder also suggests, 'one's place in the world was identical to one's self-definition, and to "know oneself" was [...] to know the duties entailed by one's membership in an order on the hierarchical ladder', then it is the subsequent crisis of identity when that place is lost that Shakespeare dramatises through banishment.⁶ For it is not given to all of

⁴ Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), 26-54. Critics who engage with Belsey's argument but defend some concept of interiority by drawing on various nondramatic sources include Katherine Eisamann Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1995), and Elizabeth Hanson, *Discovering the Subject in Renaissance England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Peter B. Murray proposes that Shakespeare's plays 'invite us to construct his characters as imagined persons' and that 'the intelligibility of their psychology was implicitly important to [Shakespeare]', *Shakespeare's Imagined Persons: The Psychology of Role-Playing and Acting* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1996), 1. These are very much the assumptions behind this study.

⁵ *The Subject of Tragedy*, 39-40.

⁶ Kay Stockholder, "'Yet Can He Write': Reading the Silences in *The Spanish Tragedy*", *American Imago* 47 (1990), 3-124. quoted by Maus in *Inwardness and Theater*, 2-3.

Shakespeare's exiles to refashion themselves with playful insouciance. Rather the dependence of the private identity upon public recognition, of the person upon the office as Philip Edwards puts it, is fundamental to the tragic expression of exile in Shakespeare's plays.⁷ Coriolanus, Richard II, King Lear, and even Romeo do not survive the destruction of those identities which were imposed upon them at birth and which they have perfectly performed. Despite attesting to a private integrity, these banished men are unable to impose a shape on their existence.

Banishment in Shakespeare's plays works on a number of levels. It is a plot device the significance of which is dictated by the overall structure into which it is placed. It can work as a submerged, perhaps subconscious metaphor for states of alienation and loss explored in the play. Finally, the repeated acts of banishment in *As You Like It* or *King Lear* may seem to work on a symbolic level. Perhaps the central characteristic of Shakespearean banishment however is that it is always on its way to becoming some other state. As such it reflects the rewriting of banishment in many other kinds of English Renaissance literature, not only fiction but biography, private letters, religious and anti-theatrical polemic, hagiography, consolation literature and travel narratives. In this chapter I will consider the problem of defining banishment in Renaissance England and the ways in which this incoherence was exploited.

The slipperiness of banishment at this time is partly linguistic. The *OED* recognises a distinction between the verbs 'banish' and 'exile'. 'To banish' is defined as 'to put to the ban,

⁷ Philip Edwards, 'Person and Office in Shakespeare's Plays', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 56 (London: Oxford University Press, 1970).

"proclaim" as an outlaw [...] To condemn (a person) by public edict or sentence to leave the country: to exile, expatriate'. Exile includes this meaning of banishment but is also defined as 'expatriation, prolonged absence from one's native land, *endured by compulsion of circumstances or voluntarily undergone for any purpose*' (italics mine). In Jowitt's *Dictionary of English Law* the two terms are described as synonymous.⁸ Moreover, in the literature with which this chapter is concerned, there is generally no attempt to distinguish between the man exiled by royal proclamation, legal statute, 'compulsion of circumstances' or free will. Anthony Wood in *Athenae Oxonienses* (1695) speaks of 'voluntary Exile' and 'voluntary banishment'.⁹ This lack of differentiation means that a voluntary journey abroad may easily become a heroic flight from persecution; or that the motive of fear may be recast as self-sacrifice.

We might expect the legal instigation of banishment to distinguish clearly between enforced and voluntary exile. This is true of the majority of such legislation. In 1562 it was decreed that 'Egyptians' and 'counterfeit' Egyptians must quit the kingdom or face charges of felony. In 1585, an 'Act against Jesuits, Seminary Priests, and other such like disobedient Persons' ordered Catholic priests trained at one of the notorious colleges abroad to return there. Recusants were similarly banished in Elizabeth's 1593 act and expelled from London in James' act of 1605. Finally, the unreformed and unlicensed beggar, wandering minstrel and player might all be expelled from the kingdom in accordance with a statute of 1597.¹⁰

⁸ *The Dictionary of English Law* ed. by Earl Jowitt (London: Sweet and Maxwell, 1959), 200.

⁹ *Athenae Oxonienses* (1695), (London: R. Knaplock, D. Midwinter & J. Tonson, 1721), 2 vols., vol. 1, 101, 170.

¹⁰ See 5 Eliz. c.20 (1562), 27 Eliz c. 2 (1585), 34 Eliz c. 1 (1593), 3 Jacobi c.5 (1605) and 39 Eliz c. 4 (1597) respectively in *The Statutes at large, from the 39th Year of Q. Elizabeth to the 12th yr of K. Charles II* ed. by Danby Pickering (London: Joseph Bentham, 1763) vol. 7. These statutes will be examined in more detail in the course of the study.

There seems little margin for metaphor here. Yet although there are cases of transportation, the offender may usually choose between exile and execution. This might not seem much of a choice but the lines of definition between exile and voluntary flight are blurred further in the case of 'abjuration'. From the reign of Edward the Confessor to the twenty-second year of Henry VIII's rule (1530), abjuration meant an oath taken to depart the kingdom forever and was usually applied in felony cases.¹¹ Such complicity is reflected in the Marian, Elizabethan and Jacobean practice of granting an offender a travel licence to quit the realm and so avoid further prosecution, but without a declaration of exile.¹² Dr John Storey referred to this agreement at his trial in 1571. Storey had occupied the position of chancellor of the dioceses of Oxford and London during Mary's reign and was notorious for his bloody persecution of English Protestants. He fled abroad following Elizabeth's succession but was captured and brought back for trial. Storey argued that he was no longer a subject of the Queen (or of English law) by mutual consent:

For it is well knowen, that I departed this realme beyng freelye licensed therunto by the queene, who accounted me an abject and castawaye, and I came not hether agayne of myne owne accorde; but I was betrayed.¹³

¹¹ In his *Law-Dictionary* Tomlins describes how from Edward I onwards the felon who fled to a church for sanctuary might avoid prosecution for felony by confessing to a justice or coroner and swearing to forsake the kingdom. He would then be allowed forty days to leave during which time only people might give him food and water. Under Henry VIII, this punishment was replaced by 'perpetual confinement of the offender to some sanctuary' which he chose, 'upon *abjuration* of his liberty and free habitation', abolished by statute 21. Jac. I c.28.

¹² Examples of this kind of exile under Marian and Jacobean rule might be Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire and Tobie Matthew. Courtenay was involved in a plot to put himself and Princess Elizabeth on the throne. When the rebellion was suppressed Courtenay was sent to the Tower but because of Mary's affection for him he was released and exiled. Tobie Matthew was imprisoned for converting to Roman Catholicism in 1607. He was released the following year through the intervention of powerful friends on the condition that he travel abroad for some time.

¹³ See 'A Declaration of the Lyfe and Death of John Story' (1571) printed in *Somer's Tracts* (London, 1809) (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1965), 10 vols., vol. 1, 477-87, 485. Sir John Cheke suffered a similar kidnapping despite his licence to travel abroad. He was also imprisoned in the Tower and only escaped execution by recantation.

If exile may be by mutual consent, then the distance implied is another variable. In 1572 Elizabeth repealed an act of 1530 implemented by her father, 'for the Punishment of Vagabonds, and for the Relief of the Poor and Impotent'. This legislation reiterated the order that unlicensed beggars should be sent back to their parishes to receive the benefits of the poor rate, or to be punished and then set to work.¹⁴ Thus, banishment might describe the enforced removal of a person from one parish to another. When Sir Francis Bacon was expelled from the court by James I in 1621, he was charged not to come within the 'verge' of the court, a distance of twelve miles. In statutes passed by Elizabeth and James, Catholics were to remain at all times at least ten miles away from the monarch. To be denied access was a rather mundane and yet richly metaphorical kind of banishment: mundane because it seems to have occurred so frequently in the lives of the most successful courtiers, and metaphorical because, whilst it might not require one's departure from England, it could be imagined as such a loss.

Elizabeth frequently expelled courtiers from her presence. For the more serious crimes of making a secret marriage and returning from Ireland without permission, Raleigh and Essex respectively found themselves imprisoned and then banished from the court. To displease the Queen by some rash word or opinion might incur a less severe form of exile. When Francis Bacon lost his access to Elizabeth in 1593 he had been guilty of opposition to a series of subsidies she required of Parliament. Essex, Bacon's patron, urged the Queen to readmit Bacon to her presence but without success. He related her answer thus:

¹⁴ See 14 Eliz c.5.

Your access, she saith, is as much as you can look for. If it had been in the king her father's time, a less offence than that would have made a man be banished his presence for ever. But you did come to the court, when you would yourself; and she should precipitate too much from being highly displeased with you, to give you near access, such as she shows only to those, that she favours extraordinarily.¹⁵

Mario Digangi describes the correlation between the courtier's power and his access to the sovereign's body in the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. At Elizabeth's court those closest to the actual body of the queen were women. When James replaced them with male servants the role of gentleman of the bedchamber became a highly sought after position at court.¹⁶ Hence, exile from that body was a literal and metaphorical disempowering of the subject. Moreover, where Elizabethan and Jacobean ideology equated sovereign and kingdom (through the theory of the King's two bodies), this exile might yet be imagined as banishment from the world. The representation of Elizabeth standing on a map of England in the Ditchley portrait (c.1592), James' declaration that he united England and Scotland within his body, and even the equation in Petrarchan poetry of the mistress with the world, all reinforced the idea that banishment from the monarch was exile from England and hence from the world.

Thus banishment is metaphorical even as it is decreed. The banished man's response is invariably to work within the allegory that he has inherited or to refashion the experience of exile in accordance with some other literary or historical model. In the rest of this chapter I will be concerned with some of those models, in particular the representation of exile as a

¹⁵ A letter from Essex to Bacon dated c 24th August 1593, reprinted in *Hostage to Fortune: The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon* by Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998), 149.

¹⁶ Mario Digangi, *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 100-3.

tragic, destructive fate, as self-fulfilment through liberty, and as the realisation of a divine or literary vocation.

The narrative of exile as penned by the absent courtier is often tragic. By inspiring the monarch's pity and even admiration at the abject misery of the outcast state, he might hope to be forgiven and recalled. Essex was extremely proficient at such rhetoric. Having been forced to retire into the country in disgrace over the Irish campaign, the Earl wrote:

My soul cried out unto your Majesty for grace, for access and for an end to this exile [...] for till I may appear in your gracious presence and kiss your Majesty's fair correcting hand, time itself is a perpetual night, and the whole world but a sepulchre unto your Majesty's humblest vassal.¹⁷

Such rhetoric recalls the Petrarchan convention of the lover bewailing his absence from his mistress as imitated by many courtier poets, for example Sir Thomas Wyatt and Sir Philip Sidney.¹⁸ In Sidney's *Arcadia*, the princess, Pamela, has a very regal turn of phrase when she commands Dorus to leave her. His response is to write a long poem dramatising himself as a banished man. Later he presents himself to fight Amphialus in the guise of a 'forsaken knight', with this fate emblemized on his shield.¹⁹ Yet this pose of the banished man as tragic figure did not only serve the purposes of the ambitious courtier. It was also central to the representation of the persecuted Protestant and Catholic in post-Reformation England.

¹⁷ Reprinted in *Robert, Earl of Essex: An Elizabethan Icarus* by Robert Lacey (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971), 259.

¹⁸ See *Petrarch's Lyric Poems: The Rime sparse and Other Lyrics* tr. and ed. by Robert M. Durling (Cambridge: Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), in particular sonnets 17, 21 and 76 which describe the lover as banished from himself. See also Wyatt's poem 'In Spain' (1539) and Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* (1581-3).

¹⁹ *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* ed. by Maurice Evans (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1977), 436, 438-40, 535.

It has usually been assumed that the title 'Marian exiles' is accurate, that is to say, that the flight of approximately eight hundred Protestants during Mary's reign was an exile based on 'compulsion of circumstances' if not official banishment. To remain in England would inevitably lead to persecution and possibly execution. Yet Christina Garrett has argued that this flight of English Protestants, at least in the first year of Marian rule, was a voluntary act of religious colonization. She describes how plans had been made for such a journey a month after the Queen's accession to the throne (August 1553) and that these were in operation the following January before any coercive religious measures had been taken by the government. Moreover, the journeys themselves were well-organised with students travelling in companies and the gentry in households, suggesting some forethought. Garrett writes:

That emigration, whatever the springs which fed it later, was inaugurated, we believe, as a voluntary movement, and directed to the fulfilment of a clearly conceived purpose. Yet, as a policy, it so happily met the needs of the Marian government, that in its early stages (to the late autumn, probably, of 1554), William Cecil and Stephen Gardiner actually appear as collaborators in the same religious enterprise.²⁰

Ironically, it was the state of alienation in which they found themselves that necessitated the adoption of this exile persona.²¹ English Protestants left behind their incomes, homes and patrons, the protection of the law and even their native language. To succeed abroad, they needed foreign patronage. This they might gain by representing themselves to the Protestant

²⁰ *The Marian Exiles: A Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938 rep. 1966), 6-7.

²¹ A. G. Dickens argues that Garrett's reappraisal is too sweeping and that there were still many Protestants whose flight must have been motivated by a justified fear; that a significant number left after the persecution had begun; and that there is ample evidence for their disorganisation when they arrived. He writes: 'The truth doubtless lies somewhere between the excessive optimism of the modern picture, and the old legend of hapless fugitives, weeping by the waters of Babylon', *The English Reformation* (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd, 1964), 284.

communities into which they came as religious exiles.²² To be a political refugee from an oppressive regime would not ensure a welcome. Indeed, Strasbourg, Frankfurt and Zurich, among other cities, had a strict policy on the political backgrounds of their refugees, denying access to those guilty of 'crimes against the state'.²³ Garrett writes:

It was out of this predicament [...] that the need arose for *a legend of persecution and banishment*. Hence it was that in all their supplications for shelter, these voluntary exiles became in their own phrase 'die armen vertrybnen Engellender', and 'poor banished Englishmen' they have remained in the sympathy of the world to the present day.²⁴ (italics mine)

The iconography of the exile at this time also correlates with the iconography of the Protestant martyr. Foxe includes exile as one of the tribulations suffered by the martyred under Henry VIII. On Edward's succession: 'such as before were in banishment for the danger of the truth, were again received to their country'.²⁵ Foxe describes Mary's reign as one in which

many men, women, and children were burnt, many imprisoned, and in prison starved, divers exiled, some spoiled of goods and possessions, a great number driven from house and home.²⁶

He shows an awareness of the suffering of Protestant exiles abroad in the case of Bartlet Green. Green's correspondence with Christopher Goodman, 'being at that present a poor exile

²² Exile-communities were established at Emden, Wesel, Frankfurt, Strasburg and Zurich with offshoots at Basel, Geneva and Aarau. See *The English Reformation* for a brief history of these Protestant colonies in particular the notorious Frankfurt, 286-94.

²³ Garrett cites a letter written by Richard Hilles to Henry Bullinger in 1545 concerning the application of his friend, John Burcher, for the freedom of the Canton of Zurich. Hilles refers to the necessity of the exile proving himself innocent of any sedition and thus presenting himself as one persecuted 'for having embraced the pure and christian doctrine, and freely made a profession of it'. *The Marian Exiles*, 12-3.

²⁴ *The Marian Exiles*, 15.

²⁵ *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe* ed. by Rev. Josiah Pratt (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1877), 4th ed., 8 vols., vol 5, 703.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, 624.

beyond the seas' was intercepted and became the object of royal scrutiny when a remark of Green's about the Queen was 'misinterpreted'. Foxe is too interested in Bartlet's subsequent martyrdom to describe this exile any further. However, he later refers to the fateful letter as included among 'others, written to divers of the godly exiles', suggesting that Goodman was another persecuted Protestant.²⁷

In the early years of her reign, Elizabeth seemed to promise a degree of religious toleration. Bishops were deprived of their positions and put in prison or under house arrest but the rest of the clergy remained in England practising their faith with varying degrees of compromise. The supremacy oath was not imposed on laymen systematically nor were the fines for recusancy effectually enforced.²⁸ Although Nicolas Sander's *The Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism* (1585), continued by Edward Rishton, describes how high dignitaries of the Church were 'banished the realm' in these early years, the extent to which this removal was voluntary or enforced remains unclear.²⁹ Once again, the migration of a number of Elizabethan bishops and academics from Oxford and Cambridge may be seen as religious colonization. The exiles went to the universities of Paris, Padua, Salamanca and Louvain and to newly created Catholic colleges such as Rheims, Rome and Douai, where the intention was

²⁷ Goodman left England voluntarily in 1554 and his name appeared in the same year with the exiles at Strasbourg. He moved to Frankfurt and then joined John Knox at Geneva where they were appointed pastors to the exile community there. From here, Goodman wrote *How Superior powers ought to be obeyd of their subiects* (1558) which was deeply critical of Mary and of the sovereignty of women in general. The tract was so unpopular for its splenetic tone that Goodman did not dare to return at once to England on Elizabeth's accession. He was also involved in Coverdale's translation of the Bible and in Knox's writing.

²⁸ Christopher Haigh describes the varying circumstances of the Catholic priests who remained in England. He explains the Elizabethan government's change to a draconian anti-Catholic policy as a reaction, not just to the Northern rebellion, but to a perceived increase in the number of English Catholics. This was largely due to the return of English priests trained abroad, particularly at the Douai seminary, to England from 1574 onwards. See *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 251-67, 256, 261-3.

²⁹ *The Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism* tr. and ed. by David Lewis (London: Burns & Oates, 1877), Bk. 4, chp. 3, 261.

to train priests who might return to England and keep the faith alive there. Moreover, in 1585 the *Anglican Schism* refers to banishment as a 'new course', distinguished from the Act of that year which required Jesuits to leave the country.³⁰ This banishment of priests held in prison sounds more like transportation and here Rishton writes from personal experience, describing the reluctance of the priests to 'forsake' English Catholics (327-30). He suggests that the Church's persecutors now wish to present a more humane face to the world. The exile demurs:

But most assuredly banishment for life is no strong proof of forbearance, and in truth is the most cruel punishment, when the condition of it is death if you return. Now the priests of God are in England by the command of their superiors, and out of their own great zeal for the salvation of souls; to them, therefore, this banishment must have been harder to bear than all torture and death itself, and to the Catholic people also, thus robbed of their priests, it must have been infinitely sad.³¹

Voluntary or enforced, motivated by religious zeal or political dissidence, the definition of exile is a central bone of contention in contemporary debates over Catholic persecution. In *The Execution of Justice in England* (1583), William Cecil argues that the Pope has been deceived by the fugitives.³² Their support for his bull of excommunication against Elizabeth is inspired by inherent treachery not religious conviction. Cecil writes:

not only all the rabble of the foresaid traitors that were before fled, but also all other persons that had forsaken their native countries, being of divers

³⁰ See *The Statutes at Large from the First Year of Queen Mary, to the Thirty-fifth Year of Queen Elizabeth*, inclusive ed. by Danby Pickering (Cambridge: Joseph Bentham, 1763), 27 Eliz. cap. 2. The act called for those mentioned to quit the realm of England within forty days of the proclamation or face a charge of high treason. It also declared that to harbour a priest after those forty days would be a felony punishable by death; that within six months the seminarians must return to England and take the oath of allegiance or be proclaimed traitors; that it is not lawful to send one's child or ward abroad without a special licence; and that no money may be sent over to the colleges. These laws are summarised in *The Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*. Bk 4, chp. 11, 332-3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Bk. 4, chp. 11, 326.

³² See *The Execution of Justice in England by William Cecil and A True, Sincere, and Modest Defense of English Catholics by William Allen* ed. by Robert M. Kingdon (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 1965), 4.

conditions and qualities, some not able to live at home but in beggary, some discontented for lack of preferments, which they gaped for unworthily in universities and other places, some bankrupt merchants, some in a sort learned to contentions, being not contented to learn to obey the laws of the land, have many years, running up and down from country to country, practiced [sic] some in one corner, some in another, some with seeking to gather forces and money for forces, some with instigation of princes by untruths to make war upon their natural country, some with inward practices to murder the GREATEST, some with seditious writings, and very many of late with public infamous libels, full of spiteful vile terms and poisoned lies, altogether to uphold the foresaid anti-Christian and tyrannous warrant of the Pope's bill.³³

Hence, Cecil argues that no Catholic has been persecuted for his faith but rather for the sedition and treachery practised against Elizabeth in the name of that faith. He extends this argument to the seminaries, urging his readers not to be deceived by their apparently apolitical intents in sending priests across to England. It is all part of a papal master plan. 'to nourish and bring up persons disposed naturally to sedition' and to smuggle them into England for the Queen's overthrow.³⁴

In *A True, Sincere and Modest Defense of English Catholics* (1584) William Allen utterly refutes this. Protestants have fostered the misconception that all Catholics, but particularly Jesuits and seminarians, are in league with the Pope, the King of Spain, the Duke of Florence and others to invade the kingdom.³⁵ In fact, Allen argues, despite Elizabeth's

³³ Ibid., 5-6.

³⁴ Ibid., 6. Many of Cecil's conclusions about the Catholic exiles are dramatised in Thomas Dekker's play *The Whore of Babylon* (1606), possibly a revision of the Elizabethan play *Truth's Supplication to Candlelight* (1600), which looks back on the Elizabethan era from the same anti-Catholic perspective. In particular, Dekker repeatedly denies the exiles any religious fervour. Campeius (Edmund Campion) seems only concerned with advancement. He travels to Rome in the hope that at the Empress' court his talents will be appreciated, 2.2. In 3.1 the first Cardinal describes how Satyran (Philip II) recruits Englishmen for Rome. These include 'all such fugitives/ Whose heartes are Babylonized: all the Mutiners,/ All the damb'd Crew, that would for gold teare off/ The deuills beard: All schollers that doe eate/ The bread of sorrow, want, and discontent ...', 67-71 in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker* ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), vol. 2.

³⁵ *The Execution of Justice*, 79-80.

excommunication, Catholics have remained loyal and have even tried to mitigate that sentence. His insistence that the Catholic exiles are quite innocent of treason flew in the face of evidence collected by Sir Francis Walsingham's spies and is similarly rejected by present day historians.³⁶ Nevertheless, Allen's seminarians are models of hard work and endurance. Spending their 'long banishment in honest poverty', never accused of the least crime or disorder by their host country.³⁷ He also defends the religious convictions of the exiled laymen. If their exile were motivated by secular self-interest, Allen argues, they would certainly have succumbed to the Protestants' persuasions. Instead, the Catholic exiles remain steadfast and it is England's Protestants who are being tempted across the channel to true faith:

we in the mean space (through God's great grace) receive hundreds of your ministers, a number of your best wits, many delicate young gentlemen, and divers heirs of all ages, *voluntarily fleeing* from your damnable condition and seeking after God; and many of them also become priests or religious, even now when you hate, contemn, and punish priests so deadly.³⁸ (italics mine)

We have so far considered the representation of the exile as a passive, tragic figure but this was by no means the only identity available to the banished man, particularly if his flight was voluntary. Such exile becomes a heroic action and the realisation of one's vocation. In the case of Reformation England, expelled from the Roman Catholic Church, that exile came to seem the fulfilment of England's unique virtues.

Excommunication posits the expulsion of a man from the Church, from the community of Christians and from the intangible body of Christ. It is the fate of Cain doomed to wander the

³⁶ See Kingdon's introduction on Allen's involvement in various plots, xxxiii-vii.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 106.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 106-7.

earth with alienation written in his flesh. In *Acts and Monuments*, Foxe relates word-for-word the sentence passed upon the unknown author of certain heresies:

Accursed may they be, and given body and soul to the devil. Cursed be they, he or she, in cities and towns, in fields, in ways, in paths, in houses, out of houses, and in all other places, standing, lying, or rising, walking, running, waking, sleeping, eating, drinking, and whatsoever thing they do besides. We separate them, him or her, from the threshold, and from all the good prayers of the church: from the participation of holy mass; from all sacraments, chapels, and altars; from holy bread and holy water; [...] and we give them over utterly to the power of the fiend ...³⁹

When this sentence was extended to England's sovereign, as it was to Henry in November 1538 and to Elizabeth in April 1570, the isolation imaginatively suffered by that realm upon its break with Rome was reinforced by divine rhetoric.⁴⁰ Moreover, this latter banishment may have seemed to express the inherently marginal, even alien character of England in relation to other European powers. The kingdom had always been geographically isolated from the rest of the world. Now its isolation was marked by its governance by a woman, a declared bastard and a heretic.

In order to secure Elizabeth's position, it was vital to redefine England's self-image as an outcast. Jeffrey Knapp describes how the Virgilian aphorism about the country, 'penitos toto divisos orbe Britannos' ('the Britons wholly divided from all the world', first Eclogue) was reinterpreted:

the English could see their island as much excluding the world as being excluded by it. What would otherwise have appeared dispiriting tokens of

³⁹ *Acts and Monuments*, vol. 5, 21. Thomas Benet had put up scrolls on the doors of Exeter cathedral saying 'The pope is Antichrist; and we ought to worship God only, and no saints', 19. He was in the congregation when the excommunication was pronounced and his defiant laughter betrayed him.

⁴⁰ For the terms of Pope Pius V's excommunication of Elizabeth see *The Reformation in England* by Philip Hughes (London: Hollis & Carter, 1952), 3 vols., vol. 3, 418-20.

England's weakness - its littleness, its circumscription by enemies, its female monarch could signify instead England's abjuration of material or worldly means to power and its extraordinary reliance on God: "Whosoever will humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23.12).⁴¹

Knapp describes three central oppositional readings to the perceived weakening of England under Elizabeth. Firstly, Elizabeth's accession is celebrated as an end to Marian rule. The English Protestant Queen has rid the realm of the Spanish and Catholic Philip II, and thus she has 'reestablished England's otherness'. In these terms, the Reformation could be read as a 'restoring and setting at Liberty Gods holy Word among us'.⁴² The crucial transformation is that from exile to liberty, which will be repeated time and again in the dramatisation of banishment. Secondly, Elizabeth (and England's isolation) has brought the kingdom peace whilst Europe is ravaged by war.⁴³ Finally, the Queen is praised for her virginity:

the "impregnable virginity", that seemed not only to figure England's separateness and purity but actually to help preserve them, by literally fending off "foreign kings" [...] Elizabeth could seem, in other words, the providential consummation of England's efforts to realize itself *as an island*.⁴⁴

As England's removal/expulsion from Rome was being redefined as a kind of self-fulfilling destiny, the Protestant and Catholic exiles of post-Reformation England were also eager to emphasise the heroism and virtue of banishment. Whilst Foxe laments the enforced exile of the martyrs, he also praises them for choosing to flee. In a letter to his friend, Richard Bertie,

⁴¹ *An Empire Nowhere: England, America, and Literature from Utopia to The Tempest* (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 4-5. Knapp locates this celebration of the island and of Elizabeth's sovereignty within a redefinition of the trifling where what is paltry, insignificant and immaterial becomes England's glory.

⁴² A speech by Sir Nicholas Bacon (1571) reprinted in Sir Simonds D'Ewes' *A Compleat Journal of the Votes, Speeches and Debates Both of the House of Lords and House of Commons Throughout the Whole Reign of Queen Elizabeth of Glorious Memory* (1682) 2nd ed. (London: Robinson, Tonson, Churchil and Wyat, 1693), 138.

⁴³ *Ibid.*.

⁴⁴ *An Empire Nowhere*, 67. Elizabeth identified herself with Astraea as a figure of Justice, banished during the Iron age but now returned to England with the expulsion of the Pope. See Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 29-87, 53-4.

who fled England in 1554 followed by his wife in 1555, Foxe congratulates them both and praises God for 'delivering you out of that miserable land, from the danger of idolatry and fearful company of Herodians'. He goes on to argue that the choice of exile is a sign of the operation of God's grace and an indication that they are saved (the doctrines of irresistible grace and of predestination being two of the heresies for which they were persecuted). Foxe tells them:

To forsake your country, to despise your commodities at home, to contemn riches, and to set naught by honours which the whole world hath in great reueration, for the love of the sacred gospel of Christ, are not works of the flesh, but the most assured fruits of the Holy Ghost, and undeceivable arguments of your regeneracy or new birth; whereby God certifieth you that ye are justified in Him and sealed [to] eternal life; therefore ye have great cause to be thankful, first that He hath chosen you to life, and secondly that He hath given you His Holy Spirit which hath altered and changed you quite a new creature, working in you through the word such a mind that these things are not painful but pleasant unto you.⁴⁵

Foxe does not interpret their flight as in any way an escape from persecution (though the couple had made an enemy of Bishop Gardiner). Rather, the journey into exile is imagined as a spiritual quest, an abandoning of worldly pleasure for the sake of eternal life.

The story of Sir Thomas Copley exemplifies the heroic and derogatory connotations of voluntary exile during Elizabeth's reign. In his *Relation of a Triall between the Bishop of Evreux and the Lord Plessis Mornay*, Robert Parsons denies the power of John Jewel's *The Apology of the Church of England* (1562) to convert Catholics to Protestantism.⁴⁶ Parsons cites Thomas Copley as one upon whom it had the opposite effect for Copley was a 'zealous

⁴⁵ See *Acts and Monuments*, vol. 1, 18-9. The letter has neither date nor direction.

⁴⁶ Reprinted in *Athenae Oxonienses*, vol. 1, 170.

Protestant' until he read Jewel's book. When the reader tried to take issue with Jewel regarding the work's many errors, he received only 'trifling answers'

Which thing made the good Gentleman to make a new resolution with himself, and to take that happy course which he did to leave his Country and many great commodities, which he enjoyed therein, to enjoy the liberty of conscience, and so both lived and died in voluntary banishment.⁴⁷

Before Copley made this decision, however, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, had written to him warning against a romantic view of exile. In a letter dated 28 December 1574, Cecil warns Copley that he will lose 'the sweet benefit of your native soil, your friends, your kindred'. More gravely, he asks if Copley is willing to incur

the infamy that wilful exile doth bring, to be accompted, if not a traitor, yet a companion of traitors and conspirators, a man subject to the curses and imprecations of zealous good subjects, your native countrymen, yea, subject to lack of living by your own and thereby compelled to follow strangers for maintenance of livelihood and food? The cause must needs be of great force to induce you thereto.⁴⁸

This letter might have been a conventional account of the exile's heroic suffering were it not that Cecil undercuts the possibility of heroism by associating the exile with the traitor. He suggests that this is inevitably how Copley will be regarded if he leaves England for the Catholic Continent. In fact, Cecil was one of those men primarily responsible for that assumption. Nine years after this letter, he wrote *The Execution of Justice*.

⁴⁷ Ibid. See also Parsons' account of the conversion of Dr Stevens. Employed by Jewel (though Parsons does not know whether as secretary or chaplain), Stevens also queried certain allegations in Jewel's book. When the latter refused to amend them, Stevens sought the truth in Catholicism, 'where only it was to be found' and went voluntarily into banishment, 170.

⁴⁸ Cecil's letter to Copley is reprinted in *The Other Face: Catholic Life under Elizabeth I* collected and edited by Philip Caraman (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1960), 141. This book includes a chapter of exile writing, 140-6.

But what Cecil calls a lack of patriotism and even treachery, others might call liberty.

Copley's 'happy course' to leave England has clear pastoral undertones and may remind us of *As You Like It* where Rosalind and Celia depart 'To liberty, and not to banishment' (1.3.137).

Liberty is a crucial term in the redefinition of exile and may imply something broader than liberty of conscience, that is, freedom from political or religious persecution. It is a kind of philosophical, even psychological space. The consolations for exile published in Renaissance England, including translations of classical texts, celebrate the liberty concomitant with exile. Stoicism is the philosophy upon which these consolations are mainly founded but the definition of liberty will vary as the tract is more or less influenced by Epicurean and expansionist ideas.

The Stoic position on banishment is perhaps most clearly expressed by Seneca. In *Ad Helviam*, written during his exile on Corsica (AD 41-49), Seneca assures his mother not only that he is not miserable but that he is incapable of being made so.⁴⁹ Liberty, as Seneca defines it, is man's self-sufficiency, his existence apart from the world of earthly pleasure and pain:

the aim of Nature has been to enable us to live well without needing a vast apparatus to enable us to do so: every man is able by himself to make himself happy. External circumstances have very little importance either for good or for evil: the wise man is neither elated by prosperity nor depressed by adversity; for he has always endeavoured to depend chiefly upon himself and to derive all his joys from himself.⁵⁰

Cicero reiterates this point in his *Paradoxa Stoicorum*. He describes how the man who is not subject to Fortune but has achieved constancy of mind will not fear death or exile.⁵¹ If he has

⁴⁹ *Seneca's Minor Dialogues*, tr. by A. Stewart (London: George Bell & Sons, 1889), 323.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 324.

⁵¹ *Paradoxa Stoicorum* in *De Oratore III* (London: Heinemann, 1942), 254-303, 267-71.

not already embraced this liberty then exile is the ideal opportunity to discover it when his family and friends, home, wealth, and position in society, are all lost to him. The exile's happiness will no longer be dependent upon external circumstances but upon his own attitude of mind. The transformation of the banished landscape through philosophy is central to *De Constantia libri duo*, written by one of the foremost neo-Stoics of the period, Justus Lipsius.⁵²

To comfort the exiled Lipsius, Languet advises that he consider wisdom as a landscape:

How much better is it that thine affection were as firmly settled to the obtaining of wisdom? That thou shouldst walke through her fertile fields? That thou wouldest search out the very fountaine of all humaine perturbations? That thou wouldest erect fortes and bulwarks wherewith thou mightest be able to withstand and repulse the furious assaules of lustes?⁵³

This emphasis upon the mind's creative power is suggested by Socrates' aphorism that the wise man is a citizen of the world, as quoted by Seneca, Plutarch, Jerome Cardan and Lipsius.

Yet these words can also be interpreted in a more pragmatic and Epicurean way. Plutarch writes:

for nature hath permitted us to go and walk through the world loose and at liberty: but we for our parts imprison ourselves, and we may thank ourselves that we are pent up in straight rooms, that we be housed and kept within walls; thus of our own accord we leap into close and narrow places.⁵⁴

⁵² Jason Lewis Saunders describes Lipsius thus: 'His works, especially the Stoic treatises, were translated into every major language of Europe, and the number of published editions is very great. His *De constantia* inspired Montaigne, du Vair and Pierre Charron; his *Politics* were familiar to Richelieu and Bossuet, and his Stoic treatises were influential in the thought of Francis Bacon and, later, Montesquieu'. See *Justus Lipsius: The Philosophy of Renaissance Stoicism* (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1955), 66. For an account of Lipsius' work as a possible source for *King Lear* see chapter 6.

⁵³ *De Constantia libri duo* tr. by Sir John Stradling as *Two Bookes of Constancie* (London, 1594), STC 15695, 7.

⁵⁴ 'Of Exile or Banishment' in *Plutarch's Moralia* tr. by Philemon Holland (1603) ed. by E. H. Blakeney (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1911), 389-410, 395. Plutarch contradicts himself a few pages later, suggesting that it is preferable for men not to travel as a consolation to those exiled to a particular place, 401.

Plutarch goes on to expound on the pleasures of retirement from public duties and from the hurly-burly of civic life, leaving man free to pursue his own intellectual pursuits. That this is a rather daring liberty is suggested in Elizabethan travel literature.⁵⁵ Whilst such literature usually argues that time spent at a foreign university or court will educate the young courtier and promote self-knowledge, the ostensible object of this civilising process is service to one's country. Yet this process inevitably weakens a sense of national identity. Roger Ascham's famous description of the Englishman corrupted by Italy combines moral and national deformity in a monstrous image.⁵⁶ Francis Bacon advises the traveller, 'let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country'.⁵⁷

There is a considerable crossover in the consolation tract between Stoic philosophy and travel literature. In his *Epistola de Peregrinatione italica*, Lipsius expounds on the pleasures of travel. He declares of Italy that if the traveller 'be not rauished with delight', on seeing it, 'I shall take him but for some stocke or stone'. Cicero most famously attacked the Stoic's destruction of emotional and physical ties: 'For when the soul is deprived of emotion, what difference is there [...] between man and a stock or stone'.⁵⁸ This anti-Stoic reference is not what we might expect from the author of *De Constantia*. Moreover, where in the Stoic tract Langius will locate wisdom in the mind alone, Lipsius suggests in the *Epistola* that to some

⁵⁵ The defence of Dr John Storey quoted previously repeats the Socratic convention of man's liberty. He tells the Queen and her council, 'every man is free borne, and he hath the whole face of the earth before him to dwell and abyde in. where he liketh best; and, if he can not lyve here, he may go els where'. *Somer's Tracts*, vol. 1, 486.

⁵⁶ Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster* ed. by Edward Arber (London: English Reprints, 1870), 77-8. Ascham includes an Italian observation, '*Englese Italianato. e un diavolo incarnato*. that is to say, you remaine men in shape and facion, but becum devils in life and condition', 78.

⁵⁷ 'Of Travel' in *Francis Bacon* ed. by Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 374-6, 376.

⁵⁸ Cicero's *De Amicitia* in *De Senectute* tr. by W. A. Falconer (London: Heinemann, 1923), 108-211, 159. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Tranio tries to deflect Lucentio from his ascetic plans: 'Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray./ Or so devote to Aristotle's checks/ As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured' (1.1.31-3).

travellers it is given 'to seek, to search, to learne, and to attaine to true pollicie, and wisdom, (which is traveling indeede)'.⁵⁹ In fact, the Stoic and Epicurean perspectives are frequently combined in exile consolations. *Cardanus Comforte* by Jerome Cardan (1576) makes the point that only man's imagination can make him miserable and advises that the exile re-imagine his fate as a voluntary journey. He goes on to list the advantages of travel in terms of pleasure and profit.⁶⁰

Yet perhaps more important is the emphasis placed on self-fulfilment through travel. According to Lipsius, a man's virtue and intelligence naturally dictate severance from his homeland. He lists Biblical travellers, Classical philosophers, mythical Greek heroes and comparatively recent English kings who have travelled abroad:

These men thinke it a great staine and dishonour to the libertie which nature hath geuen them (to be *Cosmopolites*, that is Cytizens of the whole world) and yet to bee restrained within the narrowe precincts of a little countrie, as poor prisoners kept in a close place, or sillie birds cooped up in a narrowe pen.⁶¹

Lipsius fails here to distinguish between the voluntary traveller and the exile. He includes Noah, Hercules and Aeneas in a tract about travel rather than exile. A significant part of *De Constantia* is dedicated to the rejection of patriotism. Langius argues daringly that it is merely a custom. On building the first cities, men set up boundaries, laws and ceremonies in order to protect their property. Hence, man should be willing to die for his country but not to weep for

⁵⁹ *Epistola de Peregrinatione italica* tr. by Sir John Stradling as *A Direction for Travailers* (London, 1592), STC 15696, A4.

⁶⁰ *Cardanus Comforte* tr. by the Earl of Oxford (London, 1576) (Amsterdam: Da Capo Press, 1969), 86.

⁶¹ *Epistola*, A3.

it.⁶² To become a 'Cosmopolite' involves the destruction of national loyalties and restrictions. This association between the loss of one's native land and the realisation of potential is also made by Cardan. In his consolation for exile he declares that all those who 'invented any excellent knowledge' were travellers (85) and then that all excellent men have been banished including Demosthenes, Cicero, Alcibiades and Coriolanus. Cardan points out that a man's native country often won't appreciate him: 'Thus we see that exile is not onely good, but also glorious, chiefly to a wise and Learned man' (86).

That exile should facilitate the great man's work, in particular the writing of philosophy, exegesis, or literature is another convention. We must return once again to the Marian exiles and the definition of exile as not only a divine but as a literary vocation. One of the clearest examples of this may be found in John Bale's *The Image of Both Churches, Being an Exposition of the most Wonderful Book of Revelation of St. John the Evangelist* (Antwerp, 1545).⁶³ Bale was brought up in a Carmelite priory and after receiving his degree of Bachelor in Divinity at Cambridge in 1529, began his career as an Orthodox Catholic prior. His conversion to Protestantism seems to have occurred around the time of the Act of Supremacy in 1534. In the years immediately following this, he was examined by Church officials twice and finally imprisoned at Greenwich for questioning certain doctrines. Bale attributed his release to Cromwell, the King's Secretary, whose reforming zeal he had come to share and

⁶² *De Constantia*, 28.

⁶³ On the Apocalyptic writings produced in exile see *Tudor Apocalypse* by Richard Bauckham (Oxford: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978), 63-4.

who may have been Bale's patron in an acting troupe that performed Protestant plays.⁶⁴ Subsequently, when Cromwell fell from power in 1540, Bale was forced to flee the country with his family. He spent six years in exile at Antwerp where he wrote *The Image of Both Churches* and other works deemed subversive and banned by the Privy Council in 1542. Under Edward's rule, Bale returned to England and became Bishop of Ossory but was again forced to leave for Germany upon Mary's accession.

Destined to endure not one but two periods of exile, Bale already felt himself qualified by his time at Antwerp to expound the meaning of the Apocalypse. As a subheading to *The Image of Both Churches* he writes, 'Compiled by John Bale an exile also in this life for the faythfull testimonie of Jesu'. The Preface tells how St. John was banished to the isle of Patmos on account of his preaching and that here God revealed to him the 'mysterie of the whole Trinity'. Bale writes:

Of such a nature is the message of this book with the other contents thereof, that from no place is it sent more freely, opened more clearly, nor told forth more boldly, than out of exile. And this should seem to be the cause thereof. In exile was it first written, as a little before is mentioned. In exile are the powers thereof most earnestly proved of them that have faith.⁶⁵

Bale reminds his readers that Jesus himself fled and advised his disciples to escape persecution by moving from place to place. Yet exile is not merely a question of self-preservation to perform the Lord's work; the work requires exile:

⁶⁴ Peter Happé refers to evidence that Cromwell made two payments to 'Balle and his fellowes' in September 1538 and 1539, suggesting that Bale was the leader of an acting troupe and may have toured as part of Cromwell's propaganda effort, *John Bale* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996), 10.

⁶⁵ *The Image of Both Churches* in *The Select Works of John Bale* ed. by Rev. Henry Christmas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1849), 249-640, 254.

Flattery, dwelling at home, and sucking there still his mother's breasts, may never tell out the truth; he sees so many dangers on every side, as displeasure of friends, decay of name, loss of goods, offence of great men, punishment of body, and jeopardy of life, with such other like. The forsaken wretched sort hath the Lord provided always to rebuke the world of sin for want of true faith, of hypocrisy for want of perfect righteousness, and of blindness for lack of godly judgement: for nought is it not therefore, that he hath exiled a certain number of believing brethren the realms of England; of the which afflicted family my faith is that I am one.⁶⁶

In Bale's interpretation of exile therefore, it is not Henry, or later Mary, who is responsible for his flight but God. It would be easier to stay at home but God has banished him that he may be inspired with truth and proclaim it as St. John did.

It is clear from this extract that exile was not only a religious but a literary vocation. Exile and publication were associated on a purely practical level. Foxe's son describes the English community at Basle: 'Of these were many but of slender estate, who some one way and some another. but the most part gained their livelihood by reviewing and correcting the press.'⁶⁷ Clearly, the exiles were not all occupied writing controversial tracts or receiving God's truth but a large number of them were actively engaged in the dissemination of Protestant material. Moreover, this association between religion and the printing-press remembers the origins of Protestantism itself. The dissemination of Luther's works across Europe by means of the newly invented press is part of what made Protestantism possible.⁶⁸ It became a Reformation

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 254-5.

⁶⁷ *Acts and Monuments*, vol. 1, 16.

⁶⁸ See in particular A. G. Dickens, *Reformation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1966) and Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

weapon. Foxe suggested that 'either the pope must abolish knowledge and printing, or printing at length will root him out'.⁶⁹

Exile produced some major literary triumphs at this time, whether the writer had chosen to relocate abroad to make use of the free press as Tyndale did, or been forced there.⁷⁰ The *Geneva Bible*, translated by William Whittingham and Anthony Gilby with assistance from Coverdale (April 1560), John Ponet's *Shorte Treatise of Politicke Power* (1556) and of course Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* were all produced in exile. John Hopkins wrote an elegy for Foxe which includes the lines, 'Thy tongue and pen the truth did still defend,/ Thou banishment for Christ didst gladly bide'.⁷¹ Throughout the *Acts and Monuments* Foxe's passion for books and writing is part of his admiration for the martyrs whose lives and works he celebrates. He is careful to list the publications of each writer and to record the prohibition and book-burning that followed. Foxe describes a shipwreck, in which Tyndale lost his translation of *Deuteronomy* with the rest of his library as the work of Satan.⁷² For Foxe, Frith, Bale, Ponet and others, exile was a state that allowed them to write whilst offering a heroic even tragic identity which gave further prestige to that writing.⁷³ Truth became words spoken

⁶⁹ This is part of a longer quotation from *Acts and Monuments* which identifies printing, reading and writing as divinely-ordained weapons in the defence of the Church, vol. 3, 720. On the expulsion of ignorance and darkness through the press see vol. 4, 252-3.

⁷⁰ Foxe describes how, on failing to secure a position in the Bishop of London's household, Tyndale 'understood, not only that there was no room in the bishop's house for him to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England', *Acts and Monuments*, vol. 5, 118.

⁷¹ See 'In Io. Foxum theologum celeberrimum cum Christo exultantem', printed by G. A. Williamson as a preface to his abridged version, *John Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1965), xli.

⁷² *Acts and Monuments*, vol. 5, 120.

⁷³ Two useful collections of 'exile biography' are *Masters of the English Reformation* (London: Church Book Room Press, 1954) and *Pioneers of the Reformation in England* (London: Church Book Room Press, 1964) both by Marcus L. Loane.

outside English society.⁷⁴ Richard Helgerson describes the vital role of print culture in the creation of an imagined community of English Protestants. The *Acts and Monuments* was a communal task:

Ralph Allerton, who for want of ink wrote an account of his interrogation with his own blood, is only the most dramatic example. Dozens of others wrote and then managed to smuggle out of prison the extraordinarily full records Foxe eventually printed. Given the number of these accounts and their length, one cannot help imagining the ecclesiastical prisons of England during the persecuting years of Henry and Mary as a vast penal scriptorium in which the incarcerated were condemned to write until they burned. But for these Protestant martyrs writing was no punishment. It was rather an expression of defiance and hope, an act of participation in an imagined community formed by the printed word and monumentalized in it.⁷⁵

The Elizabethan Catholic exile followed the Protestant example of commanding printing-presses.⁷⁶ But it is to some secular examples of exile creativity that I want now to turn. We are used to thinking of Sidney's *Arcadia* and Spenser's *Faerie Queene* as works facilitated by exile from the court or from England.⁷⁷ Sir Francis Bacon consciously reinvented his disgrace as a beneficial retirement for the sake of his art. Following his banishment from the court in 1621, Bacon appealed to the King for a pardon, for financial assistance and for a return to London and the court, whilst representing his state very differently to the Spanish ambassador, Sarmiento:

⁷⁴ John Jewel wrote in *An Apology of the Church of England* (c. 1562): 'It hath been an old complaint, even from the first time of the patriarchs and prophets, and confirmed by the writings and testimonies of every age, that the truth wandereth here and there as a stranger in the world ...', ed. by J. E. Booty (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 1963), 7.

⁷⁵ *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writings of England* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 267.

⁷⁶ On the fear inspired by Catholic printing presses see Albert J. Loomie, *The Spanish Elizabethans: The English Exiles at the Court of Philip II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1963), 6.

⁷⁷ Katherine Duncan-Jones and J. Van Dorsten argue that Sidney's absence from court in 1580 was voluntary rather than enforced, based on ill-health, financial considerations and his quarrel with the Earl of Oxford. *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 34-5.

For myself, my age, my fortune, yea my Genius, to which I have hitherto done but scant justice, calls me now to retire from the stage of civil action and betake myself to letters, and to the instruction of the actors themselves, and the service of Posterity. In this it may be I shall find honour, and I shall pass my days as it were in the entrance halls [*in atriiis*] of a better life.⁷⁸

Moreover, Bacon consciously located his own fate in the context of the banishments of Cicero, Seneca and Demosthenes. He perceived his future literary career in contrast with the kinds of writing they had produced in exile.⁷⁹

Another example of this rewriting appears quite a long time outside the period with which this study is concerned yet it is so remarkable as to demand commentary. In its entirety the exile of Sir Robert Dudley, the illegitimate son of the Earl of Leicester, is an extraordinary narrative, not least because it incorporates most of the redefinitions of exile traced so far.

Dudley was born in 1574 to the Queen's favourite, the Earl of Leicester, and Douglas, Lady Sheffield, who had married in a private, secret ceremony the previous year.⁸⁰ Both parents later denied that any marriage had taken place and Dudley was declared illegitimate.⁸¹ Although brought up as the Earl's son, he was thus unable to inherit the Earldoms of Warwick and Leicester, with various other lordships and estates that he believed were rightfully his. Nevertheless, Dudley made some impact on the Elizabethan court. He studied and published books on the arts of navigation and shipbuilding. He commanded a man-of-war

⁷⁸ See Bacon's letter of 6 June 1621 reprinted in *Hostage to Fortune*, 473.

⁷⁹ See letters to James I and to Lancelot Andrewes, 16 July 1621 and 1622?, *Hostage to Fortune*, 474.

⁸⁰ The following account of Dudley's life is drawn from a biography by Arthur Gould Lee, *The Son of Leicester: The Story of Sir Robert Dudley* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1964).

⁸¹ An unattributed account of Dudley's life explains Leicester's fear of the Queen's displeasure as the motive for his secrecy, *Amye Robsart and the Earl of Leycester* by George Adlard (London: John Russell Smith, 1870), 280. Lee suggests that the Earl still cherished hopes of a marriage with Elizabeth (which he had come close to achieving several times before) and was trying to keep his options open, *The Son of Leicester*, 21.

in the attack on Cadiz harbour in 1596 for which he received a knighthood. He led an expedition to the West Indies and Guiana and navigated the Orinoco river before Raleigh. Dudley was also a minor player in the Essex rebellion for which he was banished the court.

Nevertheless, it was his departure from England and the court of James I in 1605 that made his name most famous. Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign Dudley had begun legal proceedings to prove his parents' marriage and thus his legitimacy. These proceedings only came to trial under James I when the King's prejudices and Sir Edward Coke's discrediting of the witnesses resulted in Dudley losing his case and his subsequent appeal. On 25th June, the still illegitimate son of Leicester obtained a licence 'to travel beyond the seas for three years next after his departure, with 3 servants, 4 geldings or nags, and £80 in money: with usual provisions.' He left on 2nd July but caused a scandal by taking with him, disguised as a boy, Elizabeth Southwell, the 19 year-old Maid of Honour to Queen Anne. From a voluntary traveller, Dudley became a fugitive from the law. To 'abduct' a Maid of Honour was a flagrant contempt of court and an act of felony punishable by death. Moreover, on his marriage to Southwell in 1605 by Papal dispensation, he had broken an English statute recently instigated against remarriage.⁸² Dudley left a wife and five daughters behind in England. Finally, he compounded his exile by taking the title of Earl of Warwick abroad and ignoring the King's summons to return to England and answer charges for this offence. As a result, he became a fugitive and his land and property were seized by the Crown under the terms of the Fugitives' Act of 1570.⁸³

⁸² 'An Act to restrain all Persons from Marriage until their former Wives and former Husbands be dead'. *Statutes at Large*, 2 Jacobi. I c11.

⁸³ 13 Eliz c3. Under this law anyone travelling abroad without a licence or six months after a licence had expired could have their goods, revenues and lands forfeited to the crown.

The elopement with Southwell might have been a protest against the King's intervention in his trial. But it may also be read as the flight of the protagonists in a romantic or pastoral play such as *Mucedorus* (1590 rev. 1610) or *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1593). In Arthur Brooke's poem *The Tragical Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562), Juliet begs to be allowed to follow the exiled Romeus in the disguise of a page.⁸⁴ Yet Dudley also presented himself as a religious exile. When the King's officials caught up with the couple at Calais, they were unable to force them to return since Dudley had told the French authorities that he was a Roman Catholic seeking refuge there and that Elizabeth was planning to enter a convent. Furthermore, to be able to marry, Dudley had declared his union with Alice illegal under Roman Catholic canon law. Dudley's sudden piety may not have been fraudulent but the guise of religious exile was crucial to the couple's future.⁸⁵ The Marian exiles had redefined themselves as Protestant refugees, fleeing religious persecution, in order to find patronage. Similarly, it was as religious refugees that Dudley presented himself and his wife to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand I.

Under Ferdinand's authorisation, Dudley's past was rewritten. The Grand Duke accepted the Catholicism, the marriage and more importantly, Dudley's claim to his father's estates. Once again, Dudley's life imitates art in the recovery of names and status through exile. Like Rosader in Lodge's *Rosalynde* or Orlando in *As You Like It*, Dudley finds his true identity and his inheritance in exile. Ferdinand and his successor, Cosimo, made use of Dudley's

⁸⁴ See the following chapter on *Romeo and Juliet*. Lee suggests that there can be little doubt that Elizabeth's motives were love: 'Though she was no heiress, she could have taken her choice of the bachelor nobility of England. And yet, amazingly, she chose to decamp with a bastard knight, already married, a runagate with no foreseeable future, unable to return to his own country except to meet arrest and ignomy', *ibid.*, 119.

⁸⁵ Lee cites Dudley's autobiography written in the third person: 'On the point of religion, he was different many years before leaving England, and did not change his opinion as is imputed since his departure', *ibid.*, 118.

knowledge of shipbuilding and navigation and gave him a position at court. Finally, an appeal was made to the Emperor of Germany and of the Holy Roman Empire on Dudley's behalf with the result that his legitimacy was finally confirmed, though it was not until 1642 that England recognised his title and preparations were made for some financial compensation.

What is finally remarkable about Dudley's exile is the interpretation of it recorded by Jacopo Lucini. In August 1645, Dudley published his magnum opus, *Arcano del Mare*, which appeared in three volumes to great acclaim across Europe. In six books it explored the subjects of navigation, shipbuilding, and maritime and military organisation. Also included was an atlas of original maps and charts. Lucini published a second edition of this book in Florence twelve years after Dudley's death. In the preface dedicated to the Doge and Lords of the Venetian Republic, Lucini celebrates Dudley's achievement:

In this worthy emprise, O my Serene Lords, if one man is more signally eminent than others, it is the Duke of Northumberland, who, in order to make himself master of marine science, *tore himself away from a great House, in which he had princely birth, and sacrificed full forty years of his life in unveiling, for the good of humanity at large, the mighty secrets of the sea.*⁸⁶ (italics mine)

Dudley, the fugitive from English law, has become the man who chooses exile that he may reveal the secrets of the sea. Only in exile could he create his art.

Shakespeare's creativity has also been seen to depend upon exile from Stratford-upon-Avon. Nicholas Rowe prefaced his edition of the complete works in 1709 with a famous

⁸⁶ Ibid., 228.

biographical essay. He related the story that Shakespeare had once fallen in with a gang who poached deer from the park of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote:

For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely: and in order to revenge that ill usage. he made a ballad upon him. And tho' this, probably the first essay of his Poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree, that he was oblig'd to leave his business and family in *Warwickshire*, for some time, and shelter himself in *London*.

Rowe characterises this exile as providential:

tho' it seem'd at first to be a blemish upon his good manners, and a misfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily prov'd the occasion of exerting one of the greatest *Genius's* that ever was known in dramattick Poetry.⁸⁷

Shakespeare's exile becomes a fortunate fall that is required by his creative genius. This assumption that exile might be responsible for the Shakespearean oeuvre is also made in the recent work, *The Story that the Sonnets Tell*, by A. D. Wraight. Here, a re-examination of the sonnets as autobiography 'reveals' Christopher Marlowe to be the author of Shakespeare. Part of the proof Wraight offers that Marlowe faked his own death and went abroad, from whence he wrote and published under Shakespeare's name, is the so-called 'sonnets of exile':

When we apply ourselves to a detailed and unprejudiced analysis of the major themes of the Sonnets, we are struck by the inescapable fact that by far the largest group of all deals with the theme of a journey that was undertaken in great heaviness of heart, and that represented a period of cruel separation from his former life and friends, a journey into what can only be likened to a state of exile. It is amazing, but there is no other way to describe this major event in the Poet's life.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Nicholas Rowe, 'Some Account of the Life, etc., of Mr William Shakespear' (1709) repr. in *Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare* ed. by D. Nichol Smith (Glasgow: James MacLehose & Sons, 1903), 1-23, 3.

⁸⁸ *The Story that the Sonnets Tell* (London: Adam Hart Ltd., 1994), 11. Particular emphasis is placed on sonnet 29 with its reference to the poet's 'outcast state', 11-2. Other sonnets located in this group are identified on pp 184-98.

Wraight's rhetoric of certainty only undercuts her interpretation of the sonnets. One obvious objection to the argument above and to the classification, 'sonnets of exile', would be the multiplicity of images of banishment and separation throughout the English Renaissance and particularly in the Petrarchan tradition. It is absurd to suggest that there is no other way of accounting for these poems. Nevertheless, I find Wraight's argument fascinating, not for any light the circumstances of exile might shed upon the poems, but for the critic's own desire to read the poet as an exile. We see here not only the rewriting of exile as a fortuitous calamity for the artist but the unconscious assumption that great art requires alienation. Wraight implies that Shakespeare could not have written these works because he was too comfortably provincial, too concerned with amassing wealth and power at Stratford.⁸⁹

Certainly, the profession of player and playwright in Elizabethan and Jacobean London was far from secure.⁹⁰ If ballad-making in Stratford had resulted in Shakespeare's banishment, play-making in London could incur the same punishment. Yet once again it is difficult to assess whether that banishment is literal and enforced or whether, as a metaphor, it merely served the rhetorical intentions of its author. When *The Isle of Dogs* was condemned for sedition in 1597, Ben Jonson and a number of players were imprisoned for their part in it. Thomas Nashe, Jonson's collaborator, escaped to Great Yarmouth where he lived temporarily in exile from the authorities. Francis Meres writes in *Palladis Tamia* (1598):

As Actaeon was woored of his owne hounds: so is Tom Nash of his *Isle of Dogs*. Dogges were the death of Euripedes; but bee not disconsolate, gallant young Juvenall, Linus, the sonne of Apollo, died the same death. Yet God forbid that so brave a witte should so basely perish! Thine are but paper dogges, neither is thy banishment like Ovid's, eternally to converse with the

⁸⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁹⁰ See Leeds Barroll, *Politics, Plague and Shakespeare's Theater* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 8-22.

barbarous *Getae*. Therefore comfort thyselfe, sweete Tom, with Cicero's glorious return to Rome, and with the counsel Aeneas gives to his seabeaten soldiors, *Lib. 1, Aeneid ...* ⁹¹

Though there is no suggestion that Nashe's work will benefit from his fate, he is exhorted to reflect upon one great writer whose poetry incurred banishment. Ovid is perhaps the most influential exile in English Renaissance literature. In Ben Jonson's *Poetaster* (1601) the poet is castigated for betraying his poetic vocation (essentially a moral and therefore civic one) and his banishment is performed. In the contemporary debate over the moral and civic implications of playing, Ovid is a central figure, invoked by the theatre's enemies and its apologists. But it was not Augustus who was most frequently associated with the banishment of the poet. Plato does not appear on the Renaissance stage but he is the principal authority behind much anti-theatrical literature. In every cry for the poet or the player to be banished his influence may be heard.⁹²

Ficino's Latin translation of Plato's works in 1484 made the philosopher accessible to European philosophers and poets and the *Opera Omnia* became a best seller, with approximately 1025 copies sold in six years.⁹³ Through this translation, Plato became known in poetry and drama for a number of essential ideas. Perhaps chief among them was the concept of a hierarchy of love and of man's freedom to transcend his humanity in the

⁹¹ *Palladis Tamia* in *Elizabethan Critical Essays* ed. by G. Gregory Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1904), 2 vols., vol. 2, 308-24, 324.

⁹² Other texts which were cited to authorise the banishment of playing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included St Augustine's *Ex Civitate Dei* (which explicitly acknowledges its debt to Plato), Tertullian's *De Spectaculis* and works by the first century Christians Lactantius and Chrysostome. The emperors Augustus, Marcus Aurelius and Nero are also frequently referred to for their banishment of players or poets. See for example William Prynne's *Histriomastix: The Players Scourge, or Actors Tragaedie* (pub. 1633) (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1974), 134.

⁹³ *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* ed. by Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 786.

Symposium. The *Republic* defined Plato as the politician and statesman, but also as the enemy of the poet:

After the dissemination of Plato's works in Latin translation the expulsion of the poets from the *Republic* became notorious, and generated both further attacks on poetry in the Platonic mode and abundant defences.⁹⁴

The *Republic* justifies the banishment of the artist on three basic charges. Firstly, art, in particular poetry, is seen to misrepresent gods and heroes. Socrates' objections are partly based on the danger of such slanderous lies and partly on the greater evil posed by the poet's questioning of authority and of social and divine justice.⁹⁵ The audience's identification with the protagonists of poetry and drama may also be a form of moral corruption. Anger, effeminacy, lechery or inconstancy may all be learned through the empathy inspired by representative art.⁹⁶ Related to this is the possibility that acting erodes civic identity. The multiplicity of roles the actor adopts contradicts one of the basic tenets of Socrates' ideal state, that each man has one function to perform for the benefit of all and only one. Acting itself has no utilitarian value at all. Finally, art is said to distract man from the study of philosophy. In Socrates' famous cave simile, the philosopher has a responsibility to teach men to recognise the shadows on the cave wall for what they are. The poet offers only further representations of those shadows and leads man further into the cave. Once more, poetry as a distraction from philosophy is antithetical to Socrates' ambitions for the ideal state whose ruler must be a philosopher.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 'Rhetoric and Poetics' by Brian Vickers, 715-45, 737.

⁹⁵ *Plato's Republic* tr. by Desmond Lee (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), 2nd ed., 135, as quoted in chapter 4 on *Henry IV* Parts One and Two.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁹⁷ It is not that Socrates will not sanction any lies about the state. He recommends a particular foundation myth as a way of generating a sense of patriotism in society. However, such story-telling must always be in the control of the guardian class. *The Republic*, 131, 181.

These three points may all be found at the heart of Renaissance anti-theatrical literature.⁹⁸ In *The Schoole of Abuse* (1579 rep. 1587), Stephen Gosson describes the Circean temptations of poetry and its ability to 'turne reasonable creatures into brute beastes'. Plato is his authority from the beginning:

No marveyle though *Plato* shut them out of his Schoole, and banished them quite from his common wealth, as effeminate writers, unprofitable members, and utter enimies to vertue.⁹⁹

In order to defend themselves from the philosopher's curse, some early modern English apologists sought to challenge the authority of Plato or to reinterpret the *Republic*. To undermine Gosson's argument in *The Schoole of Abuse*, Thomas Lodge attacks Plato, perhaps recognising him as a kind of ghost writer to that work. Where Gosson had argued that poets labour over what is worthless, Lodge suggests that philosophy is equally useless and 'fantasticall':

Your Plato in midst of his presisnes wrought that absurditie that never may be redd in Poets. to make a yearthly creature to beare the person of the creator, and a corruptible substance an incomprehensible God! for, determining of the principall causes of all things, a made them naughte els but an Idea, which if it be conferred wyth the truth, his sentence will savour of Inscience.¹⁰⁰

Another way of rewriting Plato in defence of poetry was to define him as a poet. Sidney's *Defence of Poesy* approaches the philosopher with trepidation:

⁹⁸ On the polemicists' debt to Plato see *The War Against Poetry* by Russell Fraser (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 102-12.

⁹⁹ *Markets of Bawdrie: The Dramatic Criticism of Stephen Gosson* ed. by Arthur F. Kinney (Salzburg: Universität Salzburg, 1974), 69-120, 77.

¹⁰⁰ *A Defence of Poetry* (1579) in *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, vol. 1, 61-86, 67. The *OED* defines 'Inscience' as 'want of knowledge, ignorance'.

But now indeed my burden is great; now Plato's name is laid upon me, whom, I must confess, of all philosophers I have ever esteemed most worthy of reverence, and with good reason: since of all philosophers he is the most poetical.¹⁰¹

Sidney deals with the Platonic exile of the poet in a number of ways. He argues that philosophers are inherently jealous of poets since the latter are the true creators of philosophy. He points out that the ancient world banished philosophers as well as poets. Like Lodge, Sidney refutes some unrelated aspect of Plato's philosophy, specifically his ideas about the place of women and homosexuality in the ideal state. Nevertheless, his principal defence is the argument that Plato banished poets for misleading the people with what even the pagan would consider blasphemous portrayals of divinity. Sidney denies that Plato intended to condemn poetry per se but suggests that he has been misunderstood, perhaps deliberately. He quotes Julius Scaliger who described Plato as one, '*Qua autoritate barbari quidam atque hispidi abuti velint ad poetas e republica exigendos*', 'whose authority certain barbarous and uncouth men seek to use to banish poets from the commonwealth'.¹⁰² Sidney states that the proposal of banishment was intended to defend poetry: 'So as Plato, banishing the abuse, not the thing, not banishing it, but giving due honour unto it, shall be our patron, and not our adversary'¹⁰³

This argument for banishing the abuse in order to save true poetry informs a crusade to banish the poetaster. In *The Anatomie of Absurditie* (1589), Nashe condemns the ignorance that

¹⁰¹ *The Defence of Poesy* in *Sir Philip Sidney* ed. by Katherine Duncan-Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 238.

¹⁰² Translated by Katherine Duncan-Jones in *Sir Philip Sidney*, 384.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 239.

characterises much contemporary poetry and makes the true poet ashamed to write. Of the poetaster he writes:

Such kind of Poets were they that *Plato* excluded from his Common wealth and *Augustine* banished *ex civitate Dei*, which the Romans derided, and the *Lacedaemonians* scorned, who wold not suffer one of Archilocus bookes to remaine in their Countrey: and amisse it were not, if these which meddle with the Arte they knowe not were bequethed to Bridwell, there to learne a new occupation ...¹⁰⁴

Nashe had personal experience of banishment as the fate of the dramatist. However, Plato's dictum might have been realised more commonly in the fate of the player. In *Histriomastix* (1599), Marston dramatises the banishment of a group of players and their poetaster. It is the sixth act of the play and England is ruled by Poverty. The players cannot pay their tavern debts or their taxes and the Constable tells them that it is his job to 'banish idle fellowes out o'th'land'. The players are duly dispatched despite their protests that they are patronised by Sir Oliver Owlet.¹⁰⁵ The definition of itinerant players as social outcasts was formalised in Elizabethan law by the Vagabond act of 1572 which ordered vagrants and beggars to be whipped and sent back to their parishes of origin for employment. Among these were included 'juglers, pedlars, tynkers, and pety chapmen [...] fencers, bearewardes, comon players in enterludes, and minstrels ...'. The player who could not prove that he performed under the auspices of a wealthy patron would be subject to this law. The Act of 1597 included banishment among its redressive measures. Any rogue who was declared dangerous or irredeemable was to be 'banished the realm or adjudged to the galleys'. Marston's players cannot prove their patronage and fall victim to this legislation.

¹⁰⁴ *The Anatomie of Absurditie* in *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, vol. 1, 321-37, 328. See also William Vaughan in *The Golden Grove* (1600) who argues that 'many of our English rimers and ballet-makers deserve for their baudy sonnets and amorous allurements to bee banished ...', *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, vol. 2, 325-6, 326.

¹⁰⁵ *Histriomastix* in *The Plays of John Marston* ed. by H. Harvey Wood (Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd, 1939), 3 vols., vol. 3, 299.

The theatre itself had been under threat of expulsion from London. Before the battle between city and stage was really under way, the prohibition on playing in the city during times of plague was already referred to as banishment.¹⁰⁶ This metaphor was also employed to describe the theatre's removal from the city to the Liberties following the Lord Mayor's ordinance of 1574. That the Mayor was perceived to have succeeded in banishing playing from the city, through later measures if not this act,¹⁰⁷ is suggested in a petition of November 1596. The residents of the Blackfriars were protesting against the erection of Burbage's theatre there and remonstrated that:

all players being banished by the Lord Mayor from playing within the city by reason of the great inconveniences and ill rule that followeth them, they now think to plant themselves in liberties.¹⁰⁸

The authorities were similarly seen to threaten banishment in 'An Act of Common Counsel for releafe of the poore ... Article 62', c. 1582, referred to in a letter thought to have been written two years later. This letter describes how previous attempts to suppress the stage had failed to have any effect. Hence,

there are no enterludes allowed in London in open spectacle but in private howses onely at marriages or such like, w'ch may suffise. and sute is apointed to be made that they may be likewise banished in place adioyning. Since that time and namely upon the ruine at Parise garden, sute was made to my S'rs to

¹⁰⁶ In 1572, Harrison records that 'plays were banished for a time out of London, lest the resort unto them should engender a plague, or rather disperse it, being already begonne'. *Harrison's Description of England in Shakespeare's Youth: 2nd and 3rd Books of his Description of Britaine* (1577) repr. by E. K. Chambers in *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923, repr. 1961), 4 vols., vol. 1, 281. On the expulsion of the theatre due to plague see Leeds Barroll, *Politics, Plague and Shakespeare's Theater*.

¹⁰⁷ Chambers suggests that the edict prohibiting all playing within the city which had been dated 1577 is more likely to have been written c. 1580-3, *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 1, 283.

¹⁰⁸ *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 1, 297-8.

banishe playes wholly in the places nere London, according to the said law, letters were obtained from my S'rs to banishe them on the sabbat daies.¹⁰⁹

That players were expelled and playhouses 'suppressed' seems to be confirmed by Richard Rawlidge's *A Monster Lately Found Out* (1628) though performances probably continued in the Liberties and inn yards of the city.¹¹⁰ Finally, in 1597 an order was issued for the expulsion of plays within three miles of the city during the summer and for the demolition of theatres in the same area. Although plays appear to have ceased for a time there was no such suppression.

It is difficult to say how seriously we should take the 'banishment' of the theatre. Clearly, this metaphor of prohibition and persecution served the arguments of both sides. E. K. Chambers and Virginia Gildersleeve have convincingly argued that the removal to the Liberties was voluntary and in the best interests of the companies. Rather than being forced out by the act of 1574, Chambers suggests:

the players seem to have come to the conclusion that it would be better to be independent, as far as possible, of the risks attaching to this discretion. They turned to the easier conditions afforded by the lax county government of the suburbs.¹¹¹

This pattern of rewriting a voluntary exile as a more dramatic forced exit should by now seem very familiar. Moreover, the providential ending that we have seen appended to this banishment continues. Steven Mullaney's absorbing study of the English Renaissance stage

¹⁰⁹ From a transcript of Lansdowne MS 20, no II, reproduced in *Government Regulation of the Elizabethan Drama* by Virginia Gildersleeve (New York: Burt Franklin, 1961), 172-3.

¹¹⁰ *Government Regulation*, 175.

¹¹¹ *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 1, 284, *Government Regulation*, 158.

depends upon the place it occupied topologically in London. He assumes not only that the stage was banished but that this banishment was in a sense Platonic:

For the student of Western culture, the playhouses of Elizabethan London can precipitate an uncanny sense of cultural déjà vu. In the place of the Elizabethan stage, we find the place prescribed for the mimetic arts by Plato when he banished drama from the *Republic*. A figurative banishment from an ideal republic, to be sure; but history at times reveals an acute capacity for literalizing the metaphors of its past. In exiling drama from his ideal polis, Plato did not intend to be taken quite so literally, by his readers or by history. But he did intend to codify a vagrancy – a vagabondage, in Elizabethan terms – which he regarded as constitutive of drama and poetry.¹¹²

This extract is relevant to our study in a number of ways. Mullaney refers to the stage as banished without recognising any of the contemporary applications of that metaphor to its plight. Nor does he allude to the role of Plato in anti-theatrical literature, as if the parallel with Platonic banishment had not been perceived at this time. Furthermore, Mullaney, like Sidney, tries to rewrite Plato's banishment of the artist to suggest that he was actually facilitating the arts. Considering the stage's marginality as the precondition for its greatness, Mullaney examines *Henry IV*, *Measure for Measure*, *Macbeth* and *Pericles* in the context of this subversive standpoint. Once again, Shakespeare's work is seen as the product of exile, though this time it is not the poet but the theatre for which he writes that is 'banished'.

The dramatisation of banishment on the English Renaissance stage may have reflected the marginal experience of attending the theatre. Anti-theatrical tracts often lamented the fact that the audience to a play was not where it should be: not only outside civic jurisdiction where the brothels and lazar houses stood, but absenting itself from work or from church.¹¹³ The

¹¹² *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 56.

¹¹³ Jean E. Howard discusses this anxiety about displacement, as revealed particularly in Northbrooke's *Treatise*, in *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 23-8, especially 27.

players are not where they should be either and are seen to usurp the identities of kings, statesmen and priests, thus transgressing the limits of social hierarchy. If the actor is playing a banished man, forcibly expelled from his 'proper' place and role, this sense of displacement is intensified.

Perhaps what the spectacle of the banished man daringly reveals is the contingency of identity and of place. The audience would have accepted the convention of an unlocalised stage upon which various different settings would be projected. Nevertheless, the absence of any physical demarcation between actors and audience, between illusion and reality, brought attention to the audience's participation in the creative process. It was something playwrights themselves advertised in their exhortations to the audience to 'Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts' (*Henry V* Prologue, 23). The playing of banishment often explicitly invokes the subjective power of man to transform his experience of the world. One of the best examples of this occurs in Thomas Middleton's *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (1611). At the beginning of the play, the Tyrant has already dispossessed Govianus of his kingdom when he proceeds to woo his Lady. Govianus considers her loss to outweigh that of the realm, scorning literal banishment when he believes himself to be exiled from her heart. Yet when the Lady refuses the Tyrant, the positions of king and exile are reversed. The Tyrant reflects:

Sure some dream crowned me.
 If it were possible to be less than nothing,
 I wake the man you seek for. There's the kingdom
 Within yon valley fixed, while I stand here
 Kissing false hopes upon a frozen mountain,
 Without the confines. I am he that's banished; (140-5)¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* ed. by Anne Lancashire (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978).

The act of rewriting that we have explored in this chapter, whereby exile becomes a religious vocation, a journey of discovery or a sacrifice for one's art, is dramatised on the English Renaissance stage, is even performed as theatre itself. The exile was a recognisable dramatic role according to John Webster's character 'Of an Excellent Actor' (1615). Of the actor's versatility, Webster writes:

All men have beene of his occupation: and indeed, what hee doth fainedly that doe others essentially: this day one plaies a Monarch, the next a private person. Heere one Acts a Tyrant, on the morow an Exile: A Parasite this man to night, to morow a Precisian, and so of divers others.¹¹⁵

In Munday's *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, the protagonist, newly exiled, identifies himself as the actor. For Marion's sake, Huntington denies that he is banished. His grief was 'counterfeit', part of a spectacle to entertain the guests at their banquet, one of the 'comic sports, or tragic stately plays./ We use to recreate the feasted guests'.¹¹⁶ When Marion remains unconvinced he urges:

Believe me love, believe me (I beseech),
My first scene tragic is, therefore tragic speech
I strive to get and accents filling woful action. (1.3, p115)

When the guests are brought in, Huntington plays the tragedy of his own banishment before those who are responsible. By dramatising his fate, he takes command of it, before redefining himself as Robin Hood. Thus his exile becomes a providential narrative for England. Similarly, in *King Lear*, Edgar's transformation into the archetypal outcast Poor Tom dramatises his condition whilst allowing him some distance from it. This first role gives

¹¹⁵ See the third edition of Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters* first published 1613. Webster's addition is reprinted in *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 4, 257-8, 258.

¹¹⁶ R. Dodsley's *A Select Collection of Old English Plays* (1744) 4th ed. by W. Carew Hazlitt (London: Reeves & Turner, 1874), vol. 8, 1.3, p114.

Edgar the confidence to create other guises through which he will increasingly take control of his own fate and that of the other characters. Once again this exile is perceived within some larger context. For Lear, it is symbolic of humanity itself.

In this study I will consider Shakespeare's writing and rewriting of exile in the context of various classical and contemporary, dramatic and historical banishments. As a plot device in contemporary drama, exile appears in pastoral comedy, history plays and tragedy with regularity and with some consistency. Pastoral comedy based on the Greek romance or English chivalric literature will often feature the exile of a young man or woman whose wanderings result in their reconciliation with lost parents, siblings, or with a lover (*The Thracian Wonder* (1599), *The Maid's Metamorphosis* (1600), John Day's *Humour out of Breath* (1608)). Some of these exiles will be the offspring of a deposed potentate and exile recurs frequently in the cycle of usurpation presented by the history plays (*The Wounds of Civil War* by Thomas Lodge (1588), Robert Greene's *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1587), Robert Daborne's *The Poor Man's Comfort* (1617)). Finally, banishment recurs frequently in tragedy, and particularly revenge tragedy, as a punishment or a motive for revenge (Marston's *Antonio's Revenge* and *The Malcontent*, Dekker's *Lust's Dominion* (1600), Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*).¹¹⁷ This breadth of plays means that the crimes for which banishment is imposed vary widely. To commit murder or adultery, to harbour a murderer or degrade the honour of knighthood and to withhold filial love may all result in one's exile.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ In his *Defence of Poetry*, Lodge refers to exile as a subject for tragedy. See *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, vol. 1, 61-86, 80.

¹¹⁸ See respectively Lodovico in Webster's *The White Devil*, the Duchess in Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy* (1606), Brishio in *A Knacke to Knowe an Honest Man* (anon. 1594), Fastolf in *1 Henry VI* (1590), and Cordelia in *King Lear*.

This study will focus on seven of Shakespeare's plays that feature the literal proclamation of banishment. In *Romeo and Juliet* (1594-6), I focus upon the tragic power of the word 'banished' and the lovers' attachment to Verona which renders them more susceptible to that word. The idea of banishment as peripeteia, and the exile's attempts to redefine himself in the steps of Ovid's *Tristia*, will be explored in the chapter on *Richard II* (1595). My study of *Henry IV* Parts One and Two (c. 1597) will take in a number of contexts in which Falstaff's banishment may be defined, in particular the morality tradition and the contemporary anti-theatrical debate. An exploration of pastoral exile will shape the interpretation of *As You Like It* (1599) and of *King Lear* (1605), the latter being also concerned with contemporary attitudes towards the division of kingdoms. Plutarch's definition of ostracism and Senecan and Ciceronian ideas of constancy will inform the chapter on *Coriolanus* (1608). Finally, in *The Tempest* (1611), I will examine Prospero's position in the light of the Aristotelian maxim that the exile is either a beast or a god, and with reference to contemporary ideas about magicians and colonialists.

It has not been possible within the scope of this study to examine Shakespeare's use of banishment in its entirety. Hence, I have concentrated on enforced rather than voluntary exile. As we have seen, this distinction is a negligible one but it serves my purposes in narrowing the field of study to the exclusion of *Pericles*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Macbeth*. Perhaps the most obvious omission is a detailed study of *Cymbeline*. On banishment in the late plays, I would direct the reader to my study of pastoral exile in chapter five, to Leah Marcus' chapter on *Cymbeline* in *Puzzling Shakespeare* and to G. K. Hunter's essay 'Shakespeare's

Last Tragic Heroes'.¹¹⁹ Other exiles whom I may seem to have ignored but who fall outside the parameters of this study include Cressida, whose return to her origins does not bear the stigma of exile, and Hamlet whose journey to England is not represented as exile though it is clearly enforced.¹²⁰

Banishment is Shakespeare's challenge to the integrity and imagination of his characters. They are deprived of state-sanctioned roles, thrust beyond familiar limits and denuded of their names. This is not only a prelude to all kinds of drama but to some consideration of what part the mind plays in the creation of identity and of place.

¹¹⁹ Leah S. Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and its Discontents* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1988), G. K. Hunter, 'Shakespeare's Last Tragic Heroes', *Dramatic Identities and Cultural Tradition: Studies in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries: Critical Essays by G. K. Hunter* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1978), 251-69. See also the PhD thesis by Minerva H. Neiditz 'Banishment: Separation and Loss in the Later Plays of Shakespeare', University of Connecticut, 1974.

¹²⁰ Other characters for whom a case might be made are the brothers in *The Comedy of Errors*, Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra* and Perdita in *The Winter's Tale*. Intriguingly, Desdemona pleads with Othello for banishment rather than death, 5.2.85.

THE COMMONPLACE IN *ROMEO AND JULIET*

In *Words That Matter: Linguistic Perception in Renaissance English*, Judith H. Anderson begins her study of the complex substantiality of language by recounting an episode in Bk 4 of François Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. Whilst out at sea, Pantagruel hears voices and is told that they are the sounds of a battle fought there during the previous winter which are only now thawing out. Pantagruel takes handfuls of frozen words and observes their colour, texture and sound:

Rabelais [...] explores the fact that human language has not simply intelligible substance but also material dimensions, whether as *vox*, voice or sound; as a spatial object, the frozen speech of printed or written record; as the virtual stand-in for its referent, the thing itself; or as a medium of exchange, a tender between lovers, and, in the instance of lawyers, a venal commodity.¹

Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy acutely concerned with the substantiality of words. The protagonists reject 'airy' words in the search for those that 'matter'. This distinction does not depend on their spoken or written form. For Mercutio and Juliet, the printed words of Petrarchism, further substantiated by poetic convention, are absurdly intangible. The 'airy' word is a commonplace, that is, transient, trivial, depersonalising. It is the speech of the marketplace, of the 'ancient quarrel' and of Petrarchan love poetry. It is a language that expresses only the speaker's commitment to society and cannot express the individual or make him known. Words that matter individuate the speaker but they also have a performative power. They lead to action of some kind. The most powerful word in the play is 'banished'. Not only does this word facilitate the tragic conclusion, it is also the site of a

¹ *Words That Matter* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 19.

linguistic crisis from which Romeo and Juliet never recover. The lovers have disparaged language in the privacy of the orchard but the word 'banished' forces them to recognise that they have been defined and can be destroyed by language. Romeo and Juliet imagine themselves stabbed, poisoned, and decapitated by words. They lose their linguistic power and with it their ability to survive banishment.

In *The Art of Pronuntiation* (1617) Robert Robinson contrasts the gross substance and the durability of written language with the ephemerality of the spoken word: 'though the voice be a more lively kind of speech, yet in respect it is but onely a sleight accident made of so light a substance as the ayre, so it is no sooner uttered but it is dissolved ...'.² It is not merely its composition of air but of human breath that ensures the transience of speech. Each inspiration must be quickly succeeded by another whilst the whole span of man's breathing life may be perceived as relatively short. Speech may thus serve as a reminder of human mortality.³

But Shakespeare and his contemporaries had also inherited a definition of 'vox', the voiced sound of language, as material formed from the striking of air. The medieval grammarian, Priscian, attributed to the voice height, width, and length, all properties of matter.⁴ The substance that *Romeo and Juliet* imagines for language is not only material but living and capable of action. There are numerous and varied expressions of this concept in Renaissance England. Neoplatonism depended on the association between words and things to the extent

² See *The Phonetic Writings of Robert Robinson* ed. E. J. Dobson (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 1-28, 4.

³ Jane Donawerth makes this general point: 'When they considered speech as voice, Renaissance men saw reflected in it human limitations: speech is accidental, of slight substance, not inherently significant, filled with life only for the briefest moment', *Shakespeare and the Sixteenth-Century Study of Language* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 18.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 16-7.

that words had the power to perform natural magic. The lingering superstition about cursing conceived of the efficacy of certain speech acts to perform vengeance on the possessions or body of the offender. This belief in the power of words to heal and to destroy may ultimately derive from the concept of the Divine Word. This in turn filtered down to the Pope and his priests, to the King and his ministers.⁵ Moreover, the rhetoric taught in schools was founded on the performative power of language. The rhetorician is able to “‘move”, “bewitch”, “fascinate”, “ravish”, or “possess” his listeners’, implying that ‘poetry, and hence rhetoric, is an aspect of magic’.⁶

In *Romeo and Juliet*, it is the Prince’s word of banishment that releases the fatal power of language upon the protagonists. Hence, the play explores the paradox that language can be composed of breath and yet material, transient to the ear but permanent in its effect on human flesh. *Romeo and Juliet* begins with a scene of violence derived from the trivial word. The Capulet servants have deliberately sought a fight with Abram, a Montague, in a comically brief exchange of words. Abram merely has to say ‘You lie’ and the swords are drawn. This is the point that the Prince will make in his speech:

Three civil brawls bred of an airy word
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets. (1.1.86-8)

The jibe is trivial, insubstantial and borne away by the wind. The violence incited leads to bloodshed and destruction that is palpable and permanent. This juxtaposition of airy words

⁵ See M. M. Mahood, *Shakespeare’s Wordplay* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1957), 170-171, and on the subject of cursing, Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 502-34.

⁶ See Neil Rhodes, *The Power of Eloquence and English Renaissance Literature* (Worcester: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 8. Rhodes also identifies a connection between rhetoric and satire in that both imagine the action of words on the body, often figuring words as weapons, 19-22, 45.

and blows implies the triviality of the feud but also the insubstantiality of the language from which it has sprung.

In the next scene, the same concerns with immaterial words are reflected in the world of Petrarchan love. The feud is forgotten as Benvolio and Montague describe Romeo the lover in muted pastoral terms. He is imagined walking alone before dawn, weeping and sighing, a flower prematurely marred by the 'envious worm' (1.1.148). Yet Romeo recognises the relevance of the fighting to his own experience:

O me! What fray was here?
 Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
 Here's much to do with hate, but more with love.
 Why then, O brawling love, O loving hate,
 O anything of nothing first create;
 O heavy lightness, serious vanity,
 Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms,
 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,
 Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
 This love feel I, that feel no love in this. (1.1.170-9)

Romeo employs the paradox of love and violence, of wooing as waging war, which is essential to Petrarchan courtship and to its expression in poetry. The love/war conceit has already been expressed in the violent and bawdy puns of Capulet's servants. It remains a constant pressure throughout the play in the love-death imagery which reaches its apotheosis in the fusion of wedding-bed and death-bed.⁷ However, Romeo's act of contextualising his love within the recent brawl serves another purpose. It unconsciously suggests that his love too is 'bred of an airy word'. Like the violence that erupts from nothing, Romeo describes

⁷ See for example Juliet's 'I'll to my wedding bed.' And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead!' (3.2.136-7). This is exactly what Capulet suggests Death has done in 4.4.63-6.

love as created from 'nothing'. The anti-Petrarchan voice incipient in Benvolio may remind us that these conceits were dying metaphors at the time of the play's composition. They are losing their power to signify as James Calderwood testifies:

the Petrarchan style aspires to pure poetry and in so aspiring becomes an airy, hyperbolic, mechanically artificial expression of unfelt and indiscriminating feelings. In this sense it is too pure ('Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied'-2.3.21), and when the too pure becomes too popular it turns impure, an infectious blight on the literary landscape.⁸

Romeo is self-conscious about his performance to the extent that he does not expect to be taken seriously. He asks Benvolio, 'Dost thou not laugh?' (180) and in response to Benvolio's question about the identity of his lover replies, 'What, shall I groan and tell thee?' (197).

At the same time, Romeo recognises it as a failure of language that his love is not more substantial. He employs Petrarchan terms to persuade Rosaline to give up her much-prized chastity and give him some physical return for his words. His despair at her decision to remain chaste is expressed in terms familiar from Shakespeare's sonnets urging the young man to marry: 'O. she is rich in beauty, only poor/ That when she dies, with beauty dies her store' (1.1.212-3). Again a few lines later, he declares 'For beauty starved with her severity/ Cuts beauty off from all posterity' (216-7).⁹ Whilst the sonnets ostensibly aim to persuade, so Romeo's poetry too is in active service. He says that Rosaline will not 'stay the siege of loving terms' nor receive his 'saint-seducing gold' (209, 211).

⁸ James L. Calderwood, *Shakespearean Metadrama* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 98. On the cliché of Petrarchism in the play see also 'Romeo and Juliet and the Elizabethan Sonnets' by A. J. Earl, *English* 27 (1978), 99-119, and Harry Levin, 'Form and Formality in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Sh. Q.* 11 (1960), 3-11. Other articles referring to the play's Petrarchism will be cited in due course.

⁹ In the 1609 Quarto these are the first 17 sonnets. See in particular Sonnet 6 'Then let not winter's ragged hand deface ...' in which the poet urges 'Be not self-willed, for thou art much too fair/ To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir' (13-4). Romeo also stresses that Rosaline is too fair to waste her beauty, 1.1.218.

Mercutio is fully aware of the conventions that define Romeo as a lover ('Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flowed in' (2.3.36-7)) and rarely misses an opportunity to deride the Montague for his posturing. Mercutio finds this poetic style particularly irksome because it is founded on airy hyperbole, on frustrated desire elevated to the status of the transcendent and divine. He notoriously tries to bring Romeo's conceits down to earth by counselling action that will produce physical satisfaction and possession: 'If love be rough with you, be rough with love./ Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down' (1.4.27-8).¹⁰ He has no respect for the ethereality of Romeo's love and calls it insubstantial. This insubstantiality is dramatised in the scene wherein Mercutio attempts to conjure Romeo to appear before them. At first, he chooses Petrarchan terms by which Romeo should recognise himself:

Romeo! Humours! Madman! Passion! Lover!
 Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh.
 Speak but one rhyme and I am satisfied.
 Cry but 'Ay me!' Pronounce but 'love' and 'dove'. (2.1.7-10)

Yet Romeo does not respond. This is not merely rationalism on the play's part. Rather, Romeo's absence is an expression of his self-loss through love or through playing at love. This is one aspect of his experience with which Mercutio concurs. As a lover, Romeo is as ethereal as a sigh. Only when the Montague engages in some robust wordplay after his marriage does Mercutio congratulate him: 'Now art thou sociable, now art thou Romeo, now art thou what thou art by art as well as by nature' (2.3.82-3). Rosaline too lacks substance. She never appears on the stage and remains a woman whom Romeo has conjured with words.

¹⁰ Mercutio notably rewrites the emblem of the lover sitting under a tree as satirised by Celia in *As You Like It* (3.2.229-45). He offers a characteristically bawdy version: 'Now will he sit under a medlar tree/ And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit/ As maids call medlars when they laugh alone./ O Romeo, that she were, O that she were.' An open-arse, and thou a popp'rin' pear', 2.1.34-8.

Nevertheless, when Mercutio attempts to conjure the Montague in Rosaline's name his spell is again ineffectual. Rosaline's beauties no longer have any power over Romeo for he has just abandoned this love for the exciting materiality of Juliet. Mercutio demonstrates how ineffective Petrarchan terms are to define Romeo or his affections.

Though disparaging of the lover's rhymes, Mercutio is no enemy to poetry per se. Rather, it is Romeo who reveals hostility towards his friend's invention. In his Queen Mab speech, Mercutio rejects the conventions of that 'dull sublunary lover' Romeo for an altogether different poetry. His narrative about the faery world of Queen Mab where an empty hazelnut is a chariot driven by 'a small grey-coated gnat' reveals an imagination that Romeo has never tapped in his poetry. Moreover, Mercutio uses this fantasy to offer a perspective on the human world that reduces all human ambition including love to absurdity. It is a perspective Romeo is incapable of appreciating. Perhaps in repudiation of the bawdiness of Mercutio's dream, the lover interrupts: 'Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace!/ Thou talk'st of nothing' (1.4.95-6). This rebuke defines Romeo's attitude to the faery world, that it has no reference to 'real life'. Yet we are not only concerned here with Romeo's refusal to believe in fairies or dreams. Mercutio responds that since the subject of his speech was dreams he inevitably spoke of 'nothing' but this is also the stuff of poetry:

I talk of dreams,
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
Which is as thin of substance as the air,
And more inconstant than the wind. (1.4.96-100)

Mercutio's speech equally applies to the poetry that gave expression to his dream. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Theseus uses a similar terminology:

And as imagination bodies forth
 The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
 Turns them to shapes, and gives to *airy nothing*
 A local habitation and a name. (5.1.14-7, italics mine)

It is this freewheeling creativity with its disrespect for convention that Romeo rejects.

For Romeo, Petrarchan poetry is valuable because it has the weight of social and poetic convention behind it. The language of Petrarch is spoken by various different characters in the course of the play.¹¹ It inspires the bookish terms of Lady Capulet's eulogy on Paris (1.3.83-94); Capulet's description of Juliet grieving (3.5.130-7); and provides the father with conceits by which to lament his daughter's death (4.4.62-6). Petrarchan language is very much part of the daily intercourse of Veronese society.

The literary weight behind the language that Romeo speaks exists moreover, not only in Petrarchism, but in the sources for the play itself. There is a *substantial* difference between Romeo's dream (1.4.50) and Mercutio's. Romeo gives credence to the presentiments of disaster which come to him and may also have been foretold in his dream. When Benvolio warns they will be too late for the feast, Romeo replies in soliloquy:

I fear too early, for my mind misgives
 Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
 Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
 With this night's revels, and expire the term
 Of a despisèd life, closed in my breast,
 By some vile forfeit of untimely death. (106-11)

¹¹ See Jill L. Levenson. 'The Definition of Love: Shakespeare's Phrasing in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Sh. St.* 15 (1982), 21-36, 26.

Romeo's sense of doom may be a true premonition of fate or it may imply a death wish he has long cherished.¹² Whatever our conclusion, his fate is predestined in the sense that the opening prologue has told us how this story will end. The reference to 'fatal loins' from whence Romeo and Juliet are sprung is a pun that refers to the fatal quarrel between their families but also to the 'loins', a homophonic pun on 'lines', in which their fate is written. These lines appear in the Prologue but also in the play's literary predecessors. Shakespeare's main source for his tragedy, *The Tragicall Historie of Romeus and Juliet* (1562), recognised various other literary debts. Arthur Brooke refers to a play, now lost, as one source.¹³ A more obvious predecessor would be the French version of the story by Pierre Boaistuau, itself based on Matteo Bandello's *Romeo e Giuletta* (1554).¹⁴ The play must end with the lovers' deaths not only because of its title, the 'lamentable tragedy', or even because of its opening sonnet, but because it carries the weight of half a century at least of mythology. When Romeo identifies Paris as 'One writ with me in sour misfortune's book' (5.3.82), he glances at the audience's sense of predestination through literature. They know how the story must end. This is by far the strongest 'fatal' power in a rather vague and unconvincing providential structure.¹⁵ Moreover, having Romeo almost aware that his story is predetermined, as if he knows the part he will play, emphasises his own commitment to literary convention. These are words and images that matter because they will perform his death.

¹² See Marilyn L. Williamson, 'Romeo and Death', *Sh. St.* 14 (1981), 129-37.

¹³ In his preface to the reader Brooke refers to having seen 'the same argument lately set forth on stage ...', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, vol. 1, 284-363, 285.

¹⁴ See G. Blakemore Evans' discussion of the sources in his introduction to *Romeo and Juliet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 6-13.

¹⁵ I would agree with Clifford Leech here when he argues that we could imagine the lovers enjoying a happier fate: 'the lovers are doomed only by the words of the Prologue, not by anything inherent in their situation. It is not, as it is in Hardy's novels, that we have a sense of a fully adverse "President of the immortals": there is rather an insufficient consideration of what is implied by the "stars"'. See 'The Moral Tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*' in *English Renaissance Drama: Essays in Honor of Madeleine Doran and Mark Eccles* ed. by Standish Henning, Robert Kimbrough and Richard Knowles (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Press, 1976), 59-75. 72.

When Romeo finds 'real love', he does not require a new language to describe the revelation that is Juliet but retains all the hyperbole and imagery of the old. For him the language is newly validated by its discovery of substance. Donne's *Songs and Sonnets* (pub. 1633) can enrich our appreciation of *Romeo and Juliet* at many points since he too employed the conventions of Petrarchism. In particular, Donne's 'Air and Angels' describes Romeo's predicament in having all the structures of love but lacking its substance:

Twice or thrice had I loved thee,
 Before I knew thy face or name;
 So in a voice, so in a shapeless flame,
 Angels affect us oft, and worshipped be;
 Still when, to where thou wert. I came,
 Some lovely glorious nothing I did see,
 But since my soul, whose child love is,
 Takes limbs of flesh, and else could nothing do,
 More subtle than the parent is
 Love must not be, but take a body too,
 And therefore what thou wert, and who
 I bid love ask, and now
 That it assume thy body, I allow,
 And fix itself in thy lip, eye, and brow. (1-14)

In the last stanza, Donne describes his love for the woman's every physical perfection as overwhelming: 'For, nor in nothing, nor in things/ Extreme, and scatt'ring bright can love inhere' (21-2). He needs a more stable foundation for his passion. The answer seems to be a reciprocal love. A. J. Smith writes:

If the lady returns the poet's love they will thus between them supply love with an embodiment, an aerial spirit, and a celestial nature, to complete the union. They will have created a new joint being of love, far beyond a mere physical coupling, to replace their separate selves.¹⁶

¹⁶ *John Donne: The Complete English Poems* ed. by A. J. Smith (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), 355, n. 27.

When Romeo sees Juliet, he rejects Rosaline and calls Juliet 'beauty' and then 'love'. Moreover, Juliet reciprocates by naming Romeo 'love' and by filling out the poetic structure of a sonnet with her own substance. In their conversation about Rosaline, Romeo and Benvolio frequently spoke in rhyming couplets and Romeo in quatrains. The sonnet existed here but unformed, in disparate pieces, waiting to be created between Romeo and Juliet at the Capulet feast. It is not only that Juliet is willing to match the Montague line for line. She also offers him a substantial return for his conceits. Like the saints who do not 'move', Juliet remains still so that Romeo can kiss her. The sonnet actually leads to action. The Petrarchan language becomes performative as the sonnet to Rosaline was meant to be.

Juliet will not remain so generous in her speech. Before the marriage, Romeo seeks to define love in airy words:

Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heaped like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour air, and let rich music's tongue
Unfold the imagined happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

Juliet reproves him gently:

Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament.
They are but beggars that can count their worth,
But my true love is grown to such excess
I cannot sum up some of half my wealth. (2.5.24-34)

In this speech Juliet juxtaposes words and matter, ornament and substance. Where Romeo is happy to define love within poetic structures such as the sonnet, Juliet seeks a poetry that

becomes action. The sonnet ends in a kiss. The orchard scene ends in a promise of marriage. Literally, she desires the incarnation of love, the word made flesh.

In the orchard, Romeo first discovers Juliet defying the word that makes him her enemy (and by implication the conventional feud between their families):

What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other word would smell as sweet.
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,
Retain that dear perfection which he owes
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
And for that name - which is no part of thee -
Take all myself. (2.1.85-91)

Here Juliet tries to suggest that words are insubstantial and can therefore have no relation to Romeo's divine but also mortal and physical perfection. The name is no part of his anatomy and therefore it ought to be easy to cast off. When Romeo interrupts her reverie she reveals a similar carelessness about the conventions for courtship. Having lost the necessary inscrutability by her confession, Juliet tells him, 'Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny/What I have spoke' (130-1). She refuses to play the role expected of her now, to 'frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay' (138) and thus releases Romeo from courtship defined as a long and fruitless assault upon her chastity. Throughout this scene Juliet interrupts Romeo when he tries to make her a fulsome, conceited declaration of love. All Romeo need say is 'Ay' and Juliet says that for him. She seeks 'an ideal communion of love at a level beyond idle breath'.¹⁷

¹⁷ *Shakespearean Metadrama*, 91.

Similarly, when it comes to vows, there is no prewritten form that will substantiate their love or make Juliet more convinced of its permanence. She knows what it is without naming it. The vow she will accept is typically an expression of the lover himself 'swear by thy gracious self,/ Which is the god of my idolatry' (155-6) - yet even this she interrupts. Juliet's desire to make their union nameless recurs in her epithalamium when she imagines the lovers finding one another without light or speech: 'and Romeo/ Leap to these arms untalked of and unseen' (3.2.6-7). In her incisive study of bodies in the play, Catherine Belsey explores the implications of Juliet's fantasy:

These isolated, unnamed bodies (and roses) are only imaginary. The human body is already inscribed: it has no existence as pure organism, independent of the symbolic order in which desire makes sense. In the sixteenth-century text Juliet's imagined act of love is paradoxically defined in a densely metaphoric and tightly structured instance of signifying practice [...] The text specifies a wish in a tissue of formally ordered allusions, comparisons and puns, which constitute a poem, the zenith of signification, self-conscious, artful, witty.¹⁸

This paradox is a crucial element in the tragedy. Where the characters appear to seek a private universe and a secret language, they are deeply conventional. Juliet's attitude towards names is immediately contradicted in the balcony scene by her delight in uttering Romeo's name and by her need to summon him. The lovers are inevitably defined by their names as by the language they use and are thus implicated in civic and poetic tradition. Juliet's speech in the orchard both rejects the debased airy language of love and opts for an even more public and impersonal word:

Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract tonight.
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning which doth cease to be

¹⁸ Catherine Belsey, 'The Name of the Rose in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Y.E.S.* 23 (1993), 126-42, 131.

Ere one can say it lightens. (158-62)

She goes on to propose marriage to Romeo who finds that the courtship is over before it has begun. Juliet's use of the term 'contract' reminds us that she is as conventional as Romeo but that her book is that of civic custom rather than Petrarch's *Rime*. A private vow may not realise their love but a socially recognised vow may do so. Not only does Juliet use the word 'contract' but she refers to their speech as 'unadvised', suggesting that they need the approval of other people. This is of course what both lovers seek. Romeo prepares the Friar to marry them whilst Juliet breaks with the Nurse and uses her to arrange the meeting with Romeo. The strongest words of love Juliet can imagine are those of matrimony, witnessed by the Church and by society. It is through this language that she will seek to define their relationship. Thus Juliet strengthens their bond with the community. The marriage may remain private but the fact that they have entered into it within Verona's walls testifies to their definition by the city and by its rituals.¹⁹

Hence, the convention by which Romeo and Juliet should hate one another is legitimated by their marriage. This is dramatically represented by Romeo's appearance in the marketplace after his wedding. At first, Romeo attempts to contain Capulet and Montague within himself and to reconcile them within his flesh, now Juliet's. He speaks almost lovingly to Tybalt and denies the relevance of that insult 'villain', suggesting that Tybalt is merely mistaken in naming him thus. But this position is impossible for Romeo to maintain. Tybalt's

¹⁹ Ann Jennalie Cook argues that although the marriage is performed privately and remains a secret, in the context of Renaissance betrothals and elopements it is a legitimate union. She suggests also that Shakespeare has deliberately voiced the fears of an audience about the rashness of their betrothal through Juliet in order to allay them. See *Making a Match: Courtship in Shakespeare and His Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 208-12.

anachronistic but no less passionate hatred of the Montagues makes reconciliation impossible whilst even Mercutio is willing to fight for Romeo's name, though he has no personal stake in the feud. Moreover, Romeo himself is not entirely reconciled to the union of the two houses. He responds to the news of Mercutio's death: 'O sweet Juliet./ Thy beauty hath made me effeminate' (3.1.113-4). The murder of Tybalt is an act of revenge but it is also a form of self-assertion. Romeo rejects the feminine Capulet in his nature for the masculine Montague.²⁰

The legacy of Mercutio is tragedy. His death and Romeo's subsequent revenge transform the play from comedy to tragedy.²¹ Mercutio has a notion of this himself as he delivers a curse upon Capulets and Montagues: 'A plague o' both your houses./ They have made worms' meat of me./ I have it, and soundly too. Your houses!' (3.1.106-8).²² The prologue has already promised that the punishment incurred by the two families will be the violent deaths of Romeo and Juliet. The Prince explicitly refers to the tragedy at the end of the play as a 'scourge [...] laid upon your hate' (5.3.291). Yet there is also a sense of Romeo and Juliet bringing about their own curse. Brooke begins his narrative poem by blaming the lovers for their tragedy and using them as moral exempla for his readers.²³ I want to examine the curse as a linguistic rather than a moral phenomenon in the play and as a reflection of the social discourse which creates and may destroy its citizens.

²⁰ See Coppélia Kahn's seminal article on gender in the play, 'Coming of Age in Verona' in *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare* ed. by Carolyn Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely (Urbana, Chicago and London: University of Illinois Press, 1980), 171-93.

²¹ See Susan Snyder, *The Comic Matrix of Shakespeare's Tragedies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 57, and Nicholas Brooke, *Shakespeare's Early Tragedies* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1968), 83.

²² See *Shakespeare's Wordplay* on Mercutio's dying curse, 69-70.

²³ In his preface, Brooke describes the lovers 'thralling themselves to unhoneſt deſire, neglecting the authoritie and adviſe of parents and frendes, conferring their principall counſels with dronken goſſyppes, and ſuperſtitious friers (the naturally fitte instrumentes of unchastiſtie) [...] finallye, by all meanes of unhoneſt lyfe, haſtyng to moſt unhappye deathe', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, 284-5.

A curse necessarily posits the incarnation of a word. Calderwood suggests that Mercutio's 'plague' on both households is realised when it is a plague that prevents the Friar's letter from reaching Romeo.²⁴ I would argue that Mercutio's curse also signals the vulnerability to language from which Romeo and Juliet will suffer in this second half of the play. Until this point language has been performative in a positive sense for the lovers. As they abandon a purely Petrarchan self-expression, they speak words which unite them under civil and religious law. Yet this dialogue, this reciprocity of words, is their last before the murder of Mercutio releases the fatal dissonance between their names. In the rest of the play, the lovers imagine themselves stabbed, poisoned and murdered by words as if the words were become both the expression and the instrument of a curse. The curse with which Mercutio leaves the lovers is that of banishment.

The destructive potential of language was realised at the beginning of the play in the word which led to a blow and again in the scene of Mercutio and Tybalt's deaths (3.1.39). It is also alluded to in the Petrarchan conceit of death by a harsh word from a lady. Romeo tells Juliet: 'My life were better ended by their hate/ Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love' (2.1.119-120). Mercutio responds to the news of Tybalt's challenge:

Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead stabbed with a white wench's black
eye, run through the ear with a love song, the very pin of his heart cleft with
the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft. (2.3.12-5)

The image of Romeo killed by listening to a love song anticipates the change following the death of Tybalt when wordplay becomes tragic. Even the word 'Ay' is thus empowered. From the Nurse's confused lamentation in 3.2. Juliet assumes Romeo is both murderer and victim:

²⁴ *Shakespearean Metadrama*, 96.

Hath Romeo slain himself? Say thou but 'Ay',
 And that bare vowel 'I' shall poison more
 Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice.
 I am not I if there be such an 'Ay'. (3.2.45-8)

The word which told Juliet of Romeo's love, 'I know thou wilt say "Ay"', would now poison her with his death. This transformation of 'Ay' endorses Juliet's nominalist instinct that words were too unstable and too general to describe her lover or her love. But whilst this multiplicity of meaning implied the insubstantiality of language before, Juliet now finds that words are reified into weapons that attack the lovers' own substance. When the Nurse joins Juliet in vilification of the Montague, Juliet repents at once. She answers the Nurse's curse, 'Shame come to Romeo!' with her own, 'Blistered be thy tongue/ For such a wish! He was not born to shame' (3.2.90-1). Juliet reclaims the essential Romeo, the rose that exists despite the name of murderer. Yet the slanders (not to mention the increasing number of curses) poured upon his name have apparently damaged it:

Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name
 When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it? (3.2.98-9)

This idea of Romeo misshapen by a word recurs in the next scene where the instrument is 'banished'.

In *The Tragicall Historye*, Brooke uses the word 'banished' with prodigality. Indeed, considering the fate of the lovers, it seems rather tasteless to bandy it around as he does.

Brooke's Romeus considers that he might recover from his infatuation with Rosaline:

Perhaps mine eye once banished by absence from her sight.
 This fyre of myne, that by her pleasant eyne is fed

Shall little and little weare away, and quite at last be ded. (86-8)

The banishment of care, hope, sorrow or joy, is a familiar metaphor from Italian and English Renaissance poetry and it recurs several times here. Brooke describes Juliet's insomnia thus: 'an hugy heape of dyvers thoughtes arise/ That rest have banisht from her hart, and slumber from her eyes' (367-8). Perhaps the most callous use of the word occurs after Romeus has learnt of his exile. Brooke describes his recovery from despair as a result of the Friar's good counsel:

As blackest cloudes are chaced, by winters nimble winde,
So have his reasons chaced care out of his carefull mynde.
As of a morning foule, ensues an evening fayre,
So banisht hope returneth home to banish his despayre. (1483-6)

Where Brooke deadens the effect of 'banished' upon Romeus by such frequent metaphorical use, Shakespeare preserves the power of the word. He only employs it to describe the fate which befalls Romeo and thus it bursts violently onto the stage:

Some word there was, worsser than Tybalt's death,
That murdered me. I would forget it fain,
But O, it presses to my memory
Like damnèd guilty deeds to sinners' minds!
'Tybalt is dead, and Romeo banishèd'.
That 'banishèd', that one word 'banishèd'
Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts ...

'Romeo is banishèd' - to speak that word
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
All slain, all dead. 'Romeo is banishèd' -
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
In that word's death. No words can that woe sound.
(3.2.108-14, 122-6)

Juliet's emphasis on speaking the word reminds us how Romeo's exile was performed. 'Banished' in the mouth of the Prince redefined Romeo as an exile, renamed him as such, before he had left the city. Indeed, all the Prince needed to say was that 'Immediately we do exile him hence' (3.1.186). This sentence of exile encompasses the paradox about language we have been considering. It is explicitly referred to in *Richard II*. The King describes the sentence as verbal and vocal: 'The hopeless word of "never to return" / Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life' (1.3.146-7). That such a composition of breath should be limitless as Juliet finds it, is also wondered at by Bolingbroke. When the King grants him a reprieve of six years he responds:

How long a time lies in one little word!
 Four lagging winters and four wanton springs
 End in a word: such is the breath of kings. (1.3.206-8)

This meaning is also inherent in the Friar's use of the word 'vanished' to describe the Prince's sentence, 'A gentler judgement vanished from his lips:/ Not body's death, but body's banishment' (3.3.10-1).²⁵ The New Cambridge edition of *Romeo and Juliet* gives two possible meanings for 'vanished': 'breathed out like so much air (compare "airy word" ... and "airy tongue" ...)' or 'issued without possibility of recall'.²⁶ It is here that the insubstantiality and permanence of 'banished' collide. Juliet imagines a word whose power derives from this dreaded collision. As it is limitless so Romeo's exile drives him beyond all recognisable limits. As it is impossible of recall, so Romeo may be permanently lost.

²⁵ This usage is anticipated in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* where Lance substitutes the word 'vanished' for 'banished' (3.1.215). In view of Valentine's perception of exile as dissolution and death, it is particularly appropriate. It also confirms the origins of this tragedy in human breath.

²⁶ See *Romeo and Juliet* ed. by G. Blakemore Evans, 3.3.10n, 136.

Moreover, it is a truism in this act of the play that the mere repetition of the word by Juliet, the Friar, or anyone similarly impotent, empowers that word to murder. In 3.3, Romeo inveighs not against the Prince but against the Friar who keeps repeating the word and thus the blow:

Hadst thou no poison mixed, no sharp-ground knife,
 No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
 But 'banishèd' to kill me - 'banishèd'?
 O friar, the damnèd use that word in hell.
 Howling attends it. How hast thou the heart,
 Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
 A sin-absolver and my friend professed,
 To mangle me with that word 'banishèd'? (3.3.44-51)

With Juliet in the orchard, Romeo recognised another word as his enemy and declared 'Had I it written, I would tear the word' (2.1.99). In this scene, he returns to the deadly power of his own name. When the Nurse describes how Juliet weeps and calls on 'Romeo', he responds:

As if that name
 Shot from the deadly level of a gun
 Did murder her as that name's cursèd hand
 Murdered her kinsman. O tell me, friar, tell me,
 In what vile part of this anatomy
 Doth my name lodge? Tell me, that I may sack
 The hateful mansion. (101-7)

Romeo recognises that in the fight he betrayed the namelessness of his life with Juliet for a return to his identity as heir of the Montagues and therefore Tybalt's mortal foe.

I would suggest that critics are often too easily embarrassed by the tendency of Romeo and Juliet to hyperbole. The repetition of 'banished' is decried as an instance of the protagonists

reverting back to an emotional and linguistic immaturity.²⁷ One critic who tries to rescue these passages is Robert O. Evans, who argues that the sentence of banishment would have been 'much more serious to people of the Renaissance than it seems to us' though he does not expand on this perception. Later he suggests that Shakespeare

made Romeo's reaction to banishment appear reasonable to the audience (an easier job with an Elizabethan audience than with a modern one) by leading them to understand that Romeo and Juliet were bound by grand passion; the friar never quite understood that.²⁸

For the modern audience also, the repetition of 'banished' can have a powerful and illuminating dramatic effect. It reveals the linguistic tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, their vulnerability to a curse when they had thought to defy language. But these lines are not always heard in contemporary productions for 3.2 and 3.3 are often substantially cut.²⁹ The most notorious example must be Franco Zeffirelli's film (1968) wherein Juliet's 'banished' speech was entirely cut and Romeo spoke only thirteen Shakespearean lines in 3.3. Leonard Whiting makes as much noise as possible without repeating the word 'banished':

the young lover fills out his performance with sobs (there are as many directions for sobs as for lines of dialogue), grunts, pants, thumpings, grappling and general commotion.³⁰

²⁷ Ann Pasternak Slater describes Romeo 'wallowing hysterically at news of his banishment' in 'Petrarchanism Come True in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Images of Shakespeare* ed. by Werner Habicht, D. J. Palmer and Roger Pringle (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1988), 129-50, 133, 136. James H. Seward remarks that 'the unmanliness of Romeo's behaviour is extremely difficult to harmonize with the view that the love from which it springs is worthy of our admiration'. *Tragic Vision in Romeo and Juliet* (Washington: Consortium Press, 1973), 136.

²⁸ *The Osier Cage: Rhetorical Devices in Romeo and Juliet* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1966), 54.

²⁹ It is interesting to note that Q1 *Romeo and Juliet*, probably based on a memorial reconstruction, reduces Juliet's banishment speech to 7 lines from a possible 15 and blurs the emphasis on the word's violence but that Romeo's speech remains almost in its entirety, only deprived of 4 out of 50 lines. This perhaps suggests that Shakespeare's banishment speeches would have been heard by the contemporary audience. See *The First Quarto Edition of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet* (1597) ed. by Frank G. Hubbard (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1924).

³⁰ Jill Levenson, *Romeo and Juliet* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 117.

The 1996 film by Baz Luhrmann similarly cut these speeches. On the stage, the lines have fared rather better. Adrian Noble's 1995 production for the RSC cut only the offending puns, Ay/eye/I and flies/fly (3.2.45-9, 3.3.41)³¹ and Romeo's reference to the word 'banished' as decapitation with a golden axe (3.3.21-3). It is hardly surprising that a director wishing to streamline the play would sacrifice these speeches, particularly in film. Yet as well as emphasising the linguistic themes of the play, they also offer an important insight into the nature of Romeo and Juliet's relationship with Verona. It is not so much love that Romeo and Juliet cannot bear to lose by exile. Rather, it is themselves as defined by the city. Despite all the lovers have hoped for from love, rebaptism and the creation of a private world, they are defined by their own conventional attitudes and, more importantly, by Verona itself.

Nicholas Brooke has written of *Romeo and Juliet*, 'much of the play is actually comedy, close in kind to *The Two Gentlemen*, with which it could almost be a twin birth, the comic and tragic variations on the same theme'.³² The derivation of both plays from the same source, *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet*, partly explains this twinship. If we compare the different ways in which Shakespeare has made use of this source, to comic and tragic effect, we may be able to explain the very different attitudes expressed by Valentine and Romeo towards banishment. Central to this distinction is Verona.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Shakespeare has been notoriously careless about location. The First Folio locates the main action of the play in either Verona or Milan, whilst Padua

³¹ Mahood defends these puns as part of Shakespeare's attempt 'to reveal a profound disturbance of mind by the use of quibbles', though she allows that directors of *Romeo and Juliet* are probably right to cut them, *Shakespeare's Wordplay*, 70.

³² *Shakespeare's Early Tragedies*, 81.

and Mantua are thrown in for added confusion.³³ Editors have found various ways to amend this text and to explain its eccentricities but the play's vagueness about location may have been deliberate.³⁴ Certainly, this would fit in with its attitude towards travel and adventuring. At the beginning, Valentine is about to depart for Milan. He speaks scathingly of idle and 'Home-keeping youth' and entreats Proteus to seek 'the wonders of the world abroad' (1.1.2-8), as he does. Similarly, Panthino urges Proteus' father to educate him as other men do by sending their sons to war, on voyages of discovery or to university. Antonio agrees:

I have considered well his loss of time,
And how he cannot be a perfect man,
Not being tried and tutored in the world. (1.3.19-21)

Thus, Proteus too is sent from Verona to try his fortune at the Emperor's court. In this new world both men fall in love and suffer different kinds of metamorphosis including Valentine's banishment from the court. As the play encourages the expansion of their horizons literally and psychologically, it takes banishment comparatively lightly. Valentine is a traveller at the court of Milan. His parents, friends and his social position are all waiting at Verona to be reclaimed.³⁵ Rather, Valentine's expressions of despair and self-loss are contingent upon banishment from Sylvia who has displaced Verona as his 'home'. Yet even this banishment is quite painlessly endured until the comic structure brings about the reunion of Valentine with

³³ For a detailed consideration of the Folio's inconsistencies as to location see Clifford Leech's introduction to *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1969), xv-xviii.

³⁴ Leech considers the play as stronger for its roots in the peripatetic romance. He identifies the play with *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Pericles* and *Cymbeline* as a wandering play which changes its location more than once 'not usually for the sake of a special significance in the fresh locality (the forest in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* being a place of convenient meeting rather than the place where magic is done in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the place where the wind blows and people mature in *As You Like It*, and even the Welsh hills in *Cymbeline* being only incidentally contrasted with the royal court), but in order that the characters may ultimately find their way to a sorting out of their tangled patterns of life', *ibid.*, lviii.

³⁵ This is also true of *Mucedorus* (anon. 1590, rev. 1610). Here the young prince travels disguised as a shepherd to a foreign court to meet his intended bride. His banishment only excludes him from a place to which he is a stranger anyway. He may return to Valencia where his family, friends and his inheritance await. Nor is he separated from Amadine for long. Like Sylvia, she chooses exile in the forest with him.

Sylvia and his return to Milan. It is worth noting that there is no mention of a return to Verona at the end.

The contrast between this and *Romeo and Juliet* could hardly be more marked. To begin with, the tragedy is almost entirely located in Verona. Only Act 5 scene 1 occurs in Mantua and then it is largely concerned with Romeo's preparations for a return to his native city. Nor is there any suggestion that the young Veronese might leave the city voluntarily. Travel is not associated with pleasure, education or honour as it is in the comedy. When Romeo imagines travelling to 'that vast shore washed with the farthest sea' in pursuit of Juliet (2.1.124-6), he utters a conventional metaphor. His most daring physical transgression at this point has been to climb the orchard walls. Of greater relevance to the play and to their love, is Juliet's image of Romeo as a bird which she allows to hop a little before pulling it back. 'So loving-jealous of his liberty' (222-6). Indeed, Verona is a difficult place to leave. The Friar bearing the letter for Romeo is not merely detained from leaving the city but is locked inside a house suspected of plague (5.2.8-12), a suggestively claustrophobic image. Susan Snyder is one of the few critics to have addressed this issue in her examination of the feud as ideology in the play. She describes how the lovers lack any space of their own, hemmed as they are by 'Veronese social formations':

Nor does a freer space seem to be imaginable for Romeo and Juliet somewhere else. A milieu less insistently enclosing might make visually possible the option of leaving the city together and finding a new life somewhere else. Instead, the play's physical dimensions only confirm that 'there is no world without Verona walls' (3.3.17). Verona, constituted by the feud, asserts itself like any ideology as the only reality there is.³⁶

³⁶ 'Ideology and the Feud in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Sh. S.* 49 (1996), 87-96, 93.

This ideology explains the violent response of Romeo and Juliet to the former's banishment. The Friar tries to offer Romeo consolation: 'Hence from Verona art thou banishèd./ Be patient, for the world is broad and wide' (15-6). Yet Romeo has no experience of and cannot imagine any other place:

There is no world without Verona walls
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
Hence banishèd is banished from the world.
And world's exile is death. (3.3.17-20)

Romeo characterises Juliet *and* Verona as heaven and his exile from them both is that of a damned soul (29-33). The association of Verona with heaven may have been conventional outside the world of the play.³⁷ In numerous examples of Elizabethan travel literature, Italy's paradisaical qualities are extolled, though often in juxtaposition with its hellish aspects.³⁸ In his *Crudities*, Thomas Coryat writes:

The territory of Lombardy, which I contemplated round about from this Tower, was so pleasant an object to mine eyes, being replenished with such unspeakable variety of all things, both for profite and pleasure, that it seemeth to me to be the very Elysian fields, so much decantated and celebrated by the verses of Poets, or the Tempe or Paradise of the world [...] I said to myselfe that this country was fitter to be an habitation for the immortall Gods then for mortall men.³⁹

³⁷ Other contemporary Italian stereotypes upon which the play may draw include Petrarchism, swordsmanship, irascibility, private revenge and a knowledge of poison. See for example, 'The Fictional World of *Romeo and Juliet*: Cultural Connotations of an Italian Setting' by Angela Locatelli in *Shakespeare's Italy: Functions of Italian Locations in Renaissance Drama* ed. by Michele Marrapodi, A. J. Hoenselaars, Marcello Cappuzzo and L. Falzon Stantucci (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 69-84, and *Shakespeare's Italian Settings and Plays* by Murray J. Levith (London: Macmillan Press, 1989), 54-60.

³⁸ On this heaven/hell dichotomy see Jonathan Bate, 'The Elizabethans in Italy' in *Travel and Drama in Shakespeare's Time* ed. by Jean-Pierre Maquerlot and Michèle Willems (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 55-74, 61-2.

³⁹ *Coryat's Crudities* (Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, 1905), 2 vols, vol. 1, 245. Ironically, Coryat also extends this Edenic metaphor to Mantua, 264.

Fynes Moryson attributes the Italians' lack of interest in seafaring and discovery to the fact that they 'are so ravished with the beauty of their owne Countrey'.⁴⁰ This beauty may also distract them from religion. Italy has literally displaced heaven for the Italians in another of Moryson's accounts:

in these dayes, the Italyans have small confidence in these papall pardons and spirituall promises, and so much love their owne earth, as they will not give the seene and felt pleasures it yealdes them, for the unseene and unfelt ioyes of heaven, having a Common Proverb, [...] here is good bread and good wyne, who knowes if any such be in Paradice, the Fryers prate therof but knowe nothing.⁴¹

Although Romeo posits Juliet as Elysium, she cannot displace Verona in his affections, rather the two are inextricably linked. He seems unable to conceive of Juliet outside the city. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the elopement of Hermia and Lysander from Athens is conceivable in part because their attitudes towards the city have changed. Hermia explains:

Before the time I did Lysander see
Seemed Athens as a paradise to me.
O then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turned a heaven unto a hell? (1.1.204-7)

In Brooke's *Tragicall Historye* elopement is discussed. Juliet pleads to go with Romeus, threatening to throw herself from the window if he will not agree:

Receave me as thy servant, and the fellow of thy smart:
Thy absence is my death, thy sight shall geve me life.
But if perhaps thou stand in dred, to leade me as a wyfe,
Art thou all counselllesse, canst thou no shift devise?

⁴⁰ *The Itinerary of Fynes Moryson* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1908), 4 vols., vol. 4, chp. 5, 82.

⁴¹ *Shakespeare's Europe: Unpublished Chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary* (London: Sherratt & Hughes, 1903) ed. Charles Hughes, Bk 5, chp. 1, 401-2. Critics writing on *Romeo and Juliet* from a Christian perspective have remarked that Romeo idolises Juliet instead of God and thus loses any hope of heaven. See Seward, *Tragic Vision in Romeo and Juliet*, 137, and Barbara L. Parker, *A Precious Seeing: Love and Reason in Shakespeare's Plays* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1987), 148.

What letteth, but in other weede I may my selfe disguyse?
 What, shall I be the first? hath none done so ere this?
 To scape the bondage of theyr frendes? thy selfe can aunswer yes.
 (1616-21)

Yet Shakespeare chose to ignore the possibility of elopement in his tragedy. It does not feature in Romeo's desperate conjectures. Only a reprieve from the Prince, the displacement of Verona or the creation of a second Juliet will save him (3.3.57-60). Nor does Juliet ever suggest she should leave with Romeo though she earlier declared that, once married, she would 'follow thee, my lord, throughout the world' (2.1.190). In 3.5, Capulet threatens to disinherit Juliet and to banish her from his house unless she will marry Paris (191-5). Rather than fleeing to Mantua or allowing herself to be banished, Juliet arranges to leave her father's house in the semblance of a corpse.⁴² It is only in this morbid fantasy that Juliet can imagine leaving Verona.

Nevertheless, the possibility rejected by Romeus and unthinkable to Romeo, finds expression in Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Though Romeus deplores such 'fancies wayne',⁴³ there is no one to stop Julia in this play from donning the guise of a page and going in pursuit of her lover, Proteus.⁴⁴ Moreover, Sylvia agreed to elope with Valentine before any

⁴² Although this plan is the Friar's suggestion not Juliet's, the Friar and the Nurse have never previously encouraged the lovers to leave Verona. Marianne Novy regards Juliet's passivity in keeping the marriage a secret, pretending obedience to her parents and then agreeing to the Friar's mock death as her capitulation to a stereotyped femininity. This capitulation may be seen as the 'point analogous to Romeo's duel with Tybalt where failure to transcend the gender polarization of their society makes disaster inevitable'. See *Love's Argument: Gender Relations in Shakespeare* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 108.

⁴³ Romeus' objection to the elopement is partly based on his fear of punishment and disgrace if they should be caught by Juliet's father. He also regards Juliet's disguise plot as degrading. He promises that he will return to take her away by force if necessary, 'Not in mans weede disguisd, or as one scarcely knowne,/ But as my wife and onely feere, in garment of thyne owne', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol 1, 1681-2.

⁴⁴ Julia's speech at 2.7.9-13 describing her journeying to Proteus as a pilgrimage anticipates *Romeo and Juliet* in a number of ways. The protagonists' first sonnet involves the identification of Romeo as a pilgrim. In the Orchard scene Romeo refers to 'Love's wings' that enabled him to fly over the orchard walls whilst Juliet refers to Romeo's 'dear perfection' in her opening soliloquy.

sentence of banishment had been passed. Like the union of Romeus and Juliet in Brooke, and of Romeo and Juliet in Shakespeare, this was to be effected by Valentine climbing a rope ladder to Sylvia's window (2.4.179-80). When the plan is revealed and the lover banished, Sylvia determines to follow him into exile herself. She tells Sir Eglamour that her flight to Mantua is to escape 'a most unholy match' (4.3.30) in an echo of Juliet's desperation to avoid the bigamous marriage to Paris. Mantua is also Romeo's place of exile.

This theme of possibilities enjoyed by Valentine but denied to Romeo is repeated in the exiles' adaptation to life outside the city. Valentine has foreseen annihilation in his loss of Sylvia: 'She is my essence, and I leave to be/ If I be not by her fair influence/ Fostered, illumined, cherished, kept alive' (3.1.182-4). Yet Valentine does not suffer the imagined dissolution of self in this unnamed and liminal forest.⁴⁵ The outlaws he encounters not only remind him of his former life (one of them has been exiled for trying to abduct an heiress) but they recognise these qualities in Valentine:

FIRST OUTLAW: And partly seeing you are beautified
 With goodly shape, and by your own report
 A linguist, and a man of such perfection
 As we do in our quality much want -

SECOND OUTLAW: Indeed because you are a banished man,
 Therefore above the rest we parley to you.
 Are you content to be our general ... (4.1.53-9)

Valentine's worth in this alternative society ironically depends on the same qualities that found him a position in the Emperor's court. The First Outlaw, perhaps one of the gentlemen

⁴⁵ The exact situation of the forest is never clarified. Valentine says that he has arrived there on his way from Milan to Verona (4.1.17-20). Sylvia and later the Duke locate him at Mantua (4.3.23, 5.2.45) but since the Second Outlaw declares that he was banished from Mantua the forest cannot be situated there (4.1.48-9). It is perhaps on the outskirts of Mantua somewhere between the two places Valentine has named.

amongst them, implies that exile cannot deprive Valentine of the beauty, courtesy and education he possesses. These are more essential to him than a name. Furthermore, the Second Outlaw appreciates Valentine for the very fact that society has rejected him. Valentine's exile is transformed by the conventions of pastoral wherein a sojourn in the forest becomes a time of regeneration. He laments Sylvia's loss but also embraces the opportunity for contemplation:

How use doth breed a habit in a man!
 This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods
 I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.
 Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
 And to the nightingale's complaining notes
 Tune my distresses and record my woes. (5.4.1-6)

Moreover, his command of the outlaws ensures that they are all reintegrated back into Verona. The spirit of regeneration apparently restores even the outlaw who bragged of murder (4.1.48-9).⁴⁶

In contrast, Romeo's exile is a progress towards death. Separated from Verona and Juliet, he exists in a state of limbo. His exile in Mantua is barely described and when characters do remember him it is in the context of his death. Lady Capulet suggests to Juliet that they might poison Romeo through an agent in Mantua (3.5.87-92). The Nurse argues that Juliet should take Paris as a second husband: 'Your first is dead, or 'twere as good he were' (224). The only detail we have about Romeo's existence in Mantua is that he noticed an apothecary's shop where one might buy poison. It is not surprising to learn that, before the news of Juliet's demise, he has been dreaming of death (5.1.6-9).

⁴⁶ Leah Scragg also makes this point in *Shakespeare's Mouldy Tales: Recurrent Plot Motifs in Shakespearian Drama* (London and New York: Longman, 1992), 129.

Valentine has been able to translate the word 'banished' into a term of value. Romeo and Juliet, however, declare from the first moment they hear it that that word will be their deaths. It is 'death misnamed'. It remains to be asked to what extent Romeo and Juliet are linguistically responsible for their deaths. Have they in fact wrested 'banishment' from its 'true' meaning and written their own curse? In answering this question, it is important to recognise the dual nature of the word itself. Banishment is exile as long as the conditions are obeyed, namely that the accused is never found in those particular dominions again. If they are, then 'banishment' becomes 'death'. It incorporates both meanings. Moreover, the context in which banishment signifies death is one in which other 'harmless' terms are fatally empowered. It has been frequently observed that various Petrarchan conceits are 'unmetaphored' in this play. Where Romeo describes love as 'A choking gall and a preserving sweet' (1.1.191), he unconsciously predicts his own death by poison and also describes the liquor which preserves Juliet from Paris. When he features love as 'Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!' (178), he might similarly be anticipating Juliet's death-like trance. More obvious examples of this process would be the dramatic conflation of wedding-bed and death-bed at the end of the play and Romeo's dying with a kiss.⁴⁷

The assumption that Petrarchism is somehow deadly forms the basis for Gayle Whittier's examination of the play wherein 'the inherited Petrarchan word becomes English flesh by

⁴⁷ Rosalie Colie coined the term 'unmetaphoring' with regard to *Romeo and Juliet*, defining it as the 'trick of making a verbal convention part of the scene, the action, or the psychology of the play itself', *Shakespeare's Living Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 145. Other critics who have considered the dramatic role of these conceits include Leonard Forster in *The Icy Fire: Five Studies in European Petrarchism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 51, and particularly Pasternak Slater. 'Petrarchanism Come True' from whose extensive examples those quoted above are taken.

declining from lyric freedom to tragic fact' (27).⁴⁸ Whittier describes Romeo's relationship with the 'difficult and dangerous Petrarchan word':

It is difficult in that, while all poetry, if not all language, balances the dream of transcending time and space over the referential facts of limitation, separation, and death ("... the poet, he nothing affirms and therefore never lieth ..."), the Petrarchan word is especially non-referential, with its obvious hyperbole, celestial compliments, and paradox. It is dangerous in that, where the word is performative, Romeo lives out its terms in a referential way, ultimately converting himself from life to "story". When Romeo falls in love with a love already *scripted* as otherworldly and then seeks to dramatize that script, he falls into the living power of an inherited word, which, like fleshly inheritance, bestows *both life and death*.⁴⁹

My main disagreement with this thesis is that the lyric transcendence Whittier imagines inhering in Petrarchism is not upheld by the play. The airy words of Petrarchism are frequently debased and rejected by the lovers themselves. As Jill Levenson has suggested, the terms of Petrarchism are habitual linguistic currency for a variety of Verona's citizens. Nor do I agree that Romeo seeks to reject the inherited word to become the author of himself. Although he tries to exceed Petrarchan hyperbole Romeo never abandons his poetic forefather. He wants to uphold the conventions since it is through both civic and poetic tradition that Romeo recognises and substantiates love. It is through the *commonplace* of Verona that Romeo and Juliet recognise themselves.

⁴⁸ The association of Petrarchism with death is partly an expression of the complex relationship between desire and death which informed much philosophical and literary writing in the Renaissance as throughout history, explored by Jonathan Dollimore's 'Desire is Death' in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* ed. by Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 369-86. Gayle Whittier employs Lacanian theory in 'The Sonnet's Body and the Body Sonnetized in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Sh. Q.* 40 (1989), 27-41. See also Lloyd Davis, "'Death-marked Love": Desire and Presence in *Romeo and Juliet*', *Sh. S.* 49 (1996), 57-67.

⁴⁹ 'The Sonnet's Body and the Body Sonnetized', 30.

Romeo and Juliet's inability to translate the term 'exile' into anything but 'death misnamed' reflects a lack of imagination and of poetic conviction. The words of society are more powerful than their own. In the first parting scene between the lovers, Petrarchan poetry was rejected by Juliet as too commonplace and impermanent to describe their love. They eschewed the terms of public discourse for a private communion in the orchard, a dialogue which in Juliet's case aspires to silence. In the first balcony scene then Romeo and Juliet are in control of language. Juliet has the confidence to scorn at Petrarchan poetry and the airy words of the feud. In contrast, the parting that takes place after the consummation of the marriage recognises the lovers' subjection to the popular word:

Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death.
 I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
 I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
 'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
 Nor that is not the lark whose notes do beat
 The vaulty heaven so high above our heads.
 I have more care to stay than will to go.
 Come, death, and welcome; Juliet wills it so.
 How is't, my soul? Let's talk. It is not day. (3.5.17-25)

Whether Juliet calls the lark a nightingale or a toad, it will retain its original significance as a portent of day. The curse that 'banished' performs is this inability to translate the terms of 'reality' into a private discourse and thus a private world. They will only survive exile if they abandon the conventions of Verona for their own poetry, a poetry whose imaginativeness might rival Mercutio's creation of Queen Mab. However, it is this poetry that they cannot create. Puns, oxymora and Petrarchan conceits shape Romeo's language even in the tomb.

Moreover, once in exile, the possibility for the creation of a mutual space through poetry is lost, for exile plunges them both into a profound silence. They literally never speak to one

another again after this parting at dawn. In the tomb Romeo gazes on Juliet's speechless body, willing it to reply. Though she does not, Romeo insists that they will finally find time and space together. He swears he will never leave (Juliet or Verona):

Here, here will I remain
 With worms that are thy chambermaids. O, here
 Will I set up my everlasting rest,
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 From this world-wearied flesh. (5.3.108-112)

Their search throughout the play has been to make a space for themselves in Verona where those selves were created and are still defined. Exile is a journey towards death rather than to a world elsewhere, either in geographical or cosmological terms. Romeo and Juliet are consistently sceptical about the prospect of heaven. The life in death both predict in their final puns is rather their permanent seclusion together in the tomb.

This secular ending is upheld by Verona's reaction to their deaths. In the scene wherein Juliet's mock death is lamented, the Friar tells the mourners that she has gone to heaven. They have lost their part in her to God (4.4.94-101). At the end of the play however, when Juliet really is dead, there is no such loss. Rather, Romeo and Juliet are immortalised in Verona through the creation of two golden statues. Through Juliet's effigy Montague promises:

That whiles Verona by that name is known
 There shall no figure at such rate be set
 As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Capulet responds:

As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie,

Poor sacrifices of our enmity. (5.3.299-303)

Whilst the play seems to allow for scepticism as regards the reconciliation of Capulet and Montague, Romeo and Juliet are restored to their names. We have seen in the play how they depend on social and poetic convention for their identity. In their fathers' promises, they are enclosed, not only in gold, but within a verbal structure that is both civic and poetic. As long as Verona is known by this name and as long as its history books exist they will remain part of it. Verona is the god of Romeo and Juliet's idolatry and as such, it is apt that they should be preserved through the power of its name.

‘STILL-BREEDING THOUGHTS’: *RICHARD II* AND THE EXILE’S CREATIVE
FAILURE

In an essay entitled ‘The Exile as Uncreator’, David Williams describes how exile from the English medieval society was associated with loss of speech. A common analogy for society was dialogue, the word-exchange of men. The exile’s exclusion from this communication indicated his anti-social nature. It symbolised his opposition to the linguistic creativity which bound society together and to the Creation itself, imagined as the union of separate elements.¹

Williams writes:

the exile is seen as a kind of anti-poet, the opposite of the figure of the poet at the feet of his lord, the centre of society, who binds words and weaves sounds to make language. The exile is an unbinder, an undoer, and an uncreator.²

In *Richard II*, the King proves himself to be an enemy of corporate identity. He sells off England’s land, levies exorbitant taxes upon commons and nobles, breaks England’s laws and thus alienates himself from the kingdom. Richard subsequently undergoes two forms of exile: the first in Ireland viewed retrospectively, the second when he is deposed by Bolingbroke. The King’s response to this formal expression of his identity as ‘an unbinder, an undoer, and an uncreator’ is to deploy poetry. It is through metaphor and simile that Richard seeks to identify himself once more with kingship and with England. When this fails, the exile tries to imagine a new identity for himself. Yet for all Richard’s poetic struggles, he cannot conceive an alternative to kingship.

¹ David Williams, ‘The Exile as Uncreator’, *Mosaic* 8 (Spring 1975), 1-15, 4.

² *Ibid.*: 8-9.

According to one theory, the deposition of the king should be conceptually impossible. The idea of the monarch possessing two bodies - the body natural and the body politic - posits within himself land, law and people. Even in death, his identity remains inextricably tied to the realm as the Crown passes to his successor. The theory of the king's two bodies was applied by lawyers in the Duchy of Lancaster Case (1561), as famously enumerated by Edmund Plowden in his *Reports* (1571). Plowden describes one body as mortal and susceptible to infirmity, the other as eternal and immutable, consisting of Policy and Government. Both are incorporated in the person of the sovereign.³ Although the possession of this divine and perfect body may have served the absolutist ambitions of kings, the theory was primarily concerned with the continuity of land. Marie Axton describes how the ecclesiastical 'corpus mysticum' had proven invaluable in the maintenance of church estates.⁴ In the Duchy of Lancaster Case, the theory is used to settle a dispute over land previously owned by the Crown, though this time against the Queen's wishes. In the debate over the Elizabethan succession, the theory was applied with regard to the disposal of England itself.⁵

Fundamentally, the metaphor was needed to explain and codify the continuity of England.

Axton describes the Tudor lawyers grappling with this paradox:

men died and the land endured; kings died, the crown survived; individual subjects died but subjects always remained to be governed. Perhaps the

³ Quoted by Ernst H. Kantorowicz in *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 7. See his study of the transmission of this metaphor from the ecclesiastical 'corpus mysticum' to the representation of a political collective in the chapter 'Polity-Centred Kingship: Corpus Mysticum', 193-272.

⁴ Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), 13-4.

⁵ In *A Treatise of the Two Bodies of the King, vis. Natural and Politic* (1566), Plowden defended Mary Stuart's claim to the throne. He denied John Hales' arguments that Mary could not inherit because she was a foreigner, because Scotland was out of English jurisdiction, and because Henry VIII's will specified otherwise, by posing a legal distinction between the natural and politic bodies of a sovereign. See *The Queen's Two Bodies*, 26-37.

lawyers were unwilling to envisage England itself as a perpetual corporation because the law had always vested land in a person. Anyway, for the purposes of law it was found necessary by 1561 to endow the Queen with two bodies: a *body natural* and a *body politic* [...] When lawyers spoke of this body politic they referred to a specific quality: the essence of *corporate perpetuity*.⁶

The theory did not allow for the possibility that the king might oppose himself to this body politic. Nor did it conceive of that body as vulnerable to the tyrant's will. The question of what action could be taken when a king pursued his own interests above those of the 'corporate perpetuity' was vociferously debated during Mary I's reign and in the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. It was hoped that the sovereign would feel a moral obligation to obey the law and to merit the possession of the body politic.⁷ If not there were alternatives. Radicals such as the Protestant John Ponet and the Catholic Robert Parsons posited a fragile contractual relationship between king and commonwealth.⁸ If this contract were broken, the bonds between the king's two bodies might be severed. In Ponet's tract, *A Shorte Treatise of Politicke Power* (1556), he leaves no doubt as to which body should predominate:

And men ought to have more respect to their Countrey then to their Prince: to the Common-wealth, then to any one person. For the Countrey and Common-wealth is a degree above the King. Next unto God, men ought to love their Countrey, and the whole Common-wealth, before any member of it: as Kings and Princes (be they never so great) are but members: and Common-wealths may stand well enough and flourish, albeit there be no Kings, but contrariwise without a Common-wealth there can be no King. Common-

⁶ *The Queen's Two Bodies*, 12.

⁷ Richard Hooker argues that men may choose their king but once they have endowed him with power they must obey him as God. Although it is to be hoped that a king will naturally act within the laws of the kingdom, there is nothing the people can do to restrain him. Hence, Hooker suggests that sovereign power should be limited in some way before it is bestowed. See *Of The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* in *The Works of Richard Hooker* ed. by Rev. John Keble and revised by R. W. Church and F. Paget (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), 7th edition, vol. 3, Bk 8, ii, 6-11, pp 345-51.

⁸ In *A Conference about the next Succession to the Crowne of England* (Antwerp, 1594) STC 19398, Parsons bases his argument for the nation's power to depose monarchs and redefine the succession on this contractual understanding. He argues that if the sovereign breaks his coronation oath to 'rule and governe iustly, according to law, conscience, equity, and religion [...] then is the commonwealth not only free from al oaths, made by her of obedience or allegiance to such unworthy Princes, but is bound moreover for saving the whole body, to resist chasten and remove such evel heades, if she be able, for that otherwise al would come to distruction, ruyne, and publique desolation', 77-8.

wealths and Realms may live, when the head is cut off, and may put on a new head, that is, make them a new Governour, when they see their old head seek to [sic] much his own will, and not the wealth of the whole body, for the which he was onely ordained.⁹

Such tracts as this should give us pause before the divine right theory comes to seem too central to *Richard II*. Shakespeare was writing at a time when the two bodies theory and the principle of divine right were demystified or treated as pragmatic legal fictions perhaps as often as they were asserted with unquestioning belief.¹⁰ In his chapter on the play, Ernst Kantorowicz argues that here Shakespeare ‘eternalized’ the metaphor of the king’s two bodies, making it ‘the very substance and essence of one of his greatest plays’ (26). But he is more interested in the image as a psychological truth about kingship,¹¹ than in the competing ideologies concerning kingship that Shakespeare invokes. Kantorowicz sees the play as Richard’s tragedy, political only as it was appropriated by the Essex conspirators (40-1). Though he describes how the metaphor is destroyed within the play, Kantorowicz has no interest in the reasons why this happens. He ignores the nobility’s claim that by deposing Richard it will redeem kingship and England itself.

Taking into account contemporary disagreement over the divine right theory, some critics have suggested that *Richard II* reveals a nostalgia for the medieval world in which this

⁹ John Ponet, *A Shorte Treatise of Politicke Power and of the True Obedience which Subjects owe to Kings and other Civill Governours* (London 1556), STC 20179, 28.

¹⁰ Wilbur Sanders contests the idea expressed by Tillyard and Campbell among others that divine right kingship was an uncontested doctrine at the time of the play’s composition. He offers several examples of contemporary dissent. See *The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 143-57.

¹¹ Kantorowicz suggests that Shakespeare could have known of the two bodies theory through connections at the Inns of Court but declines to prove a debt: ‘It seems all very trivial and irrelevant, since the image of the twinned nature of a king, or even of man in general, was most genuinely Shakespeare’s own and proper vision’, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 25.

doctrine commanded greater awe and faith.¹² Yet within the play, ‘medieval’ voices are heard disputing the so-called hegemony of divine right kingship. In Holinshed, medieval England is characterised by the conflict between aristocratic and monarchical ideology rather than an unquestioned acceptance of divine right. It is this dialectic that Graham Holderness finds dramatised in *Richard II* and epitomised by the King’s failure to reconcile Bolingbroke and Mowbray:

Honour has become more absolute than allegiance; loyalty to kin has superseded duty to sovereign; chivalric personal dignity has exceeded civil obligation. Monarchy has failed to control the power of feudalism.¹³

The nobility also has a claim to represent and to protect English corporate perpetuity. Indeed, in feudal terms it could be said to have a divine right to do so. Christopher Morris reminds us:

the rights of the feudal aristocracy were no more disputable than the king’s; and the place and function of the nobles in society was held to be no less a part of the divinely planned natural order. If a king had any kind of divine right, the nobles had it too. All right had to be divine right if it was to be right at all.¹⁴

Hence, the king’s ‘possession’ of the body politic could be challenged by the aristocracy’s right to defend that body, even from the king himself. England’s peers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could point to a long history of preserving England’s perpetuity, of protecting its laws and institutions.¹⁵ The Marian exile, Christopher Goodman, condemns the

¹² See Sanders, *The Dramatist and the Received Idea*, 149.

¹³ *Shakespeare Recycled: The Making of Historical Drama* (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 51-72, 60.

¹⁴ Christopher Morris, *Political Thought in England – Tyndale to Hooker* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 12.

¹⁵ In *The Rites of Knighthood: The Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1989), Richard C. McCoy explores the use of chivalry to contain and partially exorcise the latent antagonism between sovereign and aristocracy during the reigns of Elizabeth and James. He also examines the failure of these ceremonies in the case of Essex and charts the Earl’s investigations into and advocacy of noble prerogatives, 89-94.

peers who have participated in Mary's bloody persecutions to the destruction of the nation.

He argues that it is the nobles who

firste were ordayned in Realmes to stande in defence of trewe religion, lawes, and welth of their nation, and to be a shyld (to their power) agaynst their enimies in tyme of warre, and a brydel at home to their Princes in tyme of peace.¹⁶

Gaunt and York uneasily subjugate feudal values of familial and personal honour and martial renown to the duty owed to their sovereign. But eventually the compulsion to protect the kingdom and their own interests overcomes royal allegiance. Ironically, it is Richard's failure to embody divine kingship that results in their defection. The King acts in direct contradiction of the principle of the king's two bodies in his habitual abuse of the body politic. The realm is merely a possession outside the King's physical body and for much of the play beyond his imagination. To Gaunt and York, Richard threatens the perpetuity of England itself, an offence that may unite the whole kingdom against him.

The debate between the Duchess of Gloucester and John of Gaunt is dominated by their opposing ideas of continuity and identity. The Duchess' moral outrage at her husband's murder derives not from personal loss alone but from the violation done to Edward III. She figures his sons as branches from that 'most royal root' (1.2.18), and as vials of his 'sacred blood' (12. 17). Her metaphors of containment and encirclement will reverberate throughout the play, in particular the use of 'model' which occurs four times.¹⁷ In each case 'model' is concerned with essence and its continuance or loss. Gloucester was 'the model of thy father's life' (28). With his death, Edward III's perpetuity through his son is destroyed and Gaunt

¹⁶ *How Superior Powers Oght to be Obeyd of their Subjects* (Geneva 1558), STC 12020, 35.

¹⁷ See the recurrence of 'model' at 3.2.149, 3.4.43, and 5.1.11.

himself is damaged. This is partly because to accept the murder of his brother without vengeance. 'Thou show'st the naked pathway to thy life./ Teaching stern murder how to butcher thee' (31-2). Yet the Duchess also suggests the dependence of the model on the original:

Ah, Gaunt, his blood was thine! That bed, that womb,
That mettle, that self mould that fashioned thee,
Made him a man; and though thou liv'st and breathest,
Yet art thou slain in him. (1.2.22-5)

According to the two bodies theory, the king can never die, even though his mortal body may have expired.¹⁸ Hence, King Richard II embodies the spirit of the former king, even as he has spilt that 'precious liquor' (19). The Duchess does refer to Edward's sovereignty in her elegy but this is only as an embellishment of his patriarchal status. Crucially, it is not the continuum of the body politic but only that of aristocratic blood that concerns the Duchess.

Gaunt opposes this kin-centred view with the doctrine of divine right. He represents Richard as set apart from the aristocratic body and beyond the reach of vengeance:

God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,
His deputy anointed in his sight,
Hath caused his death; the which if wrongfully,
Let heaven revenge, for I may never lift
An angry arm against his minister. (1.2.37-41)

Moreover, Gaunt will not categorically state that the murder was a crime which merits vengeance. His hesitation, 'if wrongfully', suggests qualms about judging God's deputy. Later, the Queen will chastise the Gardener for daring to presume to judge Richard (3.4.79-

¹⁸ The possession of the Crown conferred immortality upon the individual king even when it had passed to his successor. Henry VIII was still referred to as alive in his son's reign. On the theory of demise see *The King's Two Bodies*, 13-5, and *The Queen's Two Bodies*, 27-30.

80).¹⁹ Gaunt may also be suggesting the need for political ruthlessness here, as echoed again by the Gardener who attributes the King's downfall to the lack of such a policy:

We at time of year
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit trees,
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,
With too much riches it confound itself.
Had he done so to great and growing men,
They might have lived to bear, and he to taste,
Their fruits of duty. Superfluous branches
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live. (3.4.58-65)

Gloucester may have been one of those trees 'over-proud in sap and blood'. Whilst the depiction of the Duke in *Thomas of Woodstock* (1592)²⁰ is that of a flawed martyr, there were other accounts of his rebellion against the King which might have justified his death. Holinshed refers to Gloucester as one 'hastie, wilfull and given more to war than peace'.²¹

Nevertheless, shortly after his conversation with the Duchess, Gaunt delivers a blistering attack on Richard, condemning him for the murder of Gloucester, the King's own uncle, and for the spilling of Edward's blood (2.1.127-8, 132). This is not the only borrowing from the Duchess that Gaunt will make. He also appropriates her metaphors of generation and containment and her use of the figure 'plove' to express anxiety about the continuance of England. The Duchess's identification of Edward as:

That bed, that womb.

¹⁹ Allan Bloom describes the obfuscatory powers of myth and divine right in the play. The assumption that subjects should not question Richard's state 'makes political science impossible and renders the attempt to establish it a sin, the sin of disobeying the ruler and of attempting to replace him', 'Richard II' in *Shakespeare as Political Thinker* ed. John Alvis and Thomas G. West (Durham, N. Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 1981), 51-61, 57.

²⁰ A. P. Rossiter suggests a date c. 1591-4, *Woodstock: A Moral History* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1946), 71-2.

²¹ See Holinshed on Gaunt in *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (London 1577), *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles* (1587), 3 vols. in 4, vol. 3, 489.

That mettle, that self mould that fashioned thee (1.2.22-3)

is repeated in Gaunt's delineation of England:

This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings. (2.1.50-1)

Yet, just as Edward is a 'model' in the past tense, so Gaunt recognises that his ideal country no longer exists: 'That England that was wont to conquer others/ Hath made a shameful conquest of itself' (65-6). This idea of self-destruction was also a feature of the Duchess' lament.

Gaunt's eulogy of England reveals certain aristocratic prejudices.²² The Duke is primarily concerned with England as a martial nation, bound in by the sea like a fortress, producing knights who fight for their own honour. Aristocratic title and privilege are seen to depend on English soil, hence Gaunt's fury that Richard should sell the land off to social upstarts. Nevertheless, his England is also prized for its kings (40-2). In *Edward I* (1591), Elinor welcomes the crusading king back to England and describes the realm in these same aristocratic/monarchist terms:

Illustrious England, auncient seat of kings,
Whose chivalrie hath roiallized thy fame:
That sounding bravely through terrestiall vaile,
Proclaiming conquests, spoiles, and victories,
Rings glorious Ecchoes through the farthest worlde. (1.11-5)²³

²² See Douglas M. Friedman's interpretation of this speech in 'John of Gaunt and the Rhetoric of Frustration', *ELH* 43 (1976), 279-99, 288-91.

²³ *Edward I* by George Peele ed. by Frank S. Hook in *The Dramatic Works of George Peele* Gen. ed. Charles Tyler Prouty (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1961), 3 vols., vol. 2.

In *Richard II*, England's crusading and expansionist days seem far behind it. The King, who should be the model of England's greatness, admits no such obligation. In contrast with Gaunt's Englishmen 'whose individual identity is submerged in a collective purpose, a kind of perpetual knightly order',²⁴ Richard stands isolated and ruthlessly solipsistic. He works to dispossess himself of England, thus to divide body natural from body politic.

Most obviously Richard dispossesses the Crown of land, dividing England among his favourites. In *Woodstock*, Richard anticipates Lear by calling for a map on which to sketch the new boundaries (4.1.220-1). Unlike Lear, he recognises the shame he will incur:

We shall be censured strangely, when they tell
How our great father toiled his royal person
Spending his blood to purchase towns in France;
And we his son, to ease our wanton youth
Become a landlord to this warlike realm,
Rent out our kingdom like a pelting farm (4.1.142-7)

This is also the imagery Gaunt will use to describe the king and kingdom in *Richard II*.²⁵ Related to this spoiling of land is the King's rash expenditure of England's fiscal wealth, not only the royal purse but the funds of his nobles and the commons. *Woodstock* dramatises the instigation of the blank charters and the succeeding rebellion but *Richard II* remembers these scenes. Of the lords' private complaints against Richard before their defection, the farming of the realm is central:

ROSS: The commons hath he pilled with grievous taxes,
And quite lost their hearts. The nobles hath he fined
For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.

WILLOUGHBY: And daily new exactions are devised.

²⁴ 'John of Gaunt and the Rhetoric of Frustration' . 289.

²⁵ See 2.1.60, 113.

As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what. (2.1.247-51)

Most important perhaps is Richard's alienation of the nobles. He not only forces some into bankruptcy but violates the laws of inheritance by depriving others of their patrimony.²⁶

Richard drives a wedge between the nobles and kingship by denying them a voice in policy-making and rejecting their claims to protect the realm. In *The Union of Two Noble Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1548), Edward Hall relates the substance of Hereford's complaint against the King, of how he,

litle esteemed and lesse regarded the nobles and Princes of his realme, and as muche as laie in hym soughte occasions, invented causes and practised prively howe to destroye the more parte of them: *to some thretenyng death, to other manacyng exile and banishment*, forgettyng and not remembryng what blotte it was to his honor, and what detrimente and damage it was to the publike wealthe ...²⁷ (italics mine)

In Shakespeare's play, such persecution is exemplified by the murder of Gloucester but in particular by the exiles of Mowbray and Bolingbroke. Froissart's *Chronicles* (1523-5) go into greater detail concerning Richard's crimes. Whilst the banished Bolingbroke is in France, he is approached by another exile, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundell. Arundell uses the following arguments to persuade Bolingbroke to return and depose the King:

He has filled up the measure of his crimes by the murder of the duke of Glocester, the beheading of the earl of Arundel without cause, the exile of the earl of Warwick, and your banishment; clearly shewing his intentions to deprive England of its nobles and the support she might have from them, for

²⁶ See Holinshed's *Chronicle* on the disinheriting of 'rightfull heires', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 387-8.

²⁷ *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 383.

he has lately banished the earl of Northumberland and his son because they talked too freely of him and his ministers.²⁸

As both Hall and Froissart have related, the alienation of the King from his nobles, literally through the latter's banishment, leaves England relatively unsupported and vulnerable.

Richard's crimes against the commonwealth justified rebellion according to the criteria of certain sixteenth- and seventeenth-century polemicists. Ponet describes the expulsion (and not the murder) of two English kings thus:

they deprived *King Edward* the II. because without law he killed his subjects, spoiled them of their goods, & wasted the treasure of the Realm. And upon what just causes *Richard* the II. was thrust out, and *Henry* the IV put in his place, I refer it to their own judgement.²⁹

Robert Parsons offers a more teleological reading, suggesting that God's endorsement of the new, perhaps usurping monarch, proves deposition justified. Richard II, he argues, allowed himself to be 'abused and misled by evel counsellors, to the great hurte & disquietnes of the realme' and hence he was deposed. Further justification for this act follows:

and in this mannes place by free election was chosen for king the noble knight Henry Duke of Lancaster who proved afterwards so notable a king as the world knoweth, and was father to king Henry the fifth surnamed commonly the Alexander of England.³⁰

Critics such as Ponet and Parsons suggested that political vengeance by the nobility, the church or the people was not only justifiable but inevitable. To this structure of

²⁸ *Sir John Froissart's Chronicles of England, France, Spain and the Adjoining Countries* tr. by Thomas Johnes 3rd ed. 12 vols., vol. 12 (London: Longman, 1808), 117. Shakespeare does not refer to the banishments of Northumberland and Percy at all, perhaps because those of Bolingbroke and Mowbray loom so large.

²⁹ *A Shorte Treatise of Politicke Power*, 47.

³⁰ *A Conference about the next Succession*, 59-60.

predestination. Shakespeare has added a kind of poetic inevitability. If the King contains the body politic within himself, then any action he might take to the detriment of that body is a self-inflicted blow. Richard's actions systematically recoil upon him. This is not to deny the political impetus of the play but to see in *Richard II* something of the peripeteia that we might expect in a tragedy. York blames Richard for seizing Bolingbroke's inheritance and thus undermining the principle of succession on which his own kingship depends (2.1.199-200). This is both a political danger, setting a precedent for Richard's enemies, and an evocation of the play's poetic subtext - the body warring against itself, the body *alienating* itself. Perhaps Richard's most disastrous political move is his banishment of Bolingbroke and Mowbray. Again this action reveals a tragic peripeteia at work for in banishing these men Richard brings about his own alienation from England.

The play opens with the appeals of Bolingbroke and Mowbray against one another. The former accuses Mowbray of appropriating royal funds, of playing a part in every conspiracy for the past eighteen years and of the murder of Gloucester (1.1.88-103). In return, Mowbray charges the Duke with slander and treason (143-5). Neither will be satisfied with any justice but that achieved through trial-by-combat. In 1.3, words are about to become blows when the King interrupts and after a brief consultation with his council banishes Bolingbroke for ten years (later commuted to six) and condemns Mowbray to an endless exile. The reasoning behind this interruption is obscure in Hall and Holinshed. Both historians allude to the consideration of some weighty cause.³¹ In *A Mirror for Magistrates* (1559), Mowbray describes Richard as desirous 'to avoyde the sheddyny of our bloode, / with shame and

³¹ See Hall's *Union* and Holinshed's *Chronicles* in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 386 and 393 respectively.

death'.³² This hint is expanded upon by Froissart whose *Chronicles* emphasise the dangers of civil war accruing from any such armed encounter between the two men.³³ Shakespeare's play is perhaps closest to this source. His Richard justifies banishment:

For that our kingdom's earth should not be soiled
With that dear blood which it hath fosterèd,
And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect
Of civil wounds ploughed up with neighbours' swords. (1.3.124-7)

Richard proceeds to use the exiles as a foil to his own Englishness. Both Bolingbroke and Mowbray have defined the combat as an expression of national identity. Mowbray asserts that he would meet Bolingbroke 'were I tied to run afoot/ Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,/ Or any other ground inhabitable./ Wherever Englishman durst set his foot' (1.1.63-6). Bolingbroke repeats the formula, declaring that he will fight 'Or here or elsewhere, to the furthest verge/ That ever was surveyed by English eye' (93-4).³⁴ When Richard stops the combat, he prevents them from these displays of nationalism, and through banishment recasts both men as hostile and alien to England. For the first time, he attempts publicly to conceive of his kingdom and his duty towards it, though his image of a passive and effeminate realm is anathema to Gaunt's crusading nation.³⁵

³² *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 418, ll 141-2.

³³ *Froissart's Chronicles*, *ibid.*, 424-5. In this account, the King's counsellors also warn him that he is suspected of having orchestrated the conflict by persuading his favourite Mowbray to challenge the Earl of Derby. They warn of the contempt in which Mowbray is held and the implications for Richard if he wins.

³⁴ There is perhaps a suggestion here that England can no longer be represented by this chivalric myth or its rituals. Bolingbroke's remark 'Lo, as at English feasts, so I regret/ The daintiest last, to make the end most sweet' (1.3.67-8) may remind us of the allusion in *As You Like It* to 'the old Robin Hood of England' (1.1.111). The distance implied between the speaker and his imagined England serves in the comedy to remind us that Arden is really Ardennes in France. In *Richard II*, such nostalgia may hint at the ending of an era as Gaunt will at 2.1.

³⁵ In the 1597 Quarto but not the Folio Richard describes peace 'which in our cradle: Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep', reprinted in the *Oxford Complete Works* in Additional Passage A (4-5) at the end of the play.

Perhaps the most important reason for the King's interruption of the combat is revealed by the recurrent imagery of tongues being silenced. Bolingbroke's chief grievance against Mowbray is his part in Gloucester's murder:

Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries
Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth
To me for justice and rough chastisement. (1.1.104-6)

But in the next scene it will be suggested that Richard himself instigated the crime. Thus, Mowbray becomes the repository of secrets, not only about his part in the murder but concerning the King's blood-guilt. Mowbray's death in the trial-by-combat would be an efficient means of silencing him and might serve to expiate Richard's own crime. But if the combat would eliminate the threat posed by Norfolk at the expense of advancing the ambitious Bolingbroke,³⁶ banishment may be the ideal means to disarm both accuser and accused. The image of the tongue as a weapon, in particular a sword, is a conventional representation of slander but it is invoked with particular violence in the first few scenes.³⁷

Bolingbroke refuses to parley:

Ere my tongue
Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,
Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear
The slavish motive of recanting fear,
And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace
Where shame doth harbour, even in Mowbray's face. (1.1.190-5)

Richard employs the same figure when he threatens to make Gaunt's treasonous tongue not merely the cause but the means of his decapitation (2.1.123-4). Banishment prevents either

³⁶ In *The Firste Foure Bookes of the Civile Wars*, Samuel Daniel suggests that Richard interrupted the tournament to banish both men for fear of Bolingbroke's victory. In this account Mowbray is innocent but is sacrificed for the sake of the realm, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 438.

³⁷ See David Norbrook. "'A Liberal Tongue': Language and Rebellion in *Richard II*" in *Shakespeare's Universe: Renaissance Ideas and Conventions* ed. by John M. Mucciolo (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 37-51.

Bolingbroke or Mowbray from breathing slander against the King in English air. Indeed, Mowbray explicitly refers to the effect of banishment upon his speech, 'Within my mouth you have enjoiled my tongue' (160).

Nevertheless, in *The First Part of the Life and Raigne of King Henrie VIII* (1599), John Hayward condemns Richard's use of exile, specifically the oaths to keep the two men apart. He argues that oaths are insufficient to contain the exile's threat and that alone each is dangerous:

Therefore the later princes of this realme have with more safetie wholly abolished the use of abjuration and exile, and doe either by death extinguish the power, or by pardon alter the will of great offenders from entring into desperate and daungerous attempts, which men in miserie and disgrace have more vehemencie to begin, and more obstinacie to continue.³⁸

The practice of abjuration, originally meaning to swear an oath not to return to the kingdom, had been replaced with perpetual confinement under Henry VIII and abolished under James I.³⁹ Yet it remains a term in use to describe a subject's quitting of the realm on the penalty of fines, seizure of property, or death. In 1593, 'An Act to Retain the Queen's Majesty's Subjects in their due Obedience' called on persistent recusants to 'abjure this Realm of *England*' until a licence was given for their return.⁴⁰ The practice of statutory banishment continued for Catholics and certain vagabonds and gypsies (exile from the court remained at the monarch's pleasure) but banishment was not extended to treason or more serious crimes.

³⁸ *The First and Second Parts of John Hayward's The Life and Raigne of King Henrie VIII* ed. John J. Manning (London: Royal Historical Society, 1992), 103.

³⁹ See Tomlins' *Law-Dictionary*, vol. 1.

⁴⁰ See 34 Eliz. c.1.

The most obvious failure of Richard's policy of banishment is the creation of a political enemy. From the first, Bolingbroke responds to his exile with a veiled threat, that the sun which shines on Richard will also gild his banishment (1.3.139-41). This phrase recalls the Stoic attitude of many of Shakespeare's exiles and even the pastoral hope that there is a better world elsewhere.⁴¹ Yet Bolingbroke's optimism here also reveals how little disparity the exile perceives between himself and Richard. The image of the sun to denote kingship, transferred to Bolingbroke, suggests the possibility that he too will be a king. Gaunt's consolations meet with a similarly treasonous interpretation. In 26 lines of the 1597 Quarto (omitted in the Folio), Gaunt invokes the conventional Stoic aphorisms:

All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.
Teach thy necessity to reason thus:
There is no virtue like necessity. (C. 8-11)⁴²

Yet imagination is revealed to be a dangerously subversive faculty when the once staunchly loyal Gaunt continues,

Think not the King did banish thee,
But thou the King. (12-3)

Bolingbroke rejects imagination. He must translate this consoling image of Richard in exile from the realm of wishful thinking to action. This he does. Bolingbroke's 'seizure' of the kingdom literally results in Richard's exile from the throne, his physical segregation at Pomfret and his murder.

⁴¹ Holderness describes pastoral as the language of power in the play, here usurped by Bolingbroke. See 'Richard II' in *Shakespeare: The Play of History* by Graham Holderness, Nick Potter and John Turner (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1988), 20-40, 34-5.

⁴² On the consolation offered by imagination in the play, see Stanley Wells' 'The Lamentable Tale of *Richard II*', *Sh. St.* (Tokyo) 17 (1982), 1-23, 16-7.

Moreover, in Bolingbroke, Richard has created a symbol of his own trespasses. As in *King Lear*, when Gloucester keeps invoking the banishment of Kent to express the rottenness of Albion, so the banished Bolingbroke becomes the watchword for Richard's enemies and the man behind whom they all rally. The Duke's popularity among the commons is only enhanced by his exile. His departure from the realm is that of a hero and martyr and thus damaging to Richard's kingship, 'As 'twere to banish their affects with him' (1.4.29). For many nobles also, Richard's treatment of the Duke of Hereford is the final incentive to rebellion. The seizure of Bolingbroke's inheritance whilst he is exiled in France is unanimously deplored by Richard's peers. By this act, the King appears 'determined to perpetuate the banishment of Duke Henry'⁴³

Nevertheless, under the terms of the Fugitives Act of 1570, Elizabeth could legally possess herself of the property of Catholics who fled abroad and of any other absentees who remained there six months after the expiry of their licence to travel.⁴⁴ Sir Francis Englefield, a Catholic who fled to Spain when Elizabeth succeeded to the throne, spent long years negotiating for the return of his property which was seized and bestowed by the Queen upon Leicester.⁴⁵ In the reign of James I, Leicester's illegitimate son, Robert Dudley, fled the country with one of Queen Anne's maids of honour, joined a Catholic community and refused the command to return to England.⁴⁶ From exile in Italy he negotiated for the return of his estates for almost

⁴³ *The Life and Raigne of Henrie IIII*, 105-6.

⁴⁴ See 13 Eliz. c 3.

⁴⁵ *The Spanish Elizabethans*, 18, 21.

⁴⁶ See introduction.

forty years.⁴⁷ Furthermore, according to English chronicle history, exile at the time of Richard II might also include the forfeiture of goods and land as in the case of the banished Thomas Arundell.

Yet, in *Richard II* the seizure of Bolingbroke's inheritance is an unconscionable deed. Before Gaunt's death, there is no mention of his son forfeiting property upon exile.⁴⁸ Indeed, the King has granted Bolingbroke letters patent empowering lawyers to act on his behalf should he inherit any property during his absence (2.3.128-9). Richard has gone against his word and revoked those patents and his actions are deplored by all. The nobles go so far as to condemn his 'robbing of the banished Duke' (2.1.262).

Bolingbroke is endowed with considerable charisma by his sufferings as an exile and he exploits it to the full. His self-dramatisation as dispossessed nobleman has a powerful emotional effect on others. In their first meeting since his return to England, York chastises his nephew in rather comic terms: 'Why have those banished and forbidden legs/ Dared once to touch a dust of England's ground?' (2.3.89-90). But he makes a serious point about the implications of Bolingbroke's disobedience. To return from banishment without a pardon and to do so bearing arms is 'gross rebellion and detested treason' (108). Bolingbroke argues that he has no choice without recourse to law. He appeals to York as to a father:

Will you permit that I shall stand condemned
A wandering vagabond, my rights and royalties
Plucked from my arms perforce and given away

⁴⁷ *The Son of Leicester*, 129-30. Dudley was finally promised recompense by Charles I in May 1644.

⁴⁸ Only Mowbray goes into exile with the knowledge that his goods are forfeited by the crown. See Hall's *Union*, Holinshed's *Chronicles* and *A Mirror for Magistrates* in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 387, 393 and 418, ll 151-4.

To upstart unthrifths? (2.3.118-21)

In that image of the wandering vagabond, Bolingbroke tugs at the heartstrings of the Duke who sees his line degraded and his family shamed. There could hardly be a greater contrast between this socially outcast 'masterless man' and Gaunt's English knights. The injustice proves too much for York and he is eventually won over onto his nephew's side. Bolingbroke again invokes his unjust banishment, and his expulsion beyond the redress of law, to justify the murders of Bushy and Green. He first enumerates their crimes against the kingdom but becomes most vehement rehearsing their crimes against himself. Bolingbroke describes how he has

stooped my neck under your injuries,
And sighed my English breath in foreign clouds,
Eating the bitter bread of banishment,
Whilst you have fed upon my signories,
Disparked my parks and felled my forest woods,
From my own windows torn my household coat,
Razed out my imprese, leaving me no sign,
Save men's opinions and my living blood,
To show the world I am a gentleman. (3.1.19-27)

The attack on Bolingbroke's identity through banishment and the abuse of his status symbols at home becomes a model for the suffering of England itself under the ravaging appetite of Richard and his followers. Bolingbroke comes to redeem England from her state of 'broking pawn' and from her self-alienation. To do this, the exile and the king must exchange roles. Where Bolingbroke's estates have been stripped and all signs of his status lost, so he will inflict upon Richard the stripping of his identity and the razing of his name.

There is a more immediate context in which we might read Bolingbroke's self-presentation as an exile: the fall from grace of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. Few critics would now argue that *Richard II* was composed as propaganda for Essex's cause.⁴⁹ There is no evidence that Shakespeare or his printer were arrested or questioned about *Richard II* in print or performance.⁵⁰ Nor does the play's performance for the conspirators the night before the uprising imply that it was generally considered seditious. The Chamberlain's Men incurred no serious penalties from the Essex performance and played before the Queen on the eve of Essex's execution. From 1599-1601, the authorities and indeed the Queen herself, were more concerned with the seditious power of Hayward's *The First Parte of The Life and Raigne of King Henrie IIII* than with Shakespeare's play.⁵¹

In February 1599 when the history was dedicated to Essex it was anticipated that his mission to Ireland would be a great success, as Shakespeare also presumed in the Chorus to *Henry V* (5.0.30-4). Since Hayward's narrative involved a lengthy discourse on Irish policy, the dedication to Essex seemed appropriate: 'he being a martial man, and going into Ireland, and the book treating of Irish causes'.⁵² Essex's response to the dedication, which was recklessly

⁴⁹ One of the first critics to pursue this connection was Evelyn May Albright in her article, 'Shakespeare's *Richard II* and the Essex Conspiracy', *PMLA* 42 (1927), 686-720. This was challenged by Ray Heffner's 'Shakespeare, Hayward, and Essex', *PMLA* 45 (1930), 754-80.

⁵⁰ On the 'censorship' of the deposition scene, see Gurr's introduction, *King Richard II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 9-10, and Leeds Barroll 'A New History for Shakespeare and His Time', *Sh. Q.* 39 (1988), 441-64, 448-9.

⁵¹ The seditious reputation of Shakespeare's *Richard II* is partly based on two important contemporary allusions to a play of Richard II and Henry IV. Essex is reputed to be particularly fond of one such play, 'being so often present at the playing thereof, and with great applause giving countenance and lyking to the same' Elizabeth allegedly declared, 'I am Richard II, know ye not that?' in a conversation with William Lambarde. But it is possible that it was not Shakespeare's play at all which thus inspired Essex and Elizabeth but a dramatisation of Hayward's prose history. On these two points and on the general question of the seditiousness of Shakespeare's play see Leeds Barroll, 'A New History for Shakespeare and His Time'

⁵² This was the testimony of the book's printer, John Wolfe, when he was examined on 13 July 1600, *The First and Second Parts of John Hayward's The Life and Raigne of Henrie IIII*, 29.

fulsome in its praise of him, was delayed but when he did protest the dedication was removed and the book continued to sell. It fell foul of a Stationers' order of 1 June 1599 and the second edition was burnt but this was not a response to the book's 'treasonous' content. Only when Essex's Irish expedition had turned sour and he hastened back to England without permission did the book come under increasing scrutiny.⁵³

Reading Hayward's history at this time the parallels between Bolingbroke and Essex must have been striking. Both men return illegally to their countries, from a state they refer to as exile. Rebellion in Ireland has occasioned the absence of Bolingbroke's king whilst it is also the cause of the Earl's exile. In England, both men must face their sovereign's wrath for returning without permission and with a rebellious aspect. Evelyn Albright drew attention to the parallelism of their careers as exiles, quoting a letter written by Essex to Antonio Perez, dated 14 September 1596, in which his future appointment to Ireland is considered an exile to be resisted.⁵⁴ But there were other letters, uncited by Albright, in which Essex specifically cast himself as an exile in Ireland. On his setting out the Queen had reluctantly granted the Earl a licence to return at his own discretion. As the relationship between them deteriorated and the mission became an embarrassment, Elizabeth revoked this licence. It has been speculated that the Queen feared Essex would return with his Irish troops to march upon London. The mobilizations ordered at this time against the Spanish may also have been intended to protect the realm from Essex.⁵⁵ In a letter dated 30 August 1599, Essex begs to be allowed to return to England:

⁵³ On the history's publication and suppression see Manning's introduction, *ibid.*, 17-34.

⁵⁴ 'Shakespeare's *Richard II* and the Essex Conspiracy', 696.

⁵⁵ *Robert, Earl of Essex*, 218, 234.

From a mind delighting in sorrow; from spirits wasted with travail, care, and grief; from a heart torn in pieces with passion; from a man that hates himself and all things that keep him alive. what service can your Majesty reap? Since my services past deserve no more than banishment and proscription into the most cursed of all countries, with what expectation or to what end shall I live longer?⁵⁶

Essex signs himself the Queen's 'exiled servant'. We cannot expect Hayward's readers to

have had access to Essex's metaphors.⁵⁷ Yet the details of the Earl's subsequent disgrace would have been common knowledge. Not only did Essex commit treason by treading once more upon English soil without the Queen's permission, he burst in on Elizabeth in her private chamber whilst the Queen was in a state of undress.⁵⁸ Essex was charged with these and other acts of disobedience before a commission at York House and an audience of 200 people. The conclusion of the hearing was that he should be imprisoned at the Queen's pleasure. The condition of his eventual release was that he be banished forever from the court. Thus Essex's 'exile' in Ireland was punished by literal banishment from the court. Moreover, like the exile in a foreign country, Essex seemed thus condemned to a life of penury. He was already on the brink of bankruptcy and now excluded from the court upon which his fortunes

⁵⁶ See *Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex, in the Reigns of Elizabeth, James I, and Charles I 1540-1646* by W. B. Devereux (London: John Murray, 1853), 2 vols., vol. 2, 68. See also my introduction.

⁵⁷ The same applies to Shakespeare and his public, in this case his readers since *Richard II* was apparently no longer playing on the stage but had been printed once in 1597 and twice in 1598. Albright suggests rather desperately that although the letter to Perez postdates the composition of *Richard II* 'it may well have been that the Devereux family held strong opinions on Irish service before that time, in view of the experiences of Essex's father' Thus, she implies that Shakespeare could have predicted Essex's response to the Irish expedition, 'Shakespeare's *Richard II* and the Essex Conspiracy', 697.

⁵⁸ Jonathan Bate draws our attention to the representation of Essex as Actaeon in Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, performed at court in 1601. The Ovidian figure who catches a glimpse of Diana bathing and is cruelly punished for it becomes Essex bursting in upon Elizabeth in her chamber. See *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 162-3.

depended. When the Queen refused to renew his licence to the Farm of Sweet Wines, he became increasingly desperate and began to plot his rebellion.⁵⁹

Throughout 1599 this parallel between Bolingbroke and Essex was unintentionally promoted by Hayward's book and confirmed by the government's violent response to it. If *Richard II* was no longer performed in 1599 and the theatre-going public was thus prevented from making comparisons between Shakespeare's Bolingbroke and Essex,⁶⁰ the conspirators on the night before the rebellion were certainly free to do so. In 1601, Francis Bacon suggested that Gilly Meyricke, Essex's steward who arranged for the performance on that night, chose *Richard II*, 'so earnest hee was to satisfie his eyes with the sight of that tragedie which hee thought soone after his lord should bring from the stage to the state'.⁶¹ It has been argued that *Richard II*'s seditiousness lies, not in its impact on the public, but in the interpretation of the conspirators. Schoenbaum suggests that they chose this play about a successful deposition 'to buoy up their own spirits on the eve of the desperate adventure' rather than to rouse the multitude.⁶² I would suggest that Bolingbroke's self-dramatisation as an exile in Shakespeare's play would have inspired Essex's followers. The Earl had already deployed the plangent tones of the exile in his letters from Ireland and continued in such a vein from his pastoral seclusion, hoping to move the Queen to sympathy. Like Bolingbroke, he protested

⁵⁹ McCoy describes Essex's exclusion from the 1600 Accession Day tilt when he was to appear as the 'Unknown Knight'. We may posit another link between Essex and Bolingbroke here if the Earl was excluded for fear of the effect his appearance and victory would have upon the Londoners with whom he was generally popular. See *The Rites of Knighthood*, 99.

⁶⁰ Gurr suggests that the play was still popular on the evidence of three quartos published in two years, a reference to the play in Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia* in 1598, and the inclusion of six passages from it in an anthology called *England's Parnassus* (1600), *King Richard II*, 3.

⁶¹ Quoted by E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), 2 vols., vol. 2, 326.

⁶² S. Schoenbaum, 'Richard II and the Realities of Power' *Sh. S.* 28 (1975), 1-13. 7. See also 'A New History for Shakespeare and His Time', 453-4.

against his exile as shameful and unjust. He was threatened with bankruptcy, the Queen having reclaimed a major source of his income, just as Bolingbroke's inheritance is seized by Richard. It may be that Shakespeare's Bolingbroke confirmed some of the conspirators in their resolution to restore and revenge Elizabeth's 'exiled servant'.

By contrast the banishment of Mowbray in Shakespeare's play has few political implications in the world of Richard II or Elizabeth I.⁶³ This exile will not return to demand his rights or vengeance. When it is announced that Mowbray will be recalled to finally settle the question of who killed Gloucester (4.1.77-81), he is already dead. What then is Mowbray's part in the downfall of his king? I would suggest that the self-wounding nature of Richard's actions as perceived by Gaunt and York is most evident here. On what we might call a subliminal level within the text, Richard suffers the exile to which he has condemned Mowbray.

This may be highlighted by the fact that Mowbray conspicuously does not suffer the fate 'history' apparently assigned to him. Shakespeare has diverged from his sources in the description of Mowbray's exile and death. Hall and Holinshed refer to him arriving in Venice 'where he for thoughte and melancoly deceased'.⁶⁴ In *A Mirror for Magistrates*, a repentant Mowbray accepts exile as his deserved punishment. When he hears of Richard's deposition he is grief-stricken and dies.⁶⁵ However, in Shakespeare's play, Carlisle describes the Duke as a crusading hero who finally 'retired himself/ To Italy, and there at Venice gave/ His body to that pleasant country's earth' (4.1.87-9). Far from losing his identity, Mowbray has become the archetypal English crusader. The loss of language he laments is overcome through the

⁶³ Mowbray's son tries to suggest otherwise in *2 Henry IV*, 4.1.123-7. See the following chapter on *Henry IV*.

⁶⁴ *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 387, 394.

⁶⁵ *A Mirror for Magistrates*, *ibid.*, 418, 1203.

eloquence of fighting for his religion. Rather, Mowbray's anticipation of what exile will be like exactly prefigures *Richard's* experience.⁶⁶

The King endures two kinds of exile in Shakespeare's play: his absence in Ireland and then his deposition. There are a number of reasons why we might consider Richard's stay in Ireland a kind of exile. We have already seen Essex's response to his commission there and this may have been conventional. Spenser also referred to his service in Ireland as banishment in *Colin Clout's Come Home Again* (1591). The shepherd reflects on his 'lucklesse lot':

That banisht had my selfe, like wight forlore,
Into that waste, where I was quite forgot. (182-3)⁶⁷

Moreover, it is not just absence that Richard creates in England but vacancy. York chastises his nephew for taking advantage of 'the absent time' (2.3.79) as if the kingdom had fallen into a period of interregnum. With Richard in Ireland, Bolingbroke is able to return unimpeded and to muster troops but the Duke also exploits the symbolic and prophetic loss of the King. In 2.2 the Queen weeps for Richard's departure, finding more 'shapes of grief' in it than merely her lack of him. When no news is heard and when portents are seen predicting 'the death or fall of kings' (2.4.15), it is rumoured that he is dead. This diminution of Richard

⁶⁶ Various critics have described Richard's behaviour as leading to a kind of self-alienation. Donna B. Hamilton examines the King's position outside the law, 'The State of Law in *Richard II*', *Sh. Q.* 34 (1983), 5-17, whilst Terence Hawkes argues that Richard has violated the 'vivid island language' from the beginning. As an enemy to reciprocal communication, law and custom, he 'puts himself outside that society's boundary, and so loses his identity as king', *Shakespeare's Talking Animals: Language and Drama in Society* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), 86.

⁶⁷ *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition* ed. by Edwin Greenlaw, Charles Grosvenor Osgood, Frederick Morgan Padelford and Ray Heffner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1943), vol. 1, 153. On the advantages and disadvantages of the Englishman's self-perception as an exile in Ireland, see Andrew Hadfield, *Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

in the imagination of his subjects is concomitant with a kind of exile. It facilitates the King's deposition.

The parallel between deposition and exile is conventional. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century tracts frequently describe kings as cast out, thrust out or expelled.⁶⁸ Moreover, the position in which the King finds himself may be literally that of an exile. In *3 Henry VI* (1591), Margaret appeals to Louis of France for help thus:

Now, therefore, be it known to noble Louis
That Henry, sole possessor of my love,
Is of a king become a banished man,
And forced to live in Scotland a forlorn,
While proud ambitious Edward, Duke of York,
Usurps the regal title and the seat
Of England's true-anointed lawful King. (3.3.23-9)

Yet even if the subject is not literally banished, the deposed king who has fallen from the apex of Fortune's wheel to the very bottom is identified with the other men who occupy that space, the beggar, the outcast, the exile.⁶⁹ This movement from the polarity of king and exile to their identification is one of the defining features of the medieval *De casibus* tradition upon which the tragic narratives of *A Mirror for Magistrates*, including the fall of Richard II, were modelled.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ See Ponet on *Richard II* quoted above and Holinshed's *Chronicles, Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 3, 397.

⁶⁹ The reversal of fortune also works the other way. In *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1587), Carinus and his son Alphonsus were both banished from their country and from their royal inheritance. As Alphonsus successfully wins through battle what he should have inherited and much more, Carinus apostrophises, 'Oh friendly *Fortune*, now thou shewest thy power,/ In raising up my sonne from banisht state,/ Unto the top of thy most mightie wheele' (1913-5). See Robert Greene's *The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926).

⁷⁰ Moody E. Prior considers the influence of medieval tragedy upon *A Mirror for Magistrates* and *Richard II* in *The Drama of Power: Studies in Shakespeare's History Plays* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 156-82, 164-5.

Moreover, the psychological effects of banishment and deposition were perceived to be similar on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. Both states involve suffering shame, bewilderment, and an amorphousness to which death is preferable. Robert P. Merrix and Carole Levin have argued for a number of structural parallels between the deposition scenes of *Edward II* (1592) and *Richard II*. Both are prefaced by banishment: that of the Bishop of Coventry in Marlowe's play and of Mowbray and Bolingbroke in Shakespeare's.⁷¹ In fact,

Coventry is not banished but stripped of his possessions and titles and then imprisoned. Nevertheless the conclusions drawn by these critics underline the possible similarities in the experience of deposition and exile:

To be suddenly bereft of an identity one has had most of his life is to lose the comfortable borders of reality and be lost in the midst of a limitless landscape. Until or unless a new identity is acquired, the victim of deposition remains vulnerable to his wild emotions, a situation that leads to frenzied attempts to create new roles, or, failing in that, to yearnings for death, the "be-all and the end-all" to his anxiety.⁷²

Mowbray, Bolingbroke and Richard encompass a range of responses to exile including a crisis of identity, a casting about for different roles to play and the longing for death rather than amorphousness. Yet Shakespeare's play seems most concerned with the deposed/banished king's linguistic drama. At this point it is necessary to quote Mowbray's speech in full:

The language I have learnt these forty years,
My native English, now I must forgo,
And now my tongue's use is to me no more

⁷¹ Robert P. Merrix and Carole Levin 'Richard II and Edward II: The Structure of Deposition', *Sh. Yearbook* 1 (1990), 1-13. 2-3.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 5.

Than an unstringèd viol or a harp,
 Or like a cunning instrument cased up,
 Or, being open, put into his hands
 That knows no touch to tune the harmony.
 Within my mouth you have enjailed my tongue,⁷³
 Doubly portcullised with my teeth and lips,
 And dull unfeeling barren ignorance
 Is made my jailer to attend on me.
 I am too old to fawn upon a nurse,
 Too far in years to be a pupil now.
 What is thy sentence then but speechless death,
 Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?⁷⁴ (1.3.153-67)

This question of Mowbray losing his native speech and being forced to acquire a new language is a fascinating anachronism. The historical Mowbray would certainly have required other languages to serve at Richard's court, before Henry V's famous advocacy of the English tongue, as would the Elizabethan courtier.⁷⁵ I would suggest that as well as promoting the English tongue and English national identity through Mowbray's regret, Shakespeare is making a broader point about the disorientation incurred through banishment. In order to enumerate the implications of this speech, I want to place it alongside another historical and literary banishment.

⁷³ The Duke's reference to his 'enjailed' tongue may also remind us of Actaeon's fate in Bk 3 of the *Metamorphoses*. Transformed into a stag, Actaeon retains his tongue but can no longer utter recognisable human sounds with it. His inability to call off his own dogs literally results in 'speechless death'

⁷⁴ This reference to the loss of native breath may recall Thomas Nashe's depiction of exile in *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594). A banished English Earl warns Wilton of the misery of permanent isolation from one's native land: 'Believe me, no air, no bread, no fire, no water doth a man any good out of his own country [...] Let no man for any transitory pleasure sell away the inheritance he hath of breathing in the place where he was born', *The Unfortunate Traveller and Other Works* ed. by J. B. Steane (London: Penguin, 1985), 251-370, 346. The Earl also quotes Ovid's *Tristia* Bk III thus: '*Cum patriam amisit, tunc me periisse putato* which he translates as 'When I was banished, think I caught my bane', 346.

⁷⁵ Joseph Porter curiously interprets Mowbray's lament as an expression of horror at the need to learn French. There is, however, no reason why Mowbray should be anticipating an exile in France at this moment for neither Shakespeare nor any of his sources places him there. Porter chooses this reading to support his view of an opposition in the play between two linguistic worlds, the univocal, unilingual and absolutist sphere of Richard, and the ambiguous and many-tongued speech of Bolingbroke. See *The Drama of Speech Acts: Shakespeare's Lancastrian Tetralogy* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1979), 43-6.

To recreate himself in exile, the banished man is perhaps most in need of linguistic tools. The tragedy of this fate, of needing language to know oneself and being deprived of it, finds its *locus classicus* in the history and literature of Ovid. Relegated to the island of Tomis in AD 8, Ovid famously lamented the loss of his poetic vocation, of his name and his identity, in the verse epistles *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto*.⁷⁶ That Shakespeare had recourse to the *Tristia* in his composition of *Richard II* has been proposed by Jonathan Bate. In *Shakespeare and Ovid*, he writes,

The language of exile in the first act of *Richard II* seems to echo that of the *Tristia*, with its emphasis on ‘frozen winters’ spent in banishment and separation from the native tongue.⁷⁷

The purgatorial descriptions of Tomis in the *Tristia* are perhaps echoed in *Richard II*'s ‘To dwell in solemn shades of endless night’ (1.3.171). The ‘six frozen winters’ (204), ‘frosty Caucasus’ (258) and ‘December snow’ (261) are conditions frequently lamented by Ovid. This is as far as Bate takes the parallel. He does not expand on the common theme of separation from the native tongue. I would suggest that it is to Mowbray’s lament on the speechlessness of exile that we must look for further examples of an Ovidian influence. one that will inform not only Mowbray’s fears but Richard’s reality in exile.

Mowbray’s lament is partly dictated by aristocratic assumptions about language.⁷⁸ To the

⁷⁶ Shakespeare could have read at least the first three books of the *Tristia* in the translation of Thomas Churchyard (London, 1572), STC 18977a and b and 18978. Further editions by the same translator appeared in 1578 and 1580. It has been argued that he must have read at least the *Metamorphoses* in the Latin original also, see *Shakespeare and Ovid*, 7-9.

⁷⁷ *Shakespeare and Ovid*, 167.

⁷⁸ Nicholas Potter argues that Mowbray’s lament is based on the loss of ‘common speech’ and English community life that includes oyster-wenches and draymen. As such Mowbray represents the ‘civil society’ notably absent from Gaunt’s and Richard’s visions of England. This might explain why Mowbray only speaks English but it does not account for the courtly assumptions the Duke makes about language nor for his horror at being thrust into the ‘common air’ (1.3.150-1). See “‘Like to a tenement or pelting farm’: *Richard II* and the Idea of the Nation” in *Shakespeare in the New Europe* ed. by Michael Hattaway, Boika Sokolova and Derek Roper (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 130-47, 136, 139, 144.

courtier and knight, language is an ornament, an instrument of pleasure and self-advancement, and a status symbol. To be deprived of speech equates to a fall in status where language must be used for mere survival. Mowbray will be at the mercy of his social and intellectual inferiors personified by 'dull unfeeling barren ignorance'. In *A Mirror for Magistrates*, another Mowbray describes his disgust at the rough manners of the Germans, their 'churlysh' speech and their refusal to distinguish between a lackey and a lord.⁷⁹ Ovid is no more complimentary about the Getae. He considers them scarce worthy the name of men for their savagery, their lawlessness, but above all for their ignorance of Greek and Latin.⁸⁰ Like both Mowbrays, he finds himself disdained for the attributes of 'civilisation' and for his exile:

They hold intercourse in the tongue they share; I must make myself understood by gestures. Here it is I that am a barbarian, understood by nobody; the Getae laugh stupidly at Latin words, and in my presence they often talk maliciously about me in perfect security, perchance reproaching me with my exile.⁸¹

Similarly, where Shakespeare's Mowbray imagines the loss of the English tongue as an end to his music-making, in *Tristia* exile is represented as the end of the poet's career. The linguistic sterility of relegation is Ovid's chief misery: 'My talent has been crushed by my long endurance of woes: no part of my former vigour remains'.⁸² Yet the purpose of the verse epistles is to keep Ovid's identity alive.⁸³ Imagining a meeting of his fellow poets in Rome, he asks

⁷⁹ *The Mirror for Magistrates* ed. by Lily B. Campbell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), 107, ll 170-1.

⁸⁰ *Tristia and Ex Ponto* tr. by Arthur Leslie Wheeler (London: Heinemann, 1924), 239.

⁸¹ *Tristia*, 249. In *The Mirror for Magistrates*, Mowbray is despised as a traitor when the Germans somehow discover that he made a 'false complaynt agaynst my trusty frende', 108, l 181.

⁸² *Tristia*, 253.

⁸³ Ovid refers a number of times to the ingress of his poems into Rome where he cannot follow, *Tristia*, 3, 5, 7. See also Essex's letter dated 9 September 1600. 'Haste paper to that happy presence. whence only unhappy I am banished', *Lives and Letters*, vol. 2, 120.

And let someone of you, uttering Naso's name, pledge him in a bowl mingled
 with his own tears, and in thought of me, when he has gazed around upon all,
 let him say, "Where is Naso, who was but now a part of our company?" [...]

 And then I pray ye may compose under Apollo's favour: keep - for this is
 precious - my name among you.⁸⁴

Mowbray anticipates this loss of language and of self but it is Richard who shares the poet's
 fate:

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! (4.1.245-9)

The exiled Ovid's preoccupation with the loss of his vocation, of his name and of his identity
 are all reflected in Richard's trials from the moment he returns to England. Cardan reminds
 his readers that Ovid wrote more poetry in this state than ever before in an attempt to
 represent banishment as a state of poetic fecundity and personal advancement.⁸⁵ As anti-
 poets, Ovid and Shakespeare's Richard II both attempt to write themselves back into society.
 Like Ovid, Richard will attempt to retain his identity through poetry, that is, through self-
 substantiating and legitimising metaphors, and through telling stories about himself. When
 he fears that he has lost the ability to express anything but grief, that grief becomes a form
 of identity. For Richard also, elegy provides a role, a form of kingship.

⁸⁴ "How were the bookes of wise men made more often then in banishmente? *Ovidius Naso* being in exile
 wrote *De tristibus*, *De ponto*, *in Ibin*, *Triumphus Caesaris* and *De piscibus*. So as it seemeth that in
 this exile, he performed more then in those fifty and foure, which before hee had lived in *Rome*,"
De amferte, 85.

On his return from Ireland Richard speaks a different language.⁸⁶ He is fantastical, sentimental, morbid and above all loquacious. Richard's greeting of the earth when he lands in Wales resembles that of an exile after his enforced absence:

Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,
 Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs.
 As a long-parted mother with her child
 Plays fondly with her tears, and smiles in meeting,
 So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee my earth,
 And do thee favours with my royal hands. (3.2.6-11)

The sense that Richard has already been dispossessed before he learns of the loss of his army and before any confrontation with Bolingbroke is signalled by these possessive adjectives. The refrain of 'my kingdom', 'my hand', 'my earth', 'my royal hands', works to blur the distinctions between Richard's body and the kingdom, to assert his incorporation of England. The enemy, Bolingbroke, is imagined through synecdoche which stresses his identity as alien and exile, the 'treacherous feet' and 'usurping steps' (recalling York 2.3.16-7). Yet the positions of rightful king and forbidden exile are already in the process of reversal as Richard tries to deflect his own sense of alienation from the kingdom. In *3 Henry VI*, the deposed and exiled king utters a similar greeting to the earth:

From Scotland am I stolen, even of pure love,
 To greet mine own land with my wishful sight.
 No. Harry, Harry – 'tis no land of thine.
 Thy place is filled, thy sceptre wrung from thee,
 Thy balm washed off wherewith thou wast anointed. (3.1.13-7)

⁸⁶ Like Ovid who felt himself derided for his foreign tongue, Richard appeals 'Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords', 3.2.23. In the following scene, Northumberland reports to Bolingbroke that the King 'speaks fondly, like a frantic man', 3.3.184.

In contrast, Richard 'greet's' his earth to deny the possibility of deposition. He employs the pathetic fallacy to protect himself from Bolingbroke and to prove his legitimacy. Spiders, toads, nettles and stones will hinder the usurper's progress and even fight against him (3.2.12-26). That Richard does not believe in his divine right is suggested by his recourse to metaphor.⁸⁷ He tries to secure his kingship by association with the sun, an instrument of heavenly justice which reveals murders, treasons and other crimes. Bolingbroke will cower when he 'Shall see us rising in our throne, the east' (46). Next Richard turns to the symbols of kingship and tries to make certain of them through hyperbole, 'Not all the water in the rough rude sea/ Can wash the balm from an anointed king' (50-1). The breath of men cannot depose him (52-3). Here, Richard already anticipates the ceremony of decoronation, as experienced by Henry VI. Despite the King's enraptured description of the angels that will fight for him, he is quick to despair when Salisbury and then Scrope relate that he will have no men to fight with.

Much has been written on the relationship between the King's fall and the fall of language in the play.⁸⁸ Ronald R. Macdonald suggests that the language of divine right had always existed to cover up what was absent. The feudal society did not endow its king with divinity because his position was already inviolate and he superhuman, but because of the vulnerability of office and of man. In Macdonald's analogy, Richard is the Emperor whose nakedness is revealed by the young boy Bolingbroke. The usurpation permanently marks the 'essentially

⁸⁷ On Richard's loss of faith in his kingship see also Michael Manheim, *The Weak King Dilemma in the Shakespearean History Play* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1973), 62, and Alexander Leggatt, *Shakespeare's Political Drama: The History Plays and the Roman Plays* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 65.

⁸⁸ See for example James L. Calderwood, 'Richard II: Metadrama and the Fall of Speech' in *Shakespeare's History Plays: Richard II to Henry V* ed. by Graham Holderness (London: Macmillan Press, 1992), 121-35 and Anne Barton, 'Shakespeare and the Limits of Language' *Sh. S.* 24 (1971), 19-30, 22.

secular, fabricated character of the political order'.⁸⁹ I find this idea of absence hidden and disclosed particularly resonant in the play. Richard decks himself in so much divine imagery, like the props of ceremony, to atone for his absence whilst in Ireland, an absence that continues even after his return. His indulgence in metaphor is easily explained as an attempt to substantiate himself, to gorge himself with meaning. Nevertheless, Richard also creates images which express his loss of substance. At the news of the Welsh army's desertion, he turns pale. It is the blood of twenty thousand men leaving his face (3.2.72-5), leaving him 'pale and dead'. Similarly, Richard's conceit of Death within the crown expresses his vacancy. In 2.1, Gaunt referred to the crown containing the realm of England (100-3). Richard takes this microcosmic conceit and reworks it to his own diminution:

For within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court; and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks,
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh which walls about our life
Were brass impregnable; and humoured thus,
Comes at the last, and with a little pin
Bores through his castle wall; and farewell, king. (3.2.156-66)

Richard has become merely the strutting player in Death's court. The line 'Infusing him with self and vain conceit' is an inspired comment on the King's situation. The conceits through which he has been celebrated and puffed up, in particular the microcosmic image, have encouraged the belief he is greater than England. Rather than trying to sustain these metaphors, Richard himself applies the pin. His body is no longer England but a grave

⁸⁹ Ronald R. Macdonald, 'Uneasy Lies: Language and History in Shakespeare's Lancastrian Tetralogy', *Sh. Q.* 35 (1984), 22-39, 23-4. See also Calderwood on metaphor as the language of the 'unnamed' in 'Richard II: Metadrama and the Fall of Speech', 125-6.

(3.2.145-50). 'Model' no longer suggests the epitome or miniature of greatness but a covering of earth over his bones. After the deposition, the Queen in 5.1 offers a similar perspective on Richard:

Ah, thou the model where old Troy did stand!
 Thou map of honour, thou King Richard's tomb,
 And not King Richard! Thou most beauteous inn:
 Why should hard-favoured grief be lodged in thee,
 When triumph is become an alehouse guest? (5.1.11-5)⁹⁰

The idea of the King as a receptacle for grief is one he develops in the deposition scene. The simile of the crown as a well with two buckets, one rising and the other falling (4.1.172-9), suggests that tragedy endows Richard with substance. Bolingbroke as the bucket aloft is empty. Richard is the bucket 'unseen, and full of water', 'full of tears' (177, 178). He pursues this image of grief as substance when Bolingbroke accuses Richard of play-acting in his shattering of the mirror (282-3). The former king thanks him for his perception:

'Tis very true: my grief lies all within,
 And these external manner of laments
 Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
 That swells with silence in the tortured soul.
 There lies the substance. (285-9)

That he will become part of a tragic narrative told by others is some comfort (5.1.40-50).⁹¹ Yet although English chronicle history offers Richard numerous examples of kings who have been deposed and murdered (3.2.151-6), whilst he lives, Richard tries to imagine a new role for himself that does not depend on the possession of a crown.

⁹⁰ Clayton G. MacKenzie traces the imagery of encirclement in the play and contrasts the images of England bound in by the sea with Richard's present inconsequence. 'Richard's national body now harbors the decimation, spiritual nadir, and grief of a lost English Eden', 'Paradise and Paradise Lost in *Richard II*' *Sh. Q.* 37 (1986), 318-39, 332.

⁹¹ See Prior on the consolation of the *De casibus* tragedy rejected by Richard in *The Drama of Power*, 170, 174.

The deposed monarch vacillates between kingship and an array of other possible identities. As the priest or clerk might, Richard leads a chorus of 'God save the king' in the decoronation scene but cannot forget that this title may still apply to him (4.1.165-6). In 3.3, he abandons himself to the life of an almsman or palmer (146-53) but where Henry VI convincingly argues for the pleasures of such a life, Richard is merely following a convention and quickly forgets his hankering for what he later calls 'crushing penury' (5.5.34). His every action leads him back to his self-definition as a king. Paradoxically, by reversing the ceremony of coronation and thus undoing his sovereignty, Richard performs a task that only the monarch could accomplish. This makes him king and un-king, king and traitor. Richard becomes the uncreator of the medieval world:

For I have given here my soul's consent
 T'undeck the pompous body of a king,
 Made glory base and sovereignty a slave,
 Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant. (4.1.239-42)

Another possibility would be to redefine kingship as something immanent and divorced from external signification. In John Ford's play, *Perkin Warbeck* (1633), the protagonist reconciles himself to the loss of his worldly crown by redefining kingship as the possession of Katherine's heart: 'Even when I fell, I stood enthroned a monarch/ Of one chaste wife's troth pure and uncorrupted' (5.3.126-7).⁹² Richard is separated from his Queen when she is

⁹² *The Chronicle History of Perkin Warbeck* ed. by Peter Ure (London: Methuen, 1968). On the relationship between Shakespeare's play and Ford's see Alexander Leggatt 'A Double Reign: *Richard II* and *Perkin Warbeck*' in *Shakespeare and his Contemporaries: Essays in Comparison* ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 129-39. Anne Barton also explores the relationship between kingship and interiority in 'He that plays the king: *Perkin Warbeck* and the Stuart History Play' in *English Drama: Forms and Development; Essays in Honour of Muriel Clara Bradbrook* ed. by Marie Axton and Raymond Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 69-93.

banished to France but there is in any case no suggestion that she played a significant part in his life or selfhood. In 3 *Henry VI*, Henry declared,

My crown is in my heart. not on my head;
Not decked with diamonds and Indian stones.
Nor to be seen. My crown is called content –
A crown it is that seldom kings enjoy. (3.1.62-5)

Richard also attempts to relocate his crown thus. In 5.1, he suggests to his Queen that they both dedicate themselves to the religious life, in pursuit of a 'new world's crown' (5.1.24). Once again, this solution is not taken up.

In the final scene, Richard expresses his inability to be content with any rewriting of his plight. Once again he turns to metaphor to transform reality or rather to offer the pretence of transformation but again his efforts are self-revealing:

I have been studying how I may compare
This prison where I live unto the world;
And for because the world is populous,
And here is not a creature but myself,
I cannot do it. Yet I'll hammer it out.
My brain I'll prove the female to my soul,
My soul the father, and these two beget
A generation of still-breeding thoughts;
And these same thoughts people this little world
In humours like the people of this world.
For no thought is contented. (5.5.1-11)⁹³

Stanley Wells writes:

⁹³ This soliloquy strongly suggests the influence of Marlowe's *Edward II* (c. 1592) on Shakespeare's play. In Marlowe's work the soon to be deposed king reflects on his 'strange despairing thoughts./ Which thoughts are martyred with endless torments;/ And in this torment, comfort find I none'. *Edward the Second* ed. by Martin Wiggins and Robert Lindsey (London: A & C Black, 1997), 20.79-81. On the relationship between the two plays see Charles R. Forker's introduction to *Edward the Second* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 36-41.

Whether Richard's prison soliloquy raises him to the status of a tragic hero is open to debate. At least, I suggest, it shows a progression in him from lamentation to a more constructive form of thought; if we were to put it in poetic terms, we might say that he has developed from a lyrical to a metaphysical poet.⁹⁴

I find this suggestion particularly valuable in allowing us to perceive how Richard's poeticising falls short throughout the play. The idea of the king as poet has come under considerable fire in recent criticism.⁹⁵ Yet the distinction Wells makes between Richard as lyrical and metaphysical poet hints at the persuasive, at times political, and constructive intention that lies behind so much of Richard's poetry. According to Helen Gardner's definition,

Argument and persuasion, and the use of the conceit as their instrument, are the elements or body of a metaphysical poem. Its quintessence or soul is the vivid imagining of a moment of experience or of a situation out of which the need to argue, or persuade, or define arises.⁹⁶

Gardner has cited Richard's soliloquy as a 'metaphysical' failure because it is merely indulgence. Richard does not persuade.⁹⁷ Yet the effort is there in the verbs 'study' and 'hammer' and in the grim determination to force parallels. Richard turns to 'metaphysical' poetry in his despair. He needs to fashion a new existence for himself and then persuade himself into it but to do this he first needs to come to terms with his tragedy.

⁹⁴ Wells, 'The Lamentable Tale of *Richard II*', 22.

⁹⁵ Mark Van Doren offers perhaps the most extreme identification of Richard as poet in *Shakespeare* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1941), 91. Leonard Tennenhouse rejects this 'nineteenth-century' creation for a 'sixteenth-century monarch who destroyed the sign of his own legitimacy' He suggests that Bolingbroke is the superior artist, *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare's Genres* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986), 81.

⁹⁶ Helen Gardner, *The Metaphysical Poets* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), xxvi.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, xxv.

Richard's peopling of his prison cell is an attempt at consolation. His thoughts parade as various citizens: religious sophists, ambitious courtiers, Stoic beggars, each of whom has a perspective on his deposition/exile (5.5.11-30). The divine thoughts apply themselves to his fate, suggesting that it is easier for him to get into heaven now that he has been stripped of all worldly impediments. Yet the divines are typically divided amongst themselves and Richard cannot believe them. The ambitious thoughts do not accept that imprisonment will continue. Like Suffolk in *2 Henry VI*, they are too proud to accept such debasement and deflect Richard from resignation whilst giving him no reason to hope. Finally, the Stoic thoughts in the stocks, reflecting on their fate with equanimity, perhaps in anticipation of Kent, proffer Richard the most powerful form of panacea. Yet Richard finds no consolation in their advice. The image of the prison peopled becomes a reflection of Richard's own multiplicity but again he vacillates between these possibilities and kingship. So strong is his identification with the role that all other shapes seem insubstantial. Like his fantasy, Richard's selfhood tends to nothing.

In Lear's speech on prison, the King and his daughter take pleasure in their detachment from fate. Prison offers a view on a world that cares nothing for them and that they too have rejected in favour of their own society. Yet Richard's alienation from the world is endless and, it seems, endlessly lamentable. He can find no creative way of looking at it.⁹⁸ This sterility can be seen in the image of Richard's still-breeding thoughts, 'ever-and-never-breeding at once, always bearing and yet still born'.⁹⁹ Paradoxically, Richard has partly

⁹⁸ For further comparison of Richard and Lear's prison speeches see *The Dramatist and the Received Idea*, 183, and 'Richard II and the Idea of the Nation', 146.

⁹⁹ 'Richard II: Metadrama and the Fall of Speech', 124.

created this situation through his disastrous acts of banishment. Not only do they fail to resolve tensions in the kingdom but the banishments of Bolingbroke and Mowbray lead to his own exile from kingship.

It may be argued, however, that the deposition of Richard has been ritually redressive for England. Indeed, the rebels consider it as the redemption of kingship and of England. In particular, Bolingbroke will reforge the union between body natural and body politic, king and commonwealth, destroyed by Richard.¹⁰⁰ Yet Henry's action is also presented as a kind of schism or national self-loss. Most obviously, the Bishop of Carlisle prophesies the civil wars that will be known as the Wars of the Roses resulting from Richard's deposition. In this confusion, England will depart even further from the kingdom Gaunt eulogised on his deathbed. The crusading greatness of that England will become indiscriminating and heretical chaos:

The blood of English shall manure the ground,
And future ages groan for this foul act.
Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound.
Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny
Shall here inhabit, and this land be called
The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls. (4.1.128-35)

Moreover, Bolingbroke may be seen to have fatally destabilised kingship. Richard prophesies that Northumberland will be tempted to depose the usurper and to place another king on the throne now that the mystery of succession has been destroyed, now that men make kings (5.1.55-8). In *Nobody and Somebody* (1605), King Elidure is banished from the throne twice

¹⁰⁰ Leggatt argues that the succession is effectively broken by Richard's own violation of his kingship and his subsequent status as king and no king in *Shakespeare's Political Drama*, 69.

and crowned three times. England is imprisoned in a cycle where kings will continually depose one another because they can.¹⁰¹ David Bergeron applies the Bakhtinian idea of Carnival to *Richard II* with its cycle of Carnival and Lenten representatives driven from the town and then reinstated. In his analysis, Bolingbroke has deposed a mockery king to replace him with a more legitimate Lenten version.¹⁰² Yet the end of the play suggests that Bolingbroke too is a mock king and that he may not be able to control the repercussions of his actions through ritual, just as Richard could not.

At the beginning of *Richard II*, the King tried to cover up his involvement in a murder by banishing the instrument of it, Thomas Mowbray. This action is repeated at the end of the play with different players. Here, it is Richard who has been the victim with Exton as the murderer. Henry refers to the slander brought upon his kingship and the realm by this act and banishes Exton for it:

The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour,
But neither my good word nor princely favour.
With Cain go wander through the shades of night,
And never show thy head by day nor light. (5.6.41-4)

Moreover, this pronouncement directly echoes the earlier scene in which Mowbray was likened to Cain (1.1.104). The terms of Exton's banishment, his wandering through 'the shades of night', also echo those of Mowbray, condemned 'To dwell in solemn shades of endless night' (1.3.171). Henry's professed desire to redeem kingship is violently contradicted. Not only does he set a dangerous precedent in killing the king but he repeats

¹⁰¹ See *Nobody and Somebody: An Introduction and Critical Edition* ed. by David L. Hay (New York and London: Garland Pub., 1980). Hay discusses the play's approach to the theme of political disorder in his introduction, 1-49.

¹⁰² David M. Bergeron, 'Richard II and Carnival Politics', *Sh. Q.* 42 (1991), 33-43.

actions associated with Richard. Exton is only a knight and we should not perhaps expect vengeance from him to alienate Henry from his throne. Nevertheless, this final banishment remembers Richard's disastrous policy of alienation and its implications for the King himself.

Naomi Conn Liebler summarises the difficulty of distinguishing between the two kings:

For Richard's deposition and Henry's accession to have those redressive features, the ambiguity of Richard's alternately conservative and destructive behaviour would have to be resolved as preeminently negative, and the matching ambiguity of Henry's restructuring of the monarchy would have to appear as positive. But the play does not allow such an easy and comfortable resolution.¹⁰³

Rather, there are indications at the end of the play that Henry too could suffer deposition, banishment and murder.

¹⁰³ Naomi Conn Liebler, *Shakespeare's Festive Tragedy: The Ritual Foundations of Genre* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 85.

THE BANISHMENT OF FALSTAFF IN *HENRY IV* PARTS ONE AND TWO¹

In the previous chapter, we were concerned with banishment as an act of self-definition, re-forming both subject and object. In *Henry IV*, Parts One and Two, this creative use of banishment is more deliberate and more solipsistic with the emphasis upon the banisher. Falstaff becomes an essential part of Hal's reformation spectacle: his banishment is an expression of the Prince's transformation into Henry V. Hal gives no thought to Falstaff's alteration through exile and Shakespeare does not dramatise the knight's altered state, though the contingency of Hal's success upon Falstaff's 'fall' is reiterated in *Henry V*: as the King grows in stature Falstaff literally dwindles and dies. But why should Henry's success depend upon the exclusion of this particular knight? There are various historical and literary paradigms by which we may interpret Falstaff's banishment. Indeed, those that I present here are all invoked by the play itself. Yet Falstaff's identification with the Vice of the morality play, the heretic Oldcastle, the political rebel, and the poet exiled from *The Republic*, all serve to obfuscate the policy behind this particular banishment and to depersonalise the knight, even as they deepen our understanding of exile's contemporary associations. This obfuscation seems deliberate on Shakespeare's part, perhaps designed to create an uneasy sense that we do not know enough about Hal's actions and that we may too easily accept his authorised version of history. Falstaff's expulsion is an expression of the 'dangerous intimacy' that exists between himself and a King intent on controlling the ways in which he is known.

Critics often emphasise the symbolic function of Falstaff's exile. As he embodies corrupt

¹ All quotations are taken from the *Oxford Complete Works* so that in Part One the name Oldcastle is used. Outside quotations I have referred to the knight as Falstaff for the sake of simplicity.

kingship, the nation's moral sins, rebelliousness or false report, the old knight must be ritually cast off.² Whilst there is a recognised need for such general purgation,³ Falstaff is not banished from England or even from London but is commanded 'Not to come near our person by ten mile' (2.5.5.65).

Exclusion from the monarch's presence would have had various connotations for the Elizabethan and Jacobean courtier. In Francis Bacon's essay 'The Charge Touching Duels' (1614), he argues that such absence strips a man of honour and condemns him to a Cain-like isolation:

The fountain of honour is the King, and his aspect and the access to his person continueth honour in life, and to be banished from his presence is one of the greatest eclipses of honour that can be [...] I think there is no man that hath any good blood in him will commit an act that shall cast him into that darkness, that he may not behold his Sovereign's face.⁴

On a more practical level, banishment from the sovereign's presence, and from the court was damaging to one's reputation and future ambitions, and also to one's finances. In contrast, the sovereign's attributes may appear more rare and wonderful as they are gazed upon by the exile from afar. The wretchedness displayed by the banished courtier must also have been highly gratifying to the monarch. The power of the royal presence was thus confirmed.

² On the ritual sacrifice of Falstaff as a king-substitute see C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*, 206-7, and J. I. M. Stewart, *Character and Motive in Shakespeare: Some Recent Appraisals Examined* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1949), 138-9. On Falstaff as moral scapegoat see Franklin B. Newman who suggests that the banishment purges Hal, the Elizabethan and modern audiences of their 'inclination toward self-indulgence and surfeit', 'The Rejection of Falstaff and the Rigorous Charity of the King'. *Sh. St.* 2 (1966), 153-61, 157, and John Dover Wilson who argues that 'what is at stake in this morality play is the salvation of England itself', *The Fortunes of Falstaff* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943), 80. Richard Abrams' study 'Rumor's Reign in 2 Henry IV: The Scope of a Personification', *ELR* 16 (1986), 467-95, considers the implications of the banishment of Rumour signifying both rebelliousness and false history.

³ In Part Two, Henry IV and the Archbishop refer to England as diseased and requiring purgation, 3.1.37-9, 4.1.54-7.

⁴ See Francis Bacon, 304-13, 307. Vickers describes two opposing notions of honour behind this text, one individualistic and 'ego-based', the other a newer code according to which the sovereign and state held a monopoly over honour and violence, 681.

Nevertheless, one might also perceive an alteration, even a diminution, in the monarch as a result of this act of banishment. In July 1592, whilst Raleigh and Elizabeth Throckmorton were imprisoned in the Tower as punishment for their secret marriage. Raleigh wrote a letter to Sir Robert Cecil:

My heart was never broken till this day, that I hear the Queen goes away so far of [sic], - whom I have followed so many years with so great love and desire, in so many journeys, and am now left behind her, in a dark prison all alone [...] I that was wont to behold her riding like *Alexander*, hunting like *Diana*, walking like *Venus*, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph; sometime siting [sic] in the shade like a Goddess; sometime singing like an angell; sometime playing like *Orpheus*.⁵

Raleigh probably assumed that Cecil would read this passage to the Queen. His compliments are finely worded not only in their classical allusions but in the suggestion that the knight constructs these identities for the Queen. Raleigh appeals to the Queen's vanity as well as to her pity for his recall from banishment. Moreover, he cunningly reverses the traditional positions of banisher and banished. In the knight's presence, the Queen became Alexander or Diana through his perception of her. Removed from Raleigh's gaze. Elizabeth becomes less superlative, less mythically great.

Where Raleigh could only hint at a change, Shakespeare's Henry V suggests publicly that Falstaff's banishment symbolises and literalizes an alteration in himself:

Presume not that I am the thing I was,
For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,
That I have turned away my former self;
So will I those that kept me company.

⁵ *The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh Based on Contemporary Documents [...] Together with his Letters* ed. by Edward Edwards (London: Macmillan & Co., 1868), 2 vols., vol. 2, 51.

When thou dost hear I am as I have been,
 Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,
 The tutor and the feeder of my riots.
 Till then I banish thee, on pain of death,
 As I have done the rest of my misleaders,
 Not to come near our person by ten mile. (2.5.5.56-65)

The King suggests that this reformation is his own work. The banishment of Falstaff and the others is the dramatic embodiment of an intangible psychological action already past. Henry is careful to represent himself as in control. Falstaff can return to being his riotous tutor only if the King has resumed his former role as pupil. If the latter does suffer a relapse it will not have been effected by Falstaff. But the relationship is not as simple as Henry implies. The identification of the knight as Hal's 'misleader' may undermine our sense of the King's exigency. It implies that he has been transformed before under this influence. Moreover, in the context of Shakespearean banishment, this sentence is uniquely personal. Even in *King Lear*, where a father banishes his daughter, Cordelia's expulsion from the King's sight and from his flesh is represented as an act to protect the realm from barbarism. There is no explicit suggestion in *2 Henry IV* that the King is acting in the nation's interests. Rather, though Henry denies it, Falstaff's presence is a danger to his altered self.

One popular contemporary authority on the dangers of companionship was the morality play, in particular the psychomachia.⁶ Ancient metaphors of companionship with sin, for example to consort with the devil, became the literal means by which man was corrupted on stage. St. Paul admonished the Ephesians:

Let no man deceive you with vain words. For through such things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of unbelief. Be not therefore companions

⁶ Bernard Spivack defines this subgenre as the battle of vice and virtue for the soul of a man, characterised by its method of personification, and its intention being moral instruction. See *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: The History of a Metaphor in Relation to his Major Villains* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 60-95.

with them [...] Accept that which is pleasing to the Lord: and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: but rather rebuke them.⁷

If not Satan himself, then his instrument, the Vice, sought out the fellowship of the *humanum genus* to corrupt him through association. The young victim was frequently characterised by his desire for fellowship. In *Lusty Juventus* (1550), Youth declares his love of merry society. Hence, the Vice figure, Hypocrisy, disguises himself as Friendship, in order to ‘infect him with wicked company’ (l 498).⁸ Bernard Spivack writes of the Vice:

The heart of his role is an act of seduction, and the characteristic stratagem whereby the Vice achieves his purpose is a vivid stage metaphor for the sly insinuation of moral evil into the human breast.⁹

This possession is often explicit. In *Appius and Virginia* (1564), the Vice remains external but at one point Justice and Conscience are seen to emerge from Appius’s body.¹⁰ In *Enough is as Good as a Feast* by W. Wager (1560), Covetous learns that Worldly Man has been converted to religion through the companionship of Enough and Heavenly Man. The Vice is threatened with banishment unless he can reverse this process (ll 381-2). Hence, he advises Temerity, Precipitation and Inconsideration to infiltrate Worldly Man:

Thus if you three within him once be placed,
 You shall see that Enough of him shall soon be disgraced.
 Under the name of Policy to enter I do not doubt,
 And I being enter’d Enough shall be cast out,
 For where Covetous in any place doth remain,
 There Content with Enough cannot abide certain. (539-44)¹¹

⁷ Tyndale’s *New Testament* (1534) edited by David Daniell (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), chp. 5, 286. References to this text appeared in the morality *Lusty Juventus* (c. 1550) as well as Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* plays. See ‘Casting off the Old Man: History and St. Paul in *Henry IV*’ by D. J. Palmer, *Crit. Q.* 12 (1970), 267-83.

⁸ *Lusty Juventus* in *Four Tudor Interludes* ed. by J. A. B. Somerset (London: Athlone Press, 1974), 97-127, 99.

⁹ *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, 152.

¹⁰ *A Select Collection of Old English Plays*, vol. 4, 128.

¹¹ *The Longer Thou Livest and Enough is as Good as a Feast* by W. Wager ed. by R. Mark Benbow (London: Edward Arnold, 1963).

If fellowship is the means by which the Vice will infect his victim, banishment consolidates his victory. The youth must be made to expel his good counsellors. As Covetous suggests, there is fierce competition for the limited attentions and favours of the would-be corrupted. Yet banishment is also deployed at the end of the drama to punish the Vice and to secure the victim's future reformation. It is another ancient metaphor, this time for the exorcism of sin. The protagonist of *Youth* (1513-4) finally casts off his tutor, Riot. In *Magnificence* (1515), Despair and Mischief are banished by the avenging Virtues, whilst God's Visitation expels Pleasure from Lust in *The Trial of Treasure* (1567).¹² In both parts of *Henry IV* the relationship between Hal and Sir John is described in terms of the Prodigal and the Vice. As Henry IV, Hal warns the Prince/Falstaff:

Thou art violently carried away from grace. 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 [...] reverend Vice, that grey Iniquity, that father Ruffian, that Vanity in Years? [...] That villainous, abominable misleader of youth, Oldcastle; that old white-bearded Satan. (1.2.5.451-68)

Moreover, in pleading for his own virtues, Falstaff recognises that the fate of the Vice was often banishment.¹³ He envisages that Hal will have to choose between rival counsellors, proposing 'there is virtue in that Oldcastle./ Him keep with; the rest banish' (433-4). Hal responds by promising that the Vice will indeed be banished (486) and thus anticipating the

¹² Other banished vices include Gluttony and Riot in the remaining fragment of *Good Order* (1515), Orion and Backwinter in Thomas Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (1592) and Flattery in *The Three Estates* (1540, rev. c. 1552).

¹³ Spivack also suggests that Falstaff's banishment reinforces his identification with the Vice: 'For the banishment of Falstaff and his imprisonment in the Fleet, we have to reckon with the fact that exile, imprisonment, or hanging is the standard disposition of the vices (and the Vice) in moralities from about 1530 onward', *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, 462, n. 69.

dramatic structure he described in his soliloquy of 1.2.¹⁴

Nevertheless, Shakespeare's characters also subvert this formulaic relationship. In Part One, Falstaff rejects his designation as the Vice and presents himself as Good Counsell and even as the Prodigal.¹⁵ In *Part Two*, the Lord Chief Justice tells Falstaff that he has 'mised the youthful Prince' but Sir John insists that it is he who has been misled (2.1.2.145-6). When the Lord Chief Justice calls upon God to 'send the Prince a better companion', the knight remonstrates with: 'God send the companion a better prince! I cannot rid my hands of him' (199-202). Moreover, in Part One, Falstaff rejected the moral absolutes upon which the morality play was constructed. He argued for the tolerance of human fallibility: 'If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked ...' (2.5.475-8), and attested to the good-and-bad of his own character. Hal also recognises the artifice of the psychomachia and its irrelevance to 'real life' even as he employs this convention. The Prince has claimed never to be deceived by Falstaff but it suits him to represent himself as the disingenuous prodigal. This is not only part of his 'miraculous conversion', it also protects Hal from the more dangerous inferences of his father. Without knowing his son's overall plan, the King fears that Hal's appetites reveal him to be unworthy of the throne. Henry IV does not admit the connection between his

¹⁴ On the question of the plays' morality structure, see Alan C. Dessen, 'The Intemperate Knight and the Politic Prince: Late Morality Structure in *1 Henry IV*', *Sh. St.* 7 (1974), 147-71 and J. A. B. Somerset 'Falstaff, the Prince, and the Pattern of *2 Henry IV*', *Sh. S.* 30 (1977), 35-45. It has been suggested that the reason for the apparent amnesia of Part Two, in which Hal's first reformation seems to have been forgotten, can be explained by Shakespeare's recourse to the morality structure. See H. Edward Cain, 'Further Light on the Relation of *1* and *2 Henry IV*', *Sh. Q.* 3 (1952), 21-38, and Edgar T. Schell, 'Prince Hal's Second 'Reformation'', *Sh. Q.* 21 (1970), 11-6.

¹⁵ For an account of the development of this theme of the Prodigal from the morality play up to 1635 see 'Terence Improved: The Paradigm of the Prodigal Son in English Renaissance Comedy' by Ervin Beck, *Ren. D.* 6 (1973), 107-22.

own illegal usurpation of the throne and Hal's unfitness as heir apparent.¹⁶ He refers to some unknown curse which now works itself out through his son:

Tell me else,
 Could such inordinate and low desires,
 Such poor, such bare, such lewd, such mean attempts,
 Such barren pleasures, rude society,
 As thou art matched withal and grafted to,
 Accompany the greatness of thy blood,
 And hold their level with thy princely heart? (1.3.2.11-7)

In response, Hal prefers to play the prodigal, accepting that there may have been occasions 'wherein my youth/ Hath faulty wandered and irregular' (26-7). He would rather be thought weak-willed than essentially flawed, that is, having a real taste for small beer and flame-coloured taffeta.

Nevertheless, throughout both parts of *Henry IV* it is assumed that companionship rather than inherent viciousness has been the Prince's undoing. In Part One, Falstaff relates how 'an old lord of the Council' chastised him for his relationship with the Prince (1.2.83-7). In Part Two, the Lord Chief Justice confronts Falstaff with his crimes directly. Both plays are generally concerned with the charm of companionship. Falstaff attests to his infection by Poins:

I have forsworn his company hourly any time this two-and-twenty years, and yet I am bewitched with the rogue's company. If the rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him, I'll be hanged. It could not be else: I have drunk medicines. (1.2.2.16-20)¹⁷

¹⁶ Hugh Dickinson describes the rebels' failure to confront Henry IV with his guilt or to represent a providential revenge in 'The Reformation of Prince Hal', *Sh. Q.* 12 (1961), 33-46, 36-9. Catherine M. Shaw suggests that Henry's guilt is dealt with through the play's 'subliminal substructure' where it is displaced onto Hotspur and Falstaff, 'The Tragic Substructure of the *Henry IV* Plays', *Sh. S.* 38 (1985), 61-7.

¹⁷ Poins also beguiles Hal, persuading the Prince to undertake the Gads Hill exploit and serving as his confessor in both parts of *Henry IV*. This may derive from *The Famous Victories of Henry V* (1586) wherein it is Ned Poins who acts as Hal's chief companion and is promised the role of Lord Chief Justice. See D. B. Landt 'The Ancestry of Sir John Falstaff' *Sh. Q.* 17 (1966), 69-76, for the influence of *The Famous Victories*, particularly in terms of characterisation.

The latter play is more concerned with the vicious consequences of association. In the tavern scene, Falstaff warns against venereal disease caught by consorting with the likes of Doll (2.4.43-5). Mistress Quickly tries to keep swaggerers out of her house for the sake of her reputation (82-93). In 5.1, Falstaff ironically condemns Shallow's relationship with Davy:

It is certain that either wise bearing or ignorant carriage is caught as men take diseases, one of another; therefore let men take heed of their company. (67-70)

It is also in this play that the Lord Chief Justice refers to Hal being separated from Falstaff on the King's orders (1.2.203-4). But if both Vice figure and Prodigal are aware of their respective roles and deny that these are anything but play-acting (the morality-play condemnation of Falstaff is satirical), then what is the danger inherent in Falstaff's company? There seems to be little concern in either play for Hal's moral health but perhaps his spiritual condition is alluded to more darkly.

One interesting development in the morality play is its representation of the conflict between 'true' and 'false' religions rather than good and evil per se. The Vice figure, with his Satanic associations, is easily translated at this period into the embodiment of Roman Catholicism or an actual emissary of the Pope. The focus of attention shifts from the mind and soul of the individual to the corruption of a government and of a nation. John Bale's *King Johan* (1538. rev. c. 1560) opens with England appealing to the King for help:

K. Joh.: ... Say forth thy mynd now
 And show me how thou art thus becum a wedowe.

Eng.: Thes vyle popych swyne hath clene exyled my hosband.

K. Joh.: Who ys thy hosband, telme good gentyll Yngland.

Eng.: For soth, God hym selfe, the spowse of every sort
that seke hym in fayth to ther sowlys helth and comfort.

Sed.: He ys scant honest that so many wyfes wyll have.

K.Joh.: I saye hold yowr peace and stand asyde lyke a knave.
Ys God exylyd owt of this regyon? Tell me.

Eng.: Yea, that he is, ser, yt is the much more pete.¹⁸

The kingdom has been infiltrated by the servants of Popery in particular Sediton, but also False Dissimulation, Vain Superstition, Private Wealth and Usurped Power. The play is concerned with corruption at a political and national level. King Johan himself is never a target for conversion. Rather, the Vice figures associate with Nobility, Civil Order and the Clergy, alienating them from their King who is excommunicated, deposed and finally poisoned. Only after Johan's death does Verity enter to rescue the kingdom. Superstition and Usurped Power will be banished, Private Wealth expelled from the monasteries and Sediton and Dissimulation will be hanged (p141, 2441-52). Most importantly, the Pope himself will be banished. Verity says,

I charge yow, therfor, as God hath charged me,
To gyve to your kynge hys due supremacyte
And exyle the pope thys realme for evermore. (2358-60)¹⁹

In this play, the reformation is figured as an act of banishment.²⁰ The eradication of popery through the Pope's literal expulsion is the precondition for the reunion of England with her husband, God. The banished authority of the Pope also gives rise to the appearance of

¹⁸ *King Johan* ed. by Barry B. Adams (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1969), 73, 105-14. See also Sediton's reference to the exile of true faith, p.119, ll 1686-9.

¹⁹ Some lines later Civil Order urges Nobility and the Clergy, 'Of the Christen faythe playe now the true defendar,/ Exyle thys monster and ravenouse devourar', ll 2427-8.

²⁰ Shakespeare's use of banishment is in contrast wholly secular. The metaphor occurs once in *King John* but without specific allusion to the Pope and not at all in *Henry VIII*.

Imperial Majesty at the end of *King Johan*, figuring Henry VIII's new ecclesiastical authority.

To every Tudor monarch after the Reformation, banishment seemed an obvious response to the infectious powers of 'heretics'. But the interpretation of such exile was inevitably more complex and heterodox than that allowed for in John Bale's play. As we saw in the introduction, Bale himself was central to the rewriting of Protestant exile, arguing that banishment was one of the sufferings of God's elite. The Protestant exile followed in the footsteps of St John, a parallel Bale developed in his commentary on St John's *Apocalypse*, *The Image of Both Churches*, written during his own exile. Similarly, banishment is an important aspect of the hagiography of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. For many of his subjects a period of exile precedes martyrdom. One such figure is Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham. When Shakespeare chose to call his knight 'Oldcastle' in *1 Henry IV* he inherited two opposing traditions of interpretation: the heretic-outlaw and the Protestant martyr.²¹ By hinting at both perspectives in his creation of the 'debauched' knight, Shakespeare was bound to inspire both delight and horror in his audience.²² Within the play, the association also colours the character of Falstaff. His 'infection' of Hal and his banishment may both be related to the legend of Oldcastle, enriching the ambiguities of the play and further challenging the simple morality pattern.

Bale summarises the clergy's first accusations against the heresy of Oldcastle thus:

²¹ See Rudolph Fiehler's article 'How Oldcastle Became Falstaff', *MLQ* 16 (1955), 16-28.

²² *Sir John Oldcastle* (1599), a two-part play of which only part one remains, was written mainly to redeem the Lollard's reputation. The prologue denies Oldcastle's identification as a 'pampered glutton' and offers to represent him faithfully. It begs, 'Let fair truth be graced,/ Since forged invention former time defaced' (13-4), a reference to Shakespeare's plays. See *The Oldcastle Controversy: Sir John Oldcastle Part 1 and The Famous Victories of Henry V* ed. by Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1991).

That he was far otherwise in belief of the sacrament of the altar, of penance, of pilgrimage, of image-worshipping, and of the ecclesiastical power, than the holy church of Rome had taught many years afore.²³

At least the first three of these aberrations are expressed in the Puritan idiom of Shakespeare's Oldcastle/Falstaff. When Hal picks the knight's pockets he complains at the quantity of sack in comparison with bread (1.2.5.543-4). Alice-Lyle Scoufos suggests that this may be a reference to the Lollards' rejection of transubstantiation as anything other than symbolic of Christ's blood and flesh: 'The Falstaff-Oldcastle figure carries only a symbolic amount of bread'.²⁴ Secondly, Falstaff makes a number of references to penance and reformation, perhaps satirising Hal's promise in 1.2, but also referring to the Puritan preoccupation with salvation. The knight punningly suggests that Hal will lack grace when he is a king (1.1.2.16-8) and that the Prince has led him astray until he is become 'one of the wicked', a common Puritan expression. Falstaff's apathy about salvation is satiric on one level but it may also reflect the doctrine that good works would not alter one's position in regard to God and that only faith and grace could save one. Falstaff refers to this sticky doctrinal point when he pretends for a moment to drop his creed. The knight says of Poins, 'O, if men were to be saved by merit, what hole in hell were hot enough for him?' (107-8). Finally, there may be a reference to Oldcastle's condemnation of pilgrimage in Falstaff's relish at the prospect of robbing 'pilgrims going to Canterbury' (124-5).²⁵

The religious dispute between Oldcastle and Henry V may also find an echo in the relationship of Shakespeare's characters. According to various historical accounts, Henry V

²³ 'The Examination and Death of Lord Cobham' in *Select Works of Bishop Bale*, 16.

²⁴ Alice-Lyle Scoufos, *Shakespeare's Typological Satire: A Study of the Falstaff-Oldcastle Problem* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1979), 44-69, 78.

²⁵ See also references to Falstaff singing psalms in Part One 2.5.132-3 and Part Two 1.2.189-90. For a list of Falstaff's Biblical allusions see Naseeb Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's History Plays* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1989), 1 *Henry IV*, 136-52, 2 *Henry IV*, 153-72.

called Oldcastle before him and tried to make him recant his heretical views. In Shakespeare's play, Hal and his companions refer to the knight as damned. They jest that he has sold his soul to the Devil for a cup of Madeira and a cold capon's leg during Lent (1.1.2.113-5) but the association with the 'heresy' of Oldcastle is there to be made. Moreover, Falstaff's damnation is partly ensured by his refusal to recant, that is, to break the devil's word or to listen to Hal. The knight refuses to be corrupted by the Prince any longer: 'I'll be damned for never a king's son in Christendom' (96-7). Of course, outside Eastcheap, the infection is seen to work the other way around. Hal is in danger from Falstaff's insinuations. We might also give this a historical-religious gloss if we remember that Oldcastle was apparently credited with trying to convert Henry V at their last meeting.²⁶

Finally, Falstaff's banishment may have recalled the Oldcastle legend. Having escaped the Tower and been excommunicated but refusing to present himself for trial, Oldcastle remained hidden in Wales for several years and was officially named an outlaw. That 'banishment' was a recognised part of the legend is reflected in John Weever's *The Mirror of Martyrs* (1601). Here Cobham has left Elysium for a time to tell his story. He describes his outlawry in Wales:

Here *Cobham* lives, O do not say he lives,
 But dying lives, or living hourly dies;
 A living death exilement always gives,
 A banished man still on his death bed lies.
 Mine high estate is low, misfortune's grave,
 My power restrain'd is now a glorious slave. (1250-5)²⁷

Furthermore, the terms of Falstaff's exile may relate it to Elizabethan and Jacobean legislation against heresy. Shakespeare follows his sources in designating the exact distance

²⁶ *Shakespeare's Typological Satire*, 48.

²⁷ Extracts reprinted in *The Oldcastle Controversy*, 223-53.

that must be maintained between Falstaff and the King as ten miles.²⁸ Although the dramatist may offer this detail in the cause of historical accuracy, it may also have had some contemporary significance. In 1585, 'An Act against Jesuits, Seminary Priests, and other such like disobedient Persons' instituted various measures to protect England from the ingress of Catholics from seminaries at Douai, Rheims and Rome as well as from foreign universities. Principal among the demands of this legislation was the expulsion of Jesuits and seminary priests from the kingdom within forty days. If the offenders did not leave they would be charged with high treason and executed. Those who recanted and agreed to swear an oath of obedience to the Queen were still perceived as pernicious:

If any Person so submitting himself, as aforesaid, do at any Time within the Space of ten Years after such Submission made, come within ten Miles of such Place where her Majesty shall be, without especial Licence from her Majesty [...] then and from thenceforth such Person shall take no Benefit of his said Submission, but that the same Submission shall be void as if the same had never been.

Similarly, after the discovery of the Gunpowder plot, James I took steps to protect himself from contact with any Catholic. 'An Act to prevent and avoid Dangers which grow by Popish Recusants' (1605) warned that 'the Repair of such evil-affected Persons to the Court, or to the City of *London*. may be very dangerous to his Majesty's Person', a danger prevented if they were instead confined to their private houses in the country. The Act demands that all known recusants and those who have not been to church for three months, must now live and remain outside a ten-mile radius of London or else face a fine of one hundred pounds.

²⁸ Holinshed describes how the King 'banished them all from his presence [...] inhibiting them upon a great paine, not once to approche, lodge, or sojourn within ten miles of his court or presence' Hall concurs though he takes his measurement from Henry's 'courte or mansion', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 4, 280, 286. *The Famous Victories* is the nearest approximation to Shakespeare's terms where the King warns his followers 'not upon pain of death to approach my presence by ten mile's space' (9.46-7).

Falstaff's association with Oldcastle deepens our sense of the 'dangerous' personality that Shakespeare's king banishes from his presence. The hint that Oldcastle was not only charismatic enough to raise a rebellion but that in private conference he tried to convert Henry V might reinforce an audience's sense of Falstaff's persuasive charms. It also places them in a national context. The contemporary laws to keep heretics at a safe distance from the sovereign were not just concerned with the possibility of regicide. They also recognised the infectious power of the heretic's transgression and the danger accruing to the state from the king's religious conversion or moral turpitude. This issue is dramatically realised on the Elizabethan stage in a series of history plays focused on the 'weak king dilemma'.²⁹ One recurring aspect of this dilemma is the insinuation of a young and ambitious courtier into the affections of the king. This relationship poses a complex threat. The new counsellor may morally corrupt the king, pandering to his weaknesses and encouraging tyranny, or he may destroy the balance of power, in particular the delicate relationship between the king and his nobles. These circumstances, allied with the courtier's own aspirations, may thus undermine the stability of the realm and suggest rebellion. We have seen banishment as the traditional response to moral and religious infection in the morality play (and to a lesser extent in Elizabethan/ Jacobean law). In the history play of the late sixteenth century, developing out of hybrid morality forms like *King Johan* and *Magnificence*, banishment is also a means to deal with this dangerous relationship.

In *Woodstock*, the King's uncles/counsellors are banished, to be replaced by his new favourites. These 'flattering minions' (2.3.87) are credited with leading their monarch astray.

²⁹ Michael Manheim draws together the monarchs of *Woodstock*, *Edward II* and *Richard II* under the heading of 'Wanton Kings'. He suggests a number of parallels between them but particularly that all three deal with court favourites who are 'corrupt, youthful comelatelies whose political abuses are paralleled by varying degrees and forms of personal corruption'. See *The Weak King Dilemma*, 15-75, 16.

They indulge his taste for exorbitant dress and for holiday festivities. Green wants it declared treason for any man with a grey beard to come within forty feet of the court gates (2.2.173-5). Under the influence of these favourites Richard becomes tyrannical, imposing excessive taxation and draconian punishments. Woodstock is appalled by these innovations and by the fact of innovation itself. He is replaced by ignorant and socially inferior youth:

Shall England, that so long was governed
By grave experience, of white-headed age,
Be subject *now* to rash unskilful boys?
Then force the sun run backward to the east,
Lay Atlas' burden on a pygmy's back,
Appoint the sea his times to ebb and flow;
And that as easily may be done as this ... (2.2.146-52)

Rebellion must inevitably follow.

In *Edward II*, Marlowe dramatises the crisis resulting from a king's infatuation with one particular courtier. Piers Gaveston is perceived as a morally corrupting influence (2.5, 4.150). He indulges Edward's lascivious tastes with poetry, music and masques (1.1.50-70) and encourages him to waste the kingdom's treasure on such spectacles. Perhaps more distressing to the peers is the contempt for hierarchy that this infatuation breeds. Gaveston is referred to by the peers as 'base and obscure' (1.100), a slave (2.25), peasant (2.30) and groom (4.291), wholly unworthy the affections of a prince, let alone the highest honours of the realm.³⁰ The peers chafe at Gaveston's 'ambitious pride' (2.31) and at his disdain for their nobility, whilst the commons apparently detest him as a 'night-grown mushroom' (4.284). Moreover, excessive taxation and a catalogue of failures in foreign policy inspire rebellion on every side. Contempt for the King is blatant: 'Libels are cast against thee in the street./ Ballads and

³⁰ Mortimer Junior deplores the impoverishment of the nobility at 4.406-20.

rhymes made of thy overthrow' (6.174-5). Edward had prophesied that his love for Gaveston would ruin the kingdom.³¹ When the nobles demand the banishment of Edward's new favourites, Spencer and Baldock, and the King again refuses, this danger is made explicit. Mortimer Junior asks:

Then, Edward, thou wilt fight it to the last,
And rather bathe thy sword in subjects' blood
Than banish that pernicious company?

EDWARD: Ay, traitors all! Rather than thus be braved,
Make England's civil towns huge heaps of stones
And ploughs to go about our palace gates.

MORTIMER JUNIOR: A desperate and unnatural resolution. (12.27-33)

Banishment is the means by which the nobility has sought to protect the King from Gaveston's influence and his own dangerous susceptibility. The play opens with the favourite recalled from exile, only to be banished, recalled and once more expelled.³² But it has also expressed the peers' increasingly blatant ambition to make Edward their puppet.³³ Their demand that Spencer and Baldock be banished seems to have no moral foundation other than the truism that all courtiers are flatterers (11.161-9). This gratuitous action may in retrospect heighten the ambiguity surrounding Gaveston's exile. In an excellent chapter, 'The homoerotics of favoritism in tragedy', Mario Digangi describes how Mortimer has constructed a rhetoric of sodomy in order to justify the banishment and execution of his

³¹ See also 4.48-50, 11.135-42 and in particular Kent's testimony that the King's love for Gaveston will be 'the ruin of your realm and you', 6.205-8.

³² Catherine Belsey sees banishment in *Edward II* as a figure for the elusiveness of desire, the lover's absences giving his passion material form in 'Desire's Excess and the English Renaissance Theatre: *Edward II*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Othello*' in *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage* ed. by Susan Zimmerman (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), 84-102, 84.

³³ It should be noted that Edward turns this weapon against the nobles. He blackmails the peers into recalling Gaveston by expelling Isabella from the court, 4.209-12. In scene 6, he tries to banish Mortimer and Isabella, 88.

political enemy.³⁴ He notes the same specious arguments behind Bolingbroke's murder of the favourites, Bushy and Green, in *Richard II*. Like Gaveston, these two men stand accused of morally corrupting the King and of destroying the royal bed (3.1.11-5). In fact, any distraction from the procreation of an heir has served Bolingbroke's ambitions and it is he who will finally divorce the King and Queen in 5.3:

Just as in *Edward II* Mortimer destroys Gaveston by casting him as the parasitical favorite that he himself comes to resemble, so Bolingbroke condemns the favorites for the erotic and political divorce for which he is directly responsible.³⁵

In *Richard II* as in *Edward II*, we find the King's dependence upon favourites hinted at more than shown. There are suggestions that these men morally corrupt the King, that they offend the nobles through their 'baseness' and that they now wield too much power. However, the nobles' antipathy towards Richard is based on numerous offences, of which his favouritism is only one aspect. It is not until the *Henry IV* plays that Shakespeare foregrounds the political dangers of a future king's relationship with his favourite.

Falstaff may have encouraged the Prince to indulge in all kinds of supposedly immoral and illegal activities but it is the ideological infection that Hal takes which gives most cause for concern. It is a taste not so much for vice as for misrule, exemplified by Carnival. The seminal study of Sir John as Carnival scapegoat is that of C. L. Barber. He proposes a structure based on the triumphant reign (Part One) followed by the ritual trial and expulsion of Carnival (Part Two). Falstaff is a perfect embodiment of the pleasures of excess. It is not

³⁴ Digangi suggests how that sodomitical rhetoric might be applied to the peers' relationship with the King. These men have sought access to the king's body and power through socially disruptive and violent means. Mortimer has committed an act of rape and regicide in the murder he designs for Edward II. See *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama*, 100-33.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

just his addiction to sack, his gluttony or the suggestion of lechery that make him a symbol of the ‘happiness’ which the Archbishop wants to purge from the realm (2.4.1.64-6). Falstaff’s impulse to anarchy reflects the spirit of travesty, laughter and liberty at the heart of Carnival. His impulse to degrade is seen in his abuse of institutions of authority such as kingship, the Law, the Scriptures; in his rejection of chivalry and terms of ‘honour’; in his abuse of words through punning. In his reading of Rabelais, Mikhail Bakhtin describes the political subversiveness of Carnival thus:

All the symbols of the carnival idiom are filled with this pathos of change and renewal, with the sense of the gay relativity of prevailing truths and authorities. We find here a characteristic logic, the peculiar logic of the “inside out” (*à l’envers*), of the “turnabout”, of a continual shifting from top to bottom, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and uncrownings.³⁶

In this context, Falstaff’s grotesque body, stuffed with food, wine and even excrescence (1.2.5.454-6), imagined as both pregnant and decaying (2.4.2.20-2, 1.2.245-6), becomes a symbol of Carnival’s impulse to degrade.³⁷

Perhaps more importantly, his attitude towards kingship reveals exactly this sense of the ‘relativity’ of power and the Carnival rhythm of life constantly remaking itself.

Falstaff’s performance as Henry IV inevitably defines him as the lord of misrule or the mocking of Carnival rites.³⁸ Within his little realm of Eastcheap, the knight travesties kingship:

³⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* tr. by Hélène Iswolsky (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1984), 11.

³⁷ The two main analyses of the tradition with especial reference to Falstaff are Willard Farnham’s *The Shakespearean Grotesque: Its Genesis and Transformations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 47-96, and *Elizabethan Grotesque* by Neil Rhodes (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), 89-130.

³⁸ See Richard Levin, *The Multiple Plot in English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 142-3, and Sandra Billington, *Mock Kings in Medieval Society and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 151-5.

SIR JOHN: ... This chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown.

HAL: Thy state is taken for a joint-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown.
(1.2.5.381-5)

This scene is only the most manifest representation of a parallel Falstaff insists on between himself and Henry as mock-kings and as thieves.³⁹ Yet the idea that Falstaff might play the king also threatens lineal succession. The ideal of sovereignty is to pass on the Crown from one generation to another in an uninterrupted succession. In plebeian culture, as expressed by Carnival, time is seen not as a linear but as a cyclical movement. This attitude is explored by Michael D. Bristol who considers the festive *agon* between the figures of Carnival and Lent as 'an explicit structuring device in the two parts of *Henry IV*'⁴⁰ According to Barber, Falstaff is in part a political scapegoat. His expulsion serves to redeem kingship from the abuses it suffered under both Richard II and Henry IV and the kingdom achieves a kind of closure.⁴¹ Bristol comes to a different conclusion. In his account of the play, the ritual thrashing and expulsion of Carnival and Lent defy the absolutism that Henry IV and his son aspire to. Carnival will always return from banishment to drive out Lent.⁴² At the end of 2 *Henry IV*, the new king banishes Falstaff forever but he does not exorcise the Carnival spirit of the plays. Bristol observes,

³⁹ On the theme of counterfeit kingship see Douglas' confusion at the battle of Shrewsbury where, having killed a number of royal substitutes, he does not recognise Henry and asks 'What art thou/ That counterfeit'st the person of a king?' (1.5.4.26-7). See James Calderwood, *Metadrama in Shakespeare's Henriad: Richard II to Henry V* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 47-67, and James Winny, *The Player King: A Theme of Shakespeare's Histories* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968), 106-14. On the subject of Bolingbroke as a thief see Robert Hapgood, 'Falstaff's Vocation' *Sh. Q.* 16 (1965), 91-8, 94-5.

⁴⁰ *Carnival and Theater: Plebeian Culture and the Structure of Authority in Renaissance England* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), 204.

⁴¹ Barber describes Bolingbroke as a sceptic and opportunist who has brought chivalric and divine-right kingship into question. In contrast, Richard II has tried to use rituals magically and failed. Barber suggests that by expelling Falstaff, Henry V 'can free himself from the sins, the "bad luck", of Richard's reign and of his father's reign. to become a king in whom chivalry and a sense of divine ordination are restored', *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*, 207.

⁴² Just as Falstaff is identified with Carnival, so Hal has a number of Lenten attributes, 1.2.5.248-9.

The rhythm that requires Lenten civil policy to be ceremonially expelled in the mock-trial of Jack-a-Lent is a piece of unfinished cultural and political business in the celebratory imagery of the final scenes of each of the *Henry IV* plays.⁴³

Hence, we might see the play's structural affinities with and references to Carnival creating the uneasiness that Falstaff's exile often inspires, rather than serving to explain it away.

Hal casts off his plebeian associates and this Carnival ideology. He has no intention of basing a kingship on popular support to the detriment of his relations with the nobility and, as soon as his father is dead, begins assiduously to win the hearts of the alienated nobles and to sever his popular connections. Nevertheless, for some time it looks to others as though Hal has fallen prey to Falstaff's persuasion. The topsy-turviness and impermanence of Carnival thought is dreadful to Henry IV (2.3.1.44-52). Yet he perceives his son, Hal, to favour it. The King prophesies with horror an England based on such misrule:

Pluck down my officers, break my decrees;
For now a time is come to mock at form -
Harry the Fifth is crowned. Up, vanity!
Down, royal state! All you sage counsellors, hence!
And to the English court assemble now
From every region, apes of idleness! (2.4.3.246-51)

Hal's mingling with the populace and with the Carnival representative, Falstaff, is also seen to make him disloyal, unstable and potentially rebellious.⁴⁴ Henry refers to the Prince as his 'near'st and dearest enemy', one whom he expects shortly to take arms against him as a hired sword (1.3.2.122-8). But if, at the end of Part Two, Hal has cast off his own rebellious identity, the new king may still be threatened by the rebellious aspect of Falstaff.

⁴³ *Carnival and Theater*, 207.

⁴⁴ The Archbishop condemns the populace for fickleness in Part Two, 1.3.89-108.

The relationships between the rebel lords and Henry IV, and between Falstaff and Hal, are comparable in a number of ways.⁴⁵ Northumberland, Worcester and their allies supported Bolingbroke on his return from banishment and claim to have placed him on the throne (1.5.1.39-41, 46-66). Falstaff too prides himself on being a king-maker. Throughout *Henry IV* Parts One and Two, he refers to the education and the protection he has bestowed on Prince Hal.⁴⁶ Yet where in Part One, Falstaff's expressions of self-justification were generously ironic, in Part Two he has started to believe his own fantasies. His ambitions for the future (which in the first play centred on not being hanged or banished) are increasingly outrageous. He will give Shallow any office he desires. He will free Doll and the Hostess from jail: 'Blessed are they that have been my friends, and woe to my Lord Chief Justice' (5.3.136-7). At the beginning of Part One, Hotspur inveighs against 'this unthankful King,/ [...] this ingrate and cankered Bolingbroke' (1.3.134-5). He incites his father and uncle to rebellion, to

Revenge the jeering and disdained contempt
Of this proud King, who studies day and night
To answer all the debt he owes to you
Even with the bloody payment of your deaths. (181-4)

At the battle of Shrewsbury, Falstaff describes his victory over Hotspur with hurt pride, hinting at the ingratitude of Hal and Henry IV if they will not reward his valour (1.5.4.138-40, 145-7). Thereupon, Hal promises to uphold the lie for the knight's profit. In Part Two, the Lord Chief Justice at least, still believes that Falstaff did good service at Shrewsbury. Yet this play opens with Falstaff in disgruntled mood suggesting that Hal is almost out of his favour (1.2.27-8) and presuming at the end that Henry V will not be able to rule without him.

⁴⁵ See for example Anita Helmbold's comparison of Falstaff with Hotspur and with the Archbishop of York in 'King of the Revels or King of the Rebels?: Sir John Falstaff Revisited'. *The Upstart Crow* 16 (1996), 70-91.

⁴⁶ See for example, 2.2.4.323-7 and 4.2.113-21.

Banishment seems likely to inspire a rebellious defiance in Falstaff.

At this point it is important to recall that Oldcastle was not condemned as a heretic alone but as a rebel leader. During his exile he took part in an attempted coup which met at St Giles field on Twelfth Night, 1415. Having been forewarned, the King's troops were ready to intercede and a number of rebels were captured. When Oldcastle was finally brought to trial, he was accused of having attempted to depose and murder the King, the King's brothers, the prelates and other lords, intending to become regent himself. The topsy-turvy realm which he had apparently planned (though sounding rather like Henry VIII's reformation), involved the abolition of religious orders, the sending of monks out to work and the plundering and destruction of churches and cathedrals.⁴⁷ Falstaff's skirmishes with Hal may include some significant threats. In Part One, when the Prince refuses to go thieving, he declares 'By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king' (1.2.144-5). After Hal's apparent cowardice at Gadshill, he rebukes him:

If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You, Prince of Wales! (2.5.136-9)⁴⁸

Such remarks as these have led Gary Taylor to conjecture that when Shakespeare wrote Part One he was anticipating a sequel in which the knight would prove a traitor to Henry V. The necessity of changing the knight's name from Oldcastle to Falstaff may have altered his

⁴⁷ See James H. Wylie, *The Reign of Henry the Fifth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914-29), 3 vols., vol. 1, 263-4.

⁴⁸ On the association with the Vice see *I Henry IV* ed. by David Bevington (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 185, n.131. This may also be a reference to the Battle of Carnival and Lent. In *Jacke a Lente: His Beginning and Entertainment* (pub. 1630), John Taylor describes how on Palm Sunday, 'whole herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep, are driven into every town for no other purpose but to drive *Lent* out of the country', *The Old Book Collector's Miscellany* ed. by Charles Hindley (London: Reeves and Turner, 1872), 3 vols., vol. 2, 19.

character.⁴⁹ One problem with this argument seems to me to be a lack of motivation for rebellion in both parts of the play. The Oldcastle of Part One lacks the religious conviction that apparently drove his historical counterpart. The association of Falstaff with rebelliousness does not mean he will take up arms. Nevertheless, critics who have interpreted the banishment of Falstaff as a response to such a threat include William Empson who argues that he is 'dangerously strong, indeed almost a rebel leader'.⁵⁰ Similarly, Anita Helmbold considers Falstaff a political liability:

Civil disorder, no matter how appealing, cannot be condoned; Falstaff, no matter how lovable, is an enemy of the state. For reasons of state, Hal must thrust Falstaff away, a task that is as distasteful as it is essential.⁵¹

In this vein, Helmbold offers a striking reading of the meeting between Prince John and York in Part 2. She suggests that John's outrage at a royal favourite turned traitor (4.1.248-52) is far more appropriate to Falstaff than to the Archbishop who does not seem to have received any particular patronage from Henry IV. One particular speech by John has multiple applications to Hal's relationship with Falstaff:

That man that sits within a monarch's heart
And ripens in the sunshine of his favour,
Would he abuse the countenance of the King,
Alack, what mischiefs might he set abroad
In shadow of such greatness! (4.1.237-41)⁵²

This ties in with our earlier consideration of the danger posed by an ambitious courtier. Yet John's speech also reminds us of Hal's first soliloquy in which he claimed to abuse his own countenance:

⁴⁹ Gary Taylor, 'The Fortunes of Oldcastle', *Sh. S.* 38 (1985), 85-100, 95-6.

⁵⁰ See *Essays on Shakespeare* ed. by David B. Pirie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 29-78, 68.

⁵¹ 'King of the Revels', 88.

⁵² A similar parallel is drawn at 4.1.248-52.

Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
 Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
 To smother up his beauty from the world,
 That when he please again to be himself,
 Being wanted he may be more wondered at
 By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
 Of vapours that did seem to strangle him. (1.2.194-200)

Falstaff is a crucial part of this abuse. He plays the role of ‘base, contagious clouds’, ‘foul and ugly mists’ from whose obscurity Hal will emerge. Hal’s experience at Eastcheap is in itself such a contagion, but it is also a lesson in the abuse of countenance, that is, a lesson in theatre.

That the relationship between Hal and Falstaff is partly based on a shared taste for theatricals is repeatedly shown in Part One 2.5. Before the knight’s entrance, Hal has been making a mockery of his absent rival, Hotspur, and wishes to play a scene with Falstaff as Percy’s wife (109-11). This proposal is forgotten in the revelation of the Gads Hill caper and the Prince’s eagerness to see how Falstaff will acquit himself: ‘What trick, what device, what starting-hole canst thou now find out to hide thee from this open and apparent shame?’ (266-8). After his brilliant improvisation in defence, the knight tries to distract his audience from Gads Hill by proposing a ‘play extempore’ (282-3) but the others prefer to hear more of Falstaff’s playing. Harvey and Russell describe how the knight instructed them to hack their swords and then to make their noses bleed and to smear the blood on their garments to counterfeit a furious battle (308-16). Nevertheless, a few lines later, Hal countenances a similar adoption of props and make-up to enact an interview with his father.

From the beginning, Hal has been playing a deliberately debased version of himself. Yet he

believes that he can control the interpretation of this playing. Without knowing the circumstances, Henry IV suggests otherwise, using the same metaphor of sun and clouds that Hal used in his soliloquy. The King describes his own ecstatic reception by the populace in comparison with that of Richard II. The latter was

Heard, not regarded, seen but with such eyes
As, sick and blunted with community,
Afford no extraordinary gaze
Such as is bent on sun-like majesty
When it shines seldom in admiring eyes,
But rather drowsed and hung their eyelids down,
Slept in his face, and rendered such aspect
As cloudy men use to their adversaries,
Being with his presence gluttred, gorged, and full. (1.3.3.76-84)

Crucially, it is the clouds created by the spectators that ruin the performance and equally it is in their gaze that the 'wonder' of the king inheres. This was a point perhaps unconsciously conceded by Edward Forset in *A Comparative Discourse of the Bodies Natural and Politique* (1606):

so when the person of a Prince is looked upon (wheron we doe seldome gaze enough) our inward cogitations filled with a reverence of the regall maiestie feared in that flesh (otherwise as infirme and full of imperfections as other is) ought to surmount all sensuall conceits (scant thinking of any humane nature) but making an infinit difference betweene that body, so (as it were) glorified with the presence, representation & in dwelling of that supreme or exalted eminencie, and other ordinarie persons, which yet doeth consist materially of the same substance, and perhaps endued by nature with equall graces.⁵³

Forset claims at first an inherent connection between the king's appearance and his divine substance. To look upon the king is to think upon his 'regall maiestie'. Indeed, he implies in parenthesis that one's apprehension of majesty would be increased if one had greater freedom to look. Yet in *1 Henry IV* the King warns that to become the object of the common gaze is to

⁵³ Forset, *A Comparative Discourse* (London 1606), STC 11188, 32-3.

be increasingly stripped of power (1.3.2.39-91). Forset does not recognise the dangers of familiarity. Yet he undermines his own assumption of the king's inherent charisma. The spectator *ought* to ignore the 'sensuall' body of the king and its possible imperfections. It is up to the spectator to correct his gaze with the ideological spectacles of divine kingship. But again the parenthesis 'as it were' undermines the statement that the body is 'glorified' with the incarnation of sovereignty. Forset teaches his readers how to look at a king (though at the same time allowing for subversive readings).

This lesson in gazing on majesty is one that Falstaff has never learnt. It is here perhaps that we come closest to understanding the implications of that intimacy between Prince and Eastcheap player that Hal would destroy through banishment.⁵⁴ Falstaff threatens to become the heckler at the reformation spectacle who will show how the puppets dally behind the scenes. When he looks on the King he sees his Eastcheap companion, the one with a taste for small beer and an intimate acquaintance with Poins' wardrobe, the one with a taste for theatricals. Hal knows this. In a discussion with Poins on Henry IV's illness, he recognised that to grieve would inevitably be interpreted as hypocrisy. Poins agreed, 'because you have been so lewd, and so much engrafted to Falstaff' (2.2.2.54-5). At his coronation, Hal has put on the robes, the crown and the symbols of rule. His body is now possessed by majesty and invested with the body politic. This transformation is threatened by Falstaff's refusal to recognise it. He greets Henry V as 'King Hal', signifying his rejection of Hal's alteration. Nor does he perceive the need to change the manner or the tone in which he greets him.

There is no respectful or ceremonious distance. Moreover, Falstaff assumes that the words of

⁵⁴ David Scott Kastan explores the creation of sovereign power through theatricality in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and in particular the risks of making that power contingent upon the spectators' assent. "'Proud Majesty Made a Subject': Shakespeare and the Spectacle of Rule', *Sh. Q.* 37 (1986), 459-75, 466.

condemnation are merely the player king's lines. He tells Shallow that banishment is a 'colour' and at night everything will be as it was (5.4.75-9, 83-4).

Moreover, Falstaff threatens to proclaim this 'false' interpretation of Hal to the world.

The old knight is an incorrigible liar and slanderer who abuses the countenances of friend and foe. He tells the Lord Chief Justice that Mistress Quickly proclaims him the father of her child (2.2.1.106-7) and warns Hal that Poinz swears the Prince will marry his sister (2.2.2.118-20). In particular, Falstaff consistently misrepresents and degrades the Prince, casting aspersions on his identity as heir apparent.⁵⁵ Even when Sir John seems bent on flattering Hal, he casts further doubt on his legitimacy:

By the Lord, I knew ye as well as he that made ye. Why, hear you, my masters. Was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware instinct. The lion will not touch the true prince - instinct is a great matter. I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life - I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. (1.2.5.270-8).

Those critics who argue that Falstaff knew it was Hal all along emasculate the threat of this speech.⁵⁶ The fact that he did not know renders this belief in the power of instinct potentially treasonous. Falstaff denies what Forset could not entirely believe, that majesty is inherent in the flesh.

In Part One, Hal has enjoyed the knight's lies as an exuberance of wit, a kind of poetic genius in which he has tried to match him. But in Part Two, Rumour enters the stage and Falstaff's

⁵⁵ See 2.2.4.239-40, 286-7.

⁵⁶ See for example Dover Wilson who opposes the arguments of Morgann and Bradley concerning Falstaff's cowardice but agrees that the knight must recognise Hal and Poinz at Gadshill, *The Fortunes of Falstaff*, 43-54.

conceits become increasingly seditious. Like Rumour, the knight spreads lies and half-truths throughout the kingdom. Where the personification appears 'painted with tongues', the old knight declares he has a bellyful of tongues (4.2.18-9). After his father's death, Hal has promised 'To frustrate prophecies, and to raze out/ Rotten opinion, who hath writ me down/ After my seeming' (2.5.2.126-8). The personified Opinion of whom Hal speaks could easily be identified with Rumour and thus with Falstaff. David Bergeron writes of the knight:

His rejection, expulsion, and imprisonment become the overthrow of "Rumour", or false history, so that a "correct" historical discourse can be inscribed in national life.⁵⁷

Falstaff's 'poetry' promises to immortalise his 'incorrect' perception of Henry V's past. Before Gads Hill he threatened, 'An I have not ballads made on you all and sung to filthy tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison' (2.2.44-6). In *2 Henry IV* he proposes to have his fictitious defeat of Coleville recorded in another ballad to the detriment of Prince John (4.2.49-53).

Hence, one final context in which we might view the banishment of Falstaff is that of the poet and player who misrepresents authority and is silenced for it. The most obvious source for such a banishment is Plato's *Republic*. It may be a cliché that Plato banished the artist, in the twentieth century as it was in the sixteenth and seventeenth. Yet this cliché was perceived as deeply relevant to the reception of theatre and poetry in early modern England.⁵⁸ It may also explain the condemnation of Hal and Falstaff's relationship in *Henry IV*. We have already seen how frequent are the assumptions of the knight's power to corrupt. The theatricality of Falstaff's company may be a part of his vice.

⁵⁷ David M. Bergeron, 'Shakespeare Makes History: *2 Henry IV*', *SEL* 31 (1991), 231-45, 233.

⁵⁸ See introduction on the influence of Plato's *Republic* on the anti-theatrical debate.

John Northbrooke's *A Treatise against Dicing, Dancing, Plays and Interludes* (1577)

inveighs at length against the corruption taken from the stage. He refers to,

those filthie and unhoneſt geſtures and movings of enterlude players, what other thing doe they teache than wanton pleaſure and ſtirring of fleſhly luſters, unlawfull appetites and deſires, with their bawdie and filthie ſayings and counterfeyt doings?⁵⁹

Philip Stubbes in his *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) offers an exhaustive list of the vices to be caught by attending a play including rebellion and treason as well as lechery, gluttony and idleness.⁶⁰ Whilst these authors primarily refer to the infection taken from the subject matter of plays, and from the experience of attending the theatre, Stephen Gosson is one who refers to the corruption of a poetic education. He likens poetry to the Circean magic that transformed men into beasts and views with horror poetry's corruption of a prince:

are not they accursed thinke you by the mouth of God, which having the government of young Princes, with Poetical fantasies draw them to the ſchooles of their owne abuſes, bewitching the graine in the greene blade, that was ſowed for the ſuſtenance of many thouſands, & poiſoning the ſpring with their amorous layes, whence the whole common wealth ſhould fetch water?⁶¹

Of greater concern perhaps than the moral influence, is the threat poetry and drama seemed to pose to social identity. The audience at a theatre has been literally misled. Its members should be at work, at church or, if women, at home. Moreover, the profession of player requires man's abandonment of his proper vocation. Actors are profitless members of the commonwealth and, like all masterless men at this period, were readily perceived as lawless

⁵⁹ Northbrooke's *Treatise* (London: The Shakespeare Society, 1843), 92.

⁶⁰ *A Critical Edition of Philip Stubbes' Anatomie of Abuses* an as yet unpublished PhD by Margaret Jane Kidnie, University of Birmingham, 1996, 238-41.

⁶¹ *The Schoole of Abuse in Markets of Bawdrie*, 81.

and subversive. Under the law of 1572, referred to by both Northbrooke and Stubbes,⁶² players were included among the rogues and vagabonds who, without the protection of a patented company, were to be whipped and sent back to their parishes with the other poor. Yet on stage, such men could put on the robes of the clergy, of the nobility, even of a king, and transcend their lowly social status. In the *Republic*, Socrates juxtaposes Poetry and Justice, the latter defined as 'keeping what is properly one's own and doing one's own job' (205). This principle is breached by the audience's imaginative identification with characters of poetry or drama beyond their social rank and by the actors who put on different identities as a profession. Socrates warns that if the three classes (guardians, auxiliaries, and businessmen/artisans) tried to usurp one another's civic identities, the consequences would be 'the greatest harm to our state [...] the worst of evils' (206). In *Plays Confuted in Five Actions* (1582), Gosson concludes:

So in a commonweale, if privat men be suffered to forsake their calling because they desire to walke gentlemanlike in sattine & velvet, with a buckler at their heeles, proportion is so broken, unitie dissolved, harmony confounded, that the whole body must be dismembred and the prince or the heade can not chuse but sicken.⁶³

Yet perhaps the aspect of the anti-theatrical debate which most closely touches upon Falstaff and his relationship with the Prince is the poet/player's pernicious misrepresentation of authority. Socrates condemns a poetry that is invariably composed of 'lies' about authority and Justice. He singles out a number of passages from Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad* which should not be allowed in the ideal state for their representations of heroes and gods. Socrates contends that it is pernicious to offer a false image of the gods, that is, as wicked and unjust,

⁶² Northbrooke's *Treatise*, 98, and Stubbes' *Anatomie*, 242.

⁶³ *Markets of Bawdrie*, 138-200, 196. This possibility of upward mobility was realised in the case of a few players, most notably Edward Alleyn and Shakespeare himself. See Andrew Gurr on the player's status in *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642* 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 80-4.

capable of deception or metamorphosis:

if a state is to be run on the right lines, every possible step must be taken to prevent anyone, young or old, either saying or being told, whether in poetry or prose, that god, being good, can cause harm or evil to any man. To say so would be sinful, inexpedient, and inconsistent. (135)

Similarly, Socrates will not allow that heroes are ever subject to laughter, weeping, despair, or fear of death as poets have claimed. Even if it were true, it is dangerous to have such stories circulating, teaching the young that they need not be ashamed of sins and weaknesses that gods and heroes apparently possess. The question of expediency is crucial. Socrates is not opposed to the guardians telling lies to the people in the interests of the polis but only they must be able to use fiction in this way (131). His offensive against poetry aims to reinforce the status quo by ensuring that the righteousness of the gods and of the guardians is unquestioned.

The perception of the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage as detrimental to civil order and to government was also founded on its debasement of authority. Both Northbrooke and Stubbes deplore the mixture of 'divinity and 'scurrilitie' on the stage in the performance of religious narratives but secular authority was equally undermined by representation.⁶⁴ Stubbes refers to players as 'Mockers and flouters of his Maiesty' (236). That such degradation extended down the hierarchical ladder to the magistrate is the complaint of one Lupus in Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*:

they will rob us, us that are magistrates, of our respect. bring us upon their stages, and make us ridiculous to the plebeians. They will play you or me, the wisest men they can come by still. Me! Only to bring us in contempt with the

⁶⁴ *Treatise*, 92. *Anatomie*, 235-6.

vulgar, and make us cheap. (1.2.39-44)⁶⁵

From the depiction of kings to that of poets like Jonson himself,⁶⁶ the stage was seen as a forum for seditious and degrading ‘misrepresentation’.

In defence of poetry and drama, the repudiation of this charge was central. In his seminal apology, Sir Philip Sidney distinguished between the abuse of poetry when used to defame gods, secular authority, or the principle of Justice, and its proper use. He sought to rescue poetry from the ignominy of Platonic banishment by arguing that Plato himself sought

to drive out those wrong opinions of the Deity (whereof now, without further law, Christianity hath taken away all the hurtful belief) perchance (as he thought) nourished by the then esteemed poets.⁶⁷

In *An Apology for Actors* (1612), Thomas Heywood makes a similar distinction to that proposed by Sidney. He argues that plays, ‘being possess of their true use’, are intended

to teach their subjects obedience to their king, to shew the people the untimely ends of such as have moved tumults, commotions, and insurrections, to present them with the flourishing estate of such as live in obedience, exhorting them to allegiance, dehorting them from all trayterous and felonious stratagems.⁶⁸

Socrates had suggested three times that the player and poet should be banished until they

⁶⁵ *Poetaster* ed. by Tom Cain (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995). See also an account regarding the Merchant Taylors’ School which prohibited playing because its young men were brought ‘to such an impudent familiarity with their betters that often times greite contempte of maisters, parents, and magistrats foloweth thereof’ (1574) in *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 2, 75.

⁶⁶ See for example *The Stage-Quarrel between Ben Jonson and the so-called Poetasters* by Roscoe Addison Small (1899) ed. by G. L. Kittredge (New York: AMS Press, 1966) and James P. Bednarz, ‘Representing Jonson: *Histrionmastix* and the Origin of the Poets’ War’, *HLQ* 54 (1991), 1-30.

⁶⁷ *The Defense of Poesy* in *Sir Philip Sidney*, 239. Sir John Harington, whose defence is largely modelled on Sidney’s, restates this point that men are wrong to interpret Plato as ‘an enemy of Poetrie, (because he found indeed just fault with the abuses of some comical Poets of his time, or some that sought to set up new and strange religions)’, *A Preface, or rather a brief Apologie of Poetrie*, *Elizabethan Critical Essays* vol. 2, 194-222, 204.

⁶⁸ *The School of Abuse & An Apology for Actors* (London: The Shakespeare Society, 1841), 53.

were able to justify their place in 'a well-run society' (438). It is a conclusion to which the anti-theatrical tracts of Elizabethan/Jacobean England repeatedly came, invoking Plato and other banishers of poetry in word and in deed, for example the Roman emperors Augustus, Marcus Aurelius and Nero, and the Church fathers St Augustine, Lactantius and Chrysostome.⁶⁹ Banishment seemed to be the punishment ordained for the pernicious poet/player and it only remained for the anti-theatricalist to persuade the authorities to take such action.

We have already referred to the law of 1572 which legislated for the wandering player as a rogue and vagabond. In 1597 an Act against vagabonds and sturdy beggars made banishment from the kingdom a possible penalty for the recalcitrant wandering player. In John Marston's *Histriomastix* (1599), the players and their resident poet who have been pretending to noble patronage are discovered and banished from the kingdom under the terms of this Act.⁷⁰ In *Henry IV*, Falstaff as player begs the Prince not to banish him. He is effectively asking the Prince not to withdraw his patronage from the Eastcheap company and, as king, not to banish playing and other kinds of subversive liberty from his kingdom. At the time Shakespeare was writing his play other legislation had been proposed to eradicate the theatre for good. In 1597 an order in the Queen's name was issued for the expulsion of plays within three miles of the city during the summer and for the demolition of the theatre in the same area. Although plays appear to have ceased for a time there was no such suppression. Nevertheless, Stephen Mullaney, who reads the removal of the theatres to the Liberties as a form of Platonic

⁶⁹ See for example Prynne's *Histriomastix*, 134-5.

⁷⁰ Philip J. Finkelpearl 'John Marston's *Histrion-Mastix* as an Inns of Court Play: A Hypothesis' *HLQ* 29 (1966), 223-34

banishment,⁷¹ suggests that this threat may have influenced Shakespeare's work.

In *1 Henry IV*, we find Prince Hal at Eastcheap, within the city of London, but imaginatively outside civic jurisdiction. In this environment, we see him indulging in his taste for theatricals under the tutelage of that consummate player and satirist, Falstaff. Mullaney describes the theatre enriched by the marginal culture it found in the Liberties. He argues that 'no literature achieves vitality or ideological complexity without establishing at least a virtual distance from its reigning culture or ideology ...' (57) and that banishment was a vital precondition for the creation of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. According to Hall and Holinshed, Hal may originally have been banished from the court and thus found himself in Eastcheap.⁷² Mullaney interprets Hal's presence there as a similarly enriching experience of marginalia. The Prince's renunciation of this culture for the prescription and rigidity of the court and in particular his banishment of Falstaff may reflect the contemporary suppression of the theatre.

Mullaney only hints at this parallel and does not explore the conscious influence of the *Republic* in such a drama. But just as it is no coincidence that drama's opponents in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries seemed to imitate Plato, so Shakespeare may also have had such a banishment in mind on writing the *Henry IV* plays. The banishment of Falstaff is Platonic justice in the sense that it protects authority and the appearance of Justice. Hal

⁷¹ In *The Place of the Stage*, Mullaney suggests that this banishment of the stage from Elizabethan London creates 'an uncanny sense of cultural déjà vu' in light of the notorious banishment of the poet and player from the *Republic*, 56. See introduction.

⁷² Both Holinshed and Hall describe how Hal was banished from the court by his father after his striking of the Lord Chief Justice. Shakespeare makes no reference to this exile, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 4. 280. 286.

literally embraces Justice and subsequently rejects the slandering Falstaff.⁷³ This context may also help to explain the unease which this exile creates in an audience. It is partly the 'poetical spirit' of Falstaff, his refusal to believe in the permanence or the authority of words or kings, which we regret to see banished by the rigour of the state. This Platonic Poetry which challenges the authoritarian and procrustean Republic may encompass the various kinds of transgression in which Falstaff has been implicated: the moral turpitude, religious dissidence, civic misrule and historical defamation. We have no evidence for how contemporary audiences interpreted Falstaff's banishment.⁷⁴ Yet Shakespeare perhaps hints at the dehumanisation which social identity and, in particular, monarchical identity impose in that final scene. Explicitly represented as Henry V's self-renunciation, Falstaff's banishment may signify the loss of 'what is free and vital and pleasurable in life' and in the King's life, as well as what is sceptical, individualistic and rebellious.⁷⁵ From the vantage point of *Henry V*, the remaining Eastcheap companions accept that banishment was necessary but surmise 'The King has killed his heart' (2.1.84). The ambiguity of this possessive, referring either to the dead Falstaff or to the legendary king, seems deliberate.

⁷³ Dover Wilson describes Shakespeare's juxtaposition of the Justice and the knight as reflecting the morality tradition: 'he brings embodiments of the two conflicting principles upon the stage, makes them engage in conversation together, so that we can judge between them for ourselves, and then shows us the Prince choosing between them. Thus during most of Part II the front of the stage is occupied by the portentous figures of Falstaff, who stands for Riot and Misrule, and of the Lord Chief Justice, the official representative of the Rule of Law', *The Fortunes of Falstaff*, 75.

⁷⁴ The earliest detailed response included in most critical bibliographies or casebooks is that of Samuel Johnson, 'A Note on *Henry IV*' (1765). Spivack suggests that the Elizabethan audience's response to Falstaff would have been more complex but less problematic than that of the twentieth-century audience: 'our modern sentiment, innocent of the old moral and dramatic convention that survives in him and controls his fate, craves a unified impression consistent with that side of him into which Shakespeare's genius mainly poured – his gorgeous wit and innocuous good fellowship. The Elizabethans, however, habituated by their transitional stage to hybrids of this sort, were completely at home with the double image and the double sentiment', *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, 204.

⁷⁵ Jonas A. Barish, 'The Turning Away of Prince Hal', *Sh. St.* 1 (1965), 9-17, 15.

To conclude, we might return to *Richard II*. Richard attempts to control the way in which he is perceived by banishing Mowbray, the man who sees him as a murderer. Yet the rebels insist that majesty appear more ‘like itself’. They thus destroy the substance of kingship to replace it with the spectacular Bolingbroke. With the fall of divine kingship, the danger for a king of being misconceived becomes acute. Yet Hal makes it work for him. He deliberately taints his own image, inviting scepticism, disrespect and misrule to be associated with him, only to dramatically cast them off through the spectacle of banishment. Falstaff embodies the principles Henry must reject but his banishment is also a response to the knight’s dangerous gaze. Like his former master, Mowbray,⁷⁶ Falstaff looks on his king with special knowledge. Hence, he presents Henry V with an unauthorised and unflattering reflection. However, unlike Mowbray, Falstaff sees not a tainted king but a player-king whose reformation is merely another piece of theatre. More importantly, Falstaff has fostered this self-consciousness in Hal. Barber describes their association as ‘a continuous exercise in the consciousness that comes from playing at being what one is not, and from seeing through such playing.’⁷⁷ Hal banishes Falstaff in pursuit of integrity. He anticipates Coriolanus’ defiant but ambiguous words, ‘Rather say I play/ The man I am’ (3.2.14-5). This is exactly Falstaff’s accusation against the King and perhaps the most compelling reason for the knight’s banishment.

⁷⁶ Shallow casually reveals in Part Two that Sir John Falstaff was once Thomas Mowbray’s page (3.2.23-5). No other source for such an association has been found. Shakespeare pursues the comparison between the two plays in the following scene when Mowbray’s son offers a controversial interpretation of his father’s banishment. His suggestion that Richard loved his father but banished him out of political necessity (4.1.113-4) may also reflect upon the banishment of Falstaff to come.

⁷⁷ *Shakespeare’s Festive Comedy*, 201.

PASTORAL EXILE AND *AS YOU LIKE IT*

In our consideration of *Romeo and Juliet* it was suggested that the characters' responses to banishment were partly determined by the play's tragic mode. Its abandonment of comedy on the death of Mercutio, though anticipated from the beginning by the Prologue, defines Romeo's exile as tragic. No metamorphosis other than death is imagined. Yet in *As You Like It*, Rosalind and Celia are able to transform exile into liberty and the tragic dissolution of identity is replaced by a sense of self-expansion and of fulfilment. Before turning to *As You Like It*, I want to consider how pastoral conventions might have informed the dramatisation of exile. As a plot device, exile will obviously be shaped by the overarching structure into which it is placed, for example, pastoral convention invariably dictates that exile be reprieved. More importantly, banishment may function as a metaphor for psychological states of alienation, displacement, and loss. If physical exile is finally redressed by the plot, metaphorical exile may be similarly resolved.

Exile is the means by which courtiers and shepherds meet in a bucolic landscape in Renaissance pastoral romance and drama, though such interludes also occur in other genres. Invariably, a person of high birth, a duke or the heir to a kingdom, is banished for some unjust cause or deposed and forced into exile. Exile is incurred by the younger character in a number of ways: for his/her relation to or support of a deposed ruler (*Humour out of Breath*, *The Four Prentices of London*); for loving a person of unequal rank (*Menaphon*, *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*); through the machinations of an enemy at court (*Mucedorus*, *The Maid's Metamorphosis*). Subsequently, by wandering, by shipwreck, and occasionally by choice, the exile enters a pastoral landscape where shepherds offer succour and a new way of

life. If disguise has not been necessitated by threatened execution or by the perils of the journey, it will often be adopted now. It is inevitable that the young exile will find love in the forest and the pastoral sojourn ends with the reconciliation of family members and/or former enemies, often preceding a betrothal. At this point the exiles are enabled to return to society.

Critics are justifiably unsure whether to locate the identity of pastoral in certain enduring literary norms and conventions, or in a specific (if perennial) subject, or in some continuity of feeling, attitude, 'philosophical conception', or mode of consciousness which informs the literary imagination but originates outside it.¹

Paul Alpers, who includes this quotation in the opening chapter of his monograph *What is Pastoral?*, proposes the 'representative anecdote' for pastoral, that which locates it in 'reality' and inspires its continual re-presentation, to be the fiction that herdsmen's lives are representative of human lives.² Later, in our consideration of pastoral 'philosophy', shepherds will be seen to express fundamental truths about man's existence. For a glimpse of how exile fits in to pastoral tradition as plot device and as metaphor, Alpers' response to the question 'what is pastoral convention?' will prove most insightful. He refers back to the original Latin root of 'convention', that is 'convenire', to come together:

Pastoral poems make explicit the dependence of their conventions on the idea of coming together. Pastoral convenings are characteristically occasions for songs and colloquies that *express and thereby seek to redress separation, absence, or loss.* (italics mine)³

Alpers assumes two kinds of movement: the physical coming together of shepherds and a psychological, 'redressive' movement from isolation to a recognition of shared human

¹ David Halperin, *Before Pastoral: Theocritus and the Ancient Tradition of Bucolic Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 76. Quoted by Paul Alpers, *What is Pastoral?* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 11.

² *What is Pastoral?*, 26.

³ *Ibid.*, 80-1, 81.

suffering. Both actions are found in Theocritus' first *Idyll*, the inspiration for Western pastoral literature, wherein shepherds gather to hear Thyrsis lament the death of Daphnis. That *exile* might be the cause of this isolation and loss was recognised by Virgil in his first *Eclogue*. The inspiration for Meliboeus' song is expulsion from his homeland:

But we must go hence - some to the thirsty Africans, some to reach Scythia
and Crete's swift Oaxes, and the Britons, wholly sundered from all the world.
Ah, shall I ever, long years hence, look again on my country's bounds ...⁴

Virgil's eclogue is based on exile from the countryside so that Meliboeus' bucolic singing becomes an expression of what he will lose. In the pastoral tradition which developed, the singer's home is often located outside the natural landscape. The pastoral expression of loss becomes redressive in itself and the movement into the greenwood a kind of return. It may be that pastoral has an archetypal return at its heart, namely post-lapsarian man's desire to return to Eden and his original blessed state. Peter Marinelli suggests that the pattern of abandoning the city for the garden also expresses this myth. In both Classical and Judaeo-Christian history, the creation of cities is facilitated by man's enforced retreat from the pastoral life.⁵

The desire to rediscover man's original innocence through a sojourn in a restorative landscape is fundamental to the journeys made by the exiled courtiers or runaways of pastoral literature. In *A Natural Perspective*, Northrop Frye identified the following tripartite structure as central to Shakespearean comedy and romance. In the beginning, the comic drive is opposed by an anti-comic society expressed by harsh or irrational law or tyranny.⁶ The obvious dramatisation of this conflict is between the young protagonist and an authority

⁴ *Virgil* tr. by H. Rushton Fairclough (London: Heinemann, 1936), 2 vols., vol. 1, 9.

⁵ See Peter V. Marinelli, *Pastoral* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1971), 10.

⁶ *A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965), 73-8.

figure, the unrelenting father of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the irrational tyrant of *As You Like It*. Banishment is often the expression of this conflict and the entrance into the second phase of Frye's schema, that of temporarily lost identity, characterised by an impenetrable disguise and/or a change in gender.⁷ In the final phase, the identity of these wandering characters is discovered and they are subsequently absorbed into a renewed social identity, a contract often sealed by marriage (78).

In *A Map of Arcadia*, Walter Davis offers a more detailed representation of the journey into the greenwood, characteristic of pastoral romance:

the three parts of the pastoral setting represent a gradual purification toward the center: from the turbulent, heroic, and sometimes "subnatural" world with all its complexities and accidents, to the simple natural world that includes the outer world's elements purified, to the supernatural center where the human and the divine meet. The action of the pastoral romance is simply the progress of the hero through the various areas of the setting: from the outer circle, into the inner circle, hence to the center, and out again.⁸

It is a plot of a 'peculiarly curative kind', a ritual of disintegration, education and reintegration, a physical and psychological movement. In the first phase, the protagonist enters the forest from the heroic world in some conflict deriving from grief or love. In the second phase, he learns to understand this conflict by means of his observation of other pastoral characters and by his interaction with them. Finally, he reaches the centre of the pastoral world, where, under the aegis of a god or a magician, he achieves peace of mind and

⁷ Frye also refers to the challenges to identity posed by identical twins, the headless body of Cloten masquerading as Posthumus, and by Prospero's island, *A Natural Perspective*, 77.

⁸ *A Map of Arcadia: Sidney's Romance in its Tradition* in *Sidney's Arcadia* by Walter R. Davis and Richard A. Lanham (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1965), li-179, 38. The reference in *As You Like It* to Ganimede's magician-uncle living within the innermost circle of the forest (5.4.32-4) suggests the relevance of this definition to the play.

is finally released into the external world.⁹

The influences upon pastoral in its development from classical lyric to Renaissance drama offer many precedents for the structural and metaphorical use of exile. The popular translations of Greek romance in the sixteenth century may have inspired the expression of separation, absence or loss that Alpers refers to in pastoral.¹⁰ Carol Gesner describes several primary romance plots, based on a potion, a slandered bride and pastoral but remarks that ‘The separation romance frequent in Western literature – Hero and Leander, Pyramus and Thisbe, Tristan and Isolde – is the basic structure of all extant Greek romances except *Daphnis and Chloe*’.¹¹ It recurs as the protagonist’s separation from his wife by mistaken death in *Apollonius of Tyre*; as the lovers’ flight from their parents’ wrath in *Clitophon and Leucippe*; the abandonment at birth of the protagonists of *Daphnis and Chloe*.¹² Primarily though, with the exception of the latter romance, the separation plot divides the lovers from one another, leading to a succession of journeys and accidents until they are eventually reunited.

The banishment plot may also have been a popular feature in the tradition of secular romance drama from the Middle Ages, influenced by Greek romance but also by English and

⁹ Ibid., 22, 38-9.

¹⁰ Carol Gesner describes the ‘enormous popularity’ of these Greek romances from 1470-1642, as evidenced by the existence of editions in Latin, scholarly Greek and vernacular translations. See *Shakespeare and the Greek Romance: A Study of Origins* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 16. Walter Davis reports that the three major romances, Heliodorus’s *Aethiopica*, Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe* and Achilles Tatius’ *Clitophon and Leucippe* first appeared in English in 1569, 1587 and 1597 respectively, *Idea and Act in Elizabethan Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 156-7. Both critics refer to the important role played by Robert Greene in the popularisation of these romances, see *Shakespeare and the Greek Romance*, 49-50, 116-24, and *Idea and Act*, chp 5, 138-88.

¹¹ *Shakespeare and the Greek Romance*, 17.

¹² See also Margaret Anne Doody’s *The True Story of the Novel* (London: Fontana Press, 1998), chp. 2 ‘Love and Suffering: The Stories of the Ancient Novels’, 33-61.

Continental folk tales (including that of Robin Hood).¹³ Leo Salingar suggests that, as a child, Shakespeare could have watched these plays. Though only three examples are extant, *Clyomon and Clamydes* (1570), *Common Conditions* (1576) and *The Rare Triumphes of Love and Fortune* (1582), Salingar remarks upon the popularity of the motifs of a heroine enduring insecurity and danger (possibly in exile) for love, and of the father banished and restored to his family.¹⁴

Finally, the chivalric romance might also inform the exile movement in Renaissance pastoral. David Young proposes that this genre or mode is based on man's harmony or conflict with nature.¹⁵ He attributes the 'dramatisation' of this relationship to the influence of chivalric romance:

If the chivalric romance – with its tripartite structure of separation, wandering, and reunion which so easily corresponded to the movement into and return from the green world – had not existed, it would probably have been necessary to invent it in order to get the pastoral from the lyric to the narrative and dramatic modes.¹⁶

If the chivalric romance, like these other sources, helped to give pastoral a plot, it also gave metaphorical richness to those actions, in particular that of banishment. Perhaps the locus classicus of metaphorical banishment in English Renaissance literature is Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. In this work 'wandering' is not only a physical but a psychological state. Spenser describes his otherwise unerring heroine, Una, after her abandonment by the Redcross knight:

¹³ See *The Robin Hood Tradition in the English Renaissance* by Malcolm A. Nelson (Salzburg: Universität Salzburg, 1973).

¹⁴ Leo Salingar, *Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 39.

¹⁵ *The Heart's Forest: A Study of Shakespeare's Pastoral Plays* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 19. See also Davis, *A Map of Arcadia*, 27-8.

¹⁶ *The Heart's Forest*, 19.

Yet she most faithfull Ladie all this while
 Forsaken, wofull, solitarie mayd
 Farre from all peoples prease, as in exile,
 In wildernesse and wastfull deserts strayd,
 To seeke her knight. (I.III.3.1-5)¹⁷

Wandering/exile in the forest is a dangerous condition for any maid. How dangerous is shown, not only by the characters' perilous encounters with beasts, giants and enchanter, but by the human fallibility which it partly expresses. The Redcross knight's spiritual doubt is signified by his entering the 'wandering wood' where he must battle against Error (I.I.12-27). In Book III, Hellenore wanders in the forest after her willing seduction by Sir Paridell (III.X.36).

Another reason for wandering is that a great number of Spenser's protagonists are foundlings, a condition referred to by Spenser as 'exile'.¹⁸ We are reminded of Frye's phase of temporarily lost identity with the exception that most of these characters have never known their 'original' selves and will not discover them during the course of the poem. The list of Spenser's foundlings includes Satyrane, Arthur, the Redcross knight, Pastorella and Artegall. Of these, only Pastorella is reunited with the parents who were forced to abandon her (VI.XII.19-22). Britomart's quest to find Artegall and discover to him his true British origins (and hence his duty to defend Britain against the Paynims) is only partly begun through their betrothal (III.III.27). No doubt if Spenser had produced the other six books he had planned then we should have had far more revelations of identity. But where wandering can express weakness or a particular transgression, exile may also be the mark of an extraordinary person. When Sir Calepine relieves himself of his baby burden in Book VI, he tells the adoptive

¹⁷ *The Faerie Queene* ed. by Thomas P. Roche Jnr and C. Patrick O'Donnell (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987).

¹⁸ Satyrane grows up, 'Emongst wild beasts and woods, from lawes of men exilde' (I.VI.23.9). Similarly, when Justice decides to educate the child, Arthegall: 'So thence him farre she brought/ Into a cave from companie exilde' (V.I.6.6-7).

mother not to worry that the child is a foundling:

And certes it hath oftentimes bene seene,
 That of the like, whose linage was unknowne,
 More brave and noble knights have raysed beene,
 As their victorious deedes have often shoven,
 Being with fame through many Nations blowen,
 Then those, which have bene dandled in the lap.
 Therefore, some thought, that those brave imps were sowen
 Here by the Gods, and fed with heavenly sap,
 That made them grow so high t'all honorable hap. (VI.IV.36)¹⁹

This perception of exile as a condition for greatness will recur in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.

Hence, banishment may be the cause of a character's wandering in the forest but also the loss that such wandering needs to redress. I want now to consider how the pastoral sojourn, and in particular the encounter with shepherds, may rejuvenate and re-socialise the exiled courtier. From the beginning of the pastoral romance or play, there may be an assumption that exile means a removal to a 'better world'. The juxtaposition of court and country is one of the most obvious conventions, providing matter for debate between exile and shepherd and for a moralising of the landscape of pastoral. This morality depends on the virtue in simplicity. Shepherds are seen to have renounced the indulgence and luxury of the court. There is an assumption that they are prevented from entering this world not through poverty or class but merely through philosophy. The pastoral life is a return to harmony with nature and thus to a

¹⁹ The central thesis of A. Bartlett Giamatti's work *Exile and Change in Renaissance Literature* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984) is that humanism imagined itself banished from the Classical world. He refers to Petrarch locating his identity there and writing from a position of exile. This displacement became a condition of Renaissance self-fashioning. Giamatti uses Spenser's foundlings as an example: 'The children were translated in order to be trained, removed in order that they could rediscover themselves or be reborn, because only by distance could they acquire the flexibility necessary for identity. Exile is the precondition for self-consciousness, culturally or individually', 95.

deeper understanding of man's position in the world, and to self-sufficiency.²⁰ This philosophy is profoundly Stoic and is represented and often expounded by the idealised shepherd. In Robert Greene's romance *Menaphon* (1589), Democles the King of Thessaly, himself disguised, greets a gathering of shepherds thus:

Arcadian Swaines, whose wealth is content, whose labours are tempred with sweete loves, whose mindes aspyre not, whose thoughts brooke no envie; onely as rivalls in affection, you are friendly emulators in honest fancie ...²¹

Similarly, the shepherd, Coridon, extols the pastoral life to Ganimede and Aliena in Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* (1590):

Envie stirres not us, wee covet not to climbe, our desires mount not above our degrees, nor our thoughts above our fortunes. Care cannot harbour in our cottages, nor doo our homely couches know broken slumbers: as we exceede not in diet, so we have inough to satisfie: and Mistres I have so much Latin, *Satis est quod sufficit*. [Sufficient is enough].²²

In particular, the shepherds expound invulnerability to Fortune, the goddess whose enmity is often seen as responsible for their banishment.²³ In *Menaphon*, Sephestia refers to herself as one of 'Fortunes outlawes' (35). In *Rosalynde*, the banished heroine fears to fall in love because it will place her even further at the mercy of this goddess (204).²⁴ Yet there is also an assumption in these plays that the patient suffering of men will be rewarded. Phoebus is the

²⁰ Young writes, 'The self-contained and isolated life of the shepherd and the pastoral community was a kind of symbol for an equivalent state of mind', *The Heart's Forest*, 30.

²¹ *Menaphon* in *Menaphon by Robert Greene and A Margarite of America by Thomas Lodge* ed. by G. B. Harrison (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1927), 94.

²² *Rosalynde* in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, vol. 2, 189. See also Meliboe in VI.IX.19-25 of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. He too refers to the contented humility of shepherds and to their ease of slumber.

²³ In *The Rare Triumphes of Love and Fortune*, Venus and Fortune each try to prove their pre-eminence in a contest to determine the fate of the lovers, Hermione and Fidelia. Fortune must try to destroy their love whilst Venus will work for a happy conclusion. Fortune begins by arranging for Hermione's banishment.

²⁴ This passage is quoted later in the chapter. Aliena suggests that Venus has overcome Fortune in Saladyne's case. She tells him: 'Your selfe exiled from your wealth, friends & countrey by *Torismond*, (sorrowes enough to suppress affections) yet amidst the depth of these extremities, Love will be Lord, and shew his power to bee more predominant than Fortune', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 2, 235.

deity who recognises Aramantus' Stoicism in *The Maid's Metamorphosis*. He tells him:

Grave *Aramantus*, now I see thy face
 I call to minde, how tedious a long space
 Thou hast frequented these sad desarts here,
 Thy time imployed, in heedfull minde I beare:
 The patient sufferance of thy former wrong,
 Thy poore estate, and sharpe exile so long.²⁵

Phoebus acknowledges how totally unmerited Aramantus' banishment was and proceeds to reward him with a place among the Muses as long as he lives and with fame when he dies. Phoebus also decides that it is time for Aramantus to be reunited with his daughter, supposed drowned, but now revealed to be the play's heroine, Eurymine.

In *Idea and Act in Elizabethan Fiction*, Davis suggests that pastoral is a site for the dramatisation of an ideal self:

this central aspect of the action is always made explicit by the disguise that the hero must assume before he can enter the pastoral land. He must, in effect, relinquish his identity and become someone else. He must strip off his proper clothing, change his name, and put on the clothes and manners of a shepherd. But that "someone else" is really an image of the person that he, the hero, might become. Moreover, since the pastoral life expresses explicit ideas of value, the pastoral disguise signifies not only the discovery of a new aspect of the self, but the conscious acceptance of new values as well.²⁶

The assumption of shepherd's garb is associated with a particular 'philosophical' cast of mind. In *Arcadia*, Musidorus sings 'Come shepherd's weeds, become your master's

²⁵ *The Maid's Metamorphosis* ed. John S. Farmer (London: The Tudor Reprinted and Parallel Texts, 1908). no page or line numbers given.

²⁶ *Idea and Act*, 61.

mind:/Yield outward show what inward change he tries'.²⁷ In *Menaphon*, Sephestia becomes the shepherdess, Samela, in hope of such contentment:

with my cloathes I will change my thoughts; for being poorelie attired I will be meanelie minded, and measure my actions by my present estate, not by former fortunes. (33)

It is an action that denies ambition and may thus appear as a form of repression or self-truncation. Yet the idea of achieving Stoic contentment is also associated with liberty and with self-expansion. In *De Constantia*, Seneca writes:

Liberty is having a mind that rises superior to injury, that makes itself the only source from which its pleasures spring, that separates itself from all external things in order that man may not have to live his life in disquietude, fearing everybody's laughter, everybody's tongue.²⁸

Such detachment from present suffering and from the world alters the exile's perception of his condition by placing it in an altogether different context. Duke Senior in *As You Like It* typifies such a transformation of the exiled state. Yet this treasured Stoic liberty could translate into another consolation for exile with libertarian associations. In John Lyly's *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578), the eponymous hero writes a letter to his exiled friend, Botonio. His consolation, a paraphrase of Plutarch's arguments in *Of Exile or Banishment*, offers the usual Stoic platitudes: that man can transform his circumstances by the power of philosophy; that the wise man is a citizen of the world; that it may be virtuous to be exiled if the state itself is corrupt. Yet Euphues also emphasises the pleasures of exile. This Epicurean

²⁷ *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* ed. by Maurice Evans (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), 169. See also Musidorus' identification of contentment with his shepherd's estate. 173.

²⁸ Seneca, *De Constantia*, in *Moral Essays* tr. by John W. Basore (London: Heinemann, 1928), 3 vols., vol. 1, 48-105, 103. The argument that exile is an ideal opportunity for the pursuance of philosophy will be examined in detail with regard to *The Tempest*.

vein is explored by Plutarch but has its roots in Seneca himself.²⁹ Euphues tells Botonio to consider thus the benefits of not holding any office in the state: ‘I am free from the injuries of the strong and malice of the weak. I am out of the broils of the seditious, and have escaped the threats of the ambitious’. Yet, it is rare, Euphues suggests, for the exile to take this perspective:

as he that having a fair orchard, seeing one tree blasted, recounteth the discommodity of that and passeth over in silence the fruitfulness of the other; so he that is banished doth always lament the loss of his house and the shame of his exile, not rejoicing at *the liberty, quietness, and pleasure that he enjoyeth by that sweet punishment*. (italics mine)³⁰

In his definition of pastoral, Renato Poggioli identifies a central conflict between the reality and pleasure principles.³¹ He recognises the emphasis in pastoral upon self-sufficiency and humility but argues that this is not necessarily asceticism:

As a conscious or unconscious philosopher, the shepherd is neither a stoic nor a cynic, but rather an epicurean [...] [he] may find sensual delight, as well as moral contentment, by merely satisfying his needs; by discarding the obsessive luxury and laborious comfort of “high life” for simple living, with its homespun clothes, homely furnishings, and unseasoned meals.³²

The association of pastoral exile with pleasure also informs attitudes towards disguise. The transformation of identity lies at the heart of the experience of exile. The ability to take control of this transformation is central to pastoral romance and drama. Within the forest

²⁹ In his *De Otio*, Seneca argues that the philosopher’s withdrawal into private life to ‘cultivate the virtues’ is of benefit to his society. He rejects the Epicurean associations of this standpoint and insists on philosophical study as another form of public duty, *Moral Essays* vol. 2, 180-201. In *De Officiis*, Cicero also defends retirement from the state on the basis of ill-health or the pursuit of philosophy but expresses caution about man’s true motivations for doing so, *De Officiis* tr. by Walter Miller (London: Heinemann, 1913), 71-5. On the cross-pollination between Stoicism and Epicureanism see Audrey Chew, *Stoicism in Renaissance English Literature: An Introduction* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 95-106.

³⁰ Lyly, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit, Euphues and His England* ed. by Morris William Croll and Harry Clemons (London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1916), 174.

³¹ See also *A Natural Perspective*, 75.

³² *The Oaten Flute: Essays on Pastoral Poetry and the Pastoral Ideal* (Cam., Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 8-9.

circle, metamorphosis is not a threat imposed from outside but an opportunity for self-fashioning. It encourages the relinquishing of old attachments and duties for the topsy-turvy world of holiday. At the same time, it allows the exploration of self-potential, most obviously seen in Rosalind's skirmishes of wit and authority in the masculine identity of Ganymede.³³ This delight in metamorphosis also extends to the transformations wrought by Cupid. As we shall see, Orlando's role as lover is an essential part of his education. Moreover, for Rosalind and Orlando the experience of love is clearly depicted as an expansion of self rather than a fearful dissolution. It allows the exile to forget his former degraded place in the world and to relocate that world in the microcosmic potential of his lover.

Finally, the experience of alienation and displacement is assuaged in the forest through the fostering of the individual's social ambitions. That Renaissance pastoral propounded the politically expedient idea of a 'beautiful relation between rich and poor', was famously expressed by William Empson in *Some Versions of Pastoral*.³⁴ Louis A. Montrose offers an illuminating reconsideration of the courtly ethic behind pastoral. He points to the suppression or marginalization of material pastoralism: the husbandmen of Virgil's *Georgics* have been 'banished' and the lifestyle of the shepherd has been purged of references to labour or hardship. The gentleman's identification with the shepherd obfuscates the real social and economic injustice of their positions in a Christian world which poses that all men are equally

³³ Marinelli describes the importance of a dual perspective in pastoral particularly as regards oneself: 'if we are so unshakeably rooted to a conception of ourselves and that conception is assaulted and overthrown, the destruction of the personality may be the inevitable result. But to be able to imagine several positions rather than one is the hallmark of a larger and more buoyant mind and of a more engaging personality as well', *Pastoral*, 38.

³⁴ *Some Versions of Pastoral* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1950), 11-2. Humphrey Tonkin concurs, suggesting that the natural world in Bk 6 of the *Faerie Queene* reinforces the social hierarchy and the profound social (and therefore moral) distinction between Sir Calidore and Pastorella, and the shepherd, Coridon. See *Spenser's Courteous Pastoral: Book Six of the Faerie Queene* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 290-1.

fallen, suffering Adam's penalty of labour.³⁵ Rather than directly opposing this Christian equality with aristocratic values, pastoral elides the social functions of courtier and shepherd by redefining pastoral as a life of otium, poetry and courtly love where virtue is defined as gentility. Nevertheless, the courtier's innate superiority shines through the shepherd's humble weeds. He is often significantly more attractive, better spoken, capable of more conceited poetry, and always of a nobler spirit. Hence, as it serves to assuage class antagonism, pastoral also works to reflect an idealised court:

Such a poetry is not concerned to embrace the lot of Elizabethan husbandmen or to advance egalitarian ideas but to recreate an elite community in pastoral form. In such pastorals, ambitious Elizabethan gentlemen who may be alienated or excluded from the courtly society that nevertheless continues to define their existence can create an imaginative space within which virtue and privilege coincide. (427)

This narrative of wish-fulfilment transforms the gentleman alienated from the Elizabethan court into an exile in Arcadia, from whence he is released to assume a position at the centre of power. This may not be vain fantasy. Montrose suggests that success in the pastoral genre could realise a poet's ambitions to be accepted into that elite community (433). Within the plays and romances themselves, a sojourn in the forest repeatedly works to encourage the hopes of the aspiring heir in his darkest hour and even to prepare him for future responsibility.

Hence, the consolation for exile in pastoral romance and drama is twofold. On one hand, it is a consolation based on the transformations wrought by the mind, encouraging a new perspective on the world. At the same time, however, the forest will facilitate the social ambitions of its exiles and will restore them through a sequence of fortuitous encounters that

³⁵ 'Of Gentlemen and Shepherds: The Politics of Elizabethan Pastoral Form', *ELH* 50 (1983), 415-59, 432.

may be accredited to a particular deity, a magician or some unknown force at the heart of the forest. I want to turn now to *As You Like It* and the particular consolations for exile found in Arden.

In *Shakespeare's Pastoral Comedy*, Thomas MacFarland suggests that the situation at the start of *As You Like It* 'could [...] as well serve for a tragedy as for a comedy'.³⁶ He compares the banishment of Duke Senior with the 'nightmare of alienation' cast upon Webster's play, *The White Devil*, by the opening word, 'Banished', and with the horrors of that state in *Romeo and Juliet*.³⁷ Furthermore, he considers the banishment of Duke Senior to be significant not only for the characters of *As You Like It* but for Shakespearean comedy itself:

This play, then, involves the first massive assault of the forces of bitterness and alienation upon the pastoral vision of Shakespeare, and its action glances off the dark borders of tragedy. Indeed, the motif of repeated abandonment of the court, first by Orlando and Adam, then by Rosalind, Celia and Touchstone, is prophetic of the departings and rejections of Cordelia, Kent, and Edgar at the beginning of *King Lear*'s quest for essential being.³⁸

This analogy between the comedy and tragedy will be considered in our examination of *King Lear* and its reworking of pastoral exile. Although I would agree with MacFarland that the state of exile is inherently tragic what I find remarkable about *As You Like It* is the ease with which that darkness is vitiated.³⁹ It was not so in Shakespeare's main source, *Rosalynde*. While still at court, Lodge's heroine thinks of her father's exile as an irreversible blight:

³⁶ Thomas MacFarland, *Shakespeare's Pastoral Comedy* (Chapel Hill: University of N. Carolina Press, 1972), 98.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 99.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 101.

³⁹ Joseph Westlund also remarks upon the serenity of *As You Like It*'s characters in their approach to banishment, 73. He sees this as typical of their self-assurance in dealing with tyranny and 'evil' and typical of the play's lack of serious psychological conflict: 'Shakespeare's comedies stir up reparative impulses in us by awakening potential fears [...] and then showing us various ways in which they can be transcended: through the plot's outcome, the characters' reactions and moods, and the large process of interaction between the play and our inner world', 13-4. See *Shakespeare's Reparative Comedies: A Psychoanalytic View of the Middle Plays* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

The blossomes of thy youth are mixt with the frostes of envie, and the hope of thy ensuing frutes perish in the bud. Thy father is by *Torismond* banisht from the crowne, & thou the unhappie daughter of a King detained captive, living as disquited [sic] in thy thoughts, as thy father discontented in his exile. (174)

At court, Rosalind too laments her unjust fate (1.2.2-6) but exile does not remain a source of shame and chagrin in the forest nor does it colour her attitude towards love. Rosalynde, however, tells herself that it would be better to remain chaste:

for that thou art an exile, and banished from the Court: whose distresse, as it is appeased with patience, so it woulde bee renewed with amorous passions. Have minde on thy forepassed fortunes, feare the worst, and intangle not thy self with present fancies. (204)

When she meets her father in the forest, Lodge's heroine grieves for his altered state and considers the lowliness and simplicity of Gerismond's life to be degrading (247-8).⁴⁰ For Saladyne, exile is a source of pain but also a curse resonant of Cain's banishment: 'grieving at his exile, yet [he] determined to beare it with patience, and in penance of his former follies to travell abroad in everie Coast, till hee had founde out his Brother *Rosader*' (199). When the two brothers are reconciled, Saladyne's conversion is wondered at. Adam Spencer rejoices 'that banishment had so reformed him, that from a lascivious youth hee was proved a vertuous Gentleman' (220).

If Shakespeare takes banishment less seriously than Lodge, I would argue that this is partly because the play's consolations for exile are more powerful. Shakespeare has created a world

⁴⁰ Compare this with Ganimede's merriment on meeting the Duke in Arden (3.4.31-4). Moreover, where Lodge describes Gerismond's grief at the news of his daughter's banishment (197), in Shakespeare's play Duke Senior and Orlando remain ignorant of this event. Lodge stages a tearstained reunion between father and daughter where, in *As You Like It*, this reunion is subordinated to the betrothals (5.4.114-22). As Rosalind declared earlier, 'what talk we of fathers when there is such a man as Orlando?' (3.4.34-5).

in which exile is easily translated into something else. He has created a court characterised by claustrophobia and alienation from which any escape might be liberty. MacFarland sees Act Two of *As You Like It*, in particular Duke Senior's opening speech, as a 'massive attempt to restore comic benignity and to check the tragic tendency'.⁴¹ Yet it is this dark opening that heightens by contrast the joyous and festive opportunities of exile. The desire to locate a 'better world than this' (1.2.274) anywhere beyond the court, helps to define exile for the courtiers before banishment. Arden could be any kind of civilised or natural setting *elsewhere*.⁴²

From the beginning of *As You Like It*, the atmosphere at court is one of alienation and self-loss. Duke Frederick has usurped his elder brother and banished him from the kingdom. Rosalind grieves for her father but also for the ignominy of her position, no longer heir to a kingdom but displaced by her cousin. Similarly, Orlando has been denied his small inheritance by his brother and is kept on Oliver's country estate in neglect and contempt. Even Adam is denied the place his faithful service has merited. Meanwhile, the usurpers are in continual fear of usurpation. Duke Frederick at first disdains to give any reason for Rosalind's banishment other than vague suspicions (1.3.51-4, 57). In *Rosalynde*, the usurper, Torismond, fears that the eponymous heroine will attract a wealthy suitor and that an attempt will subsequently be made on his kingdom. Frederick warns his daughter that Rosalind eclipses her in public opinion, 'She robs thee of thy name' (1.3.76-81, 78) but does not otherwise expand on the nature of Rosalind's threat. Similarly, Oliver reveals a straightforward envy of Orlando but expresses himself mystified at the extent of his hatred:

⁴¹ *Shakespeare's Pastoral Comedy*, 101.

⁴² Barber describes the festive release of the sojourn in Arden as in part created by the tension at court. *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*, 223-4.

I hope I shall see an end of him, for my soul – yet I know not why – hates nothing more than he. Yet he's gentle; never schooled, and yet learned; full of noble device; of all sorts enchantingly beloved; and, indeed, so much in the heart of the world, and especially of my own people, who best know him, that I am altogether misprized. (1.1.154-60)

Whilst Orlando and Rosalind perceive themselves to be displaced, their enemies suggest that both heirs occupy privileged positions in the public's imagination and affections.

In contrast with the claustrophobia and paranoia of the court, Duke Senior's 'exile' in the forest of Arden is liberty: 'many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world' (1.1.111-3). In Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1567) the golden age world is described as uniformly bountiful, a land where milk and wine flow in streams and honey pours from the trees (1.127-8), precluding the need for hunting or farming. Men are content to live where they were born, without any ambition for travel or conquest:

The loftie Pynetree was not hewen from mountaines where it stood,
In seeking straunge and forren landes, to rove upon the flood.
Men knew none other countries yet, than where themselves did keepe:
There was no towne enclosed yet, with walles and diches deepe. (1.109-112)

Golding applies a Christian gloss to this pagan concept:

Moreover by the golden age what other thing is ment,
Than Adams tyme in Paradyse, who beeing innocent
Did lead a blist and happy lyfe untill that thurrough sin
He fell from God? From which tyme foorth all sorrow did begin.
(The Epistle 469-72)⁴³

⁴³ Ovid's *Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation* ed. by John Frederick Nims (London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1965).

The reality of Arden is very different from this vision. It is a post-Saturnine, post-lapsarian world in which men suffer 'the penalty of Adam' (2.1.5). The forest may create a sense of time's suspension but its inhabitants are still subject to decay and death.⁴⁴ Nor do they behave as Golden Age dwellers were imagined to have done. The courtiers do not live in harmony with nature but suffer from their exposure to the elements and to wild animals. Unlike their vegetarian forefathers, these men hunt deer for entertainment and for food. Jaques refers to the Duke's court as usurping power in this natural world (2.1.27-8). Moreover, the voluntary exiles, Touchstone and Jaques, express distaste for their circumstances. The latter ridicules any man (including himself) for 'Leaving his wealth and ease/ A stubborn will to please' (2.5. 49-50) whilst Touchstone muses that 'When I was at home I was in a better place; but travellers must be content' (2.4.15-6). He thus contradicts the assumption that Arden is the 'better place' anticipated by Le Beau (1.2.274).

In his *De Constantia libri duo*, Lipsius describes how he fled the chaos of civil war in the Low Countries in search of peace elsewhere. His friend, Langius, warns him not to expect that he will discover peace of mind through change of scenery,

except happily there bee some region in the world which can temperate feare, bridle hope, and draw out these evil dregges of vice, which we have sucked from our infancie. But none such is there, no not in the fortunate Ilands: Or if there be, shew it unto us, and we will all hasten thither in troupes.⁴⁵

Langius' imaginary landscape expresses that dream of Edenic redemption we earlier identified with pastoral. Whilst he denies the possibility of its existence, he reiterates the desirability of such a discovery. Like Duke Senior's courtiers who flock to Arden in search of

⁴⁴ See J. L. Halio "'No Clock in the Forest": Time in *As You Like It*', *SEL* 2 (1962), 197-207.

⁴⁵ *De Constantia libri duo*, 4.

a golden world, Langius would abandon his philosophical precepts and join his friend, 'hasten[ing] in troupes' to a land which redeems men without any effort on their part. The land Langius imagines does not exist on the Shakespearean stage either. In Arden, men must suffer for redemption but this redemption does come with almost magical speed and appropriateness, like the fulfilment of their wishes. The play dramatises the regeneration of men as their readmission into society. For those whose exile thence was unjust, the conditions are created for their return, engaging a readjustment to the society which spurned them. For the guilty exile, the forest facilitates a degree of self-reflection which results in their civil, if not spiritual, conversion.

Nevertheless, the play does advocate the philosophy Langius proposed as an alternative to the restorative landscape, namely Stoicism. Duke Senior, Corin, and even Ganymede in his declared attitude to love, all invoke Stoic precepts. Duke Senior opens Act Two and our first entrance into Arden thus:

Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,
 Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
 Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
 More free from peril than the envious court?
 Here feel we not the penalty of Adam,
 The seasons' difference, as the icy fang
 And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,
 Which when it bites and blows upon my body
 Even till I shrink with cold, I smile, and say
 'This is no flattery. These are counsellors
 That feelingly persuade me what I am.'
 Sweet are the uses of adversity
 Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
 Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
 And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
 Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
 Sermons in stones, and good in everything. (2.1.1-17)⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Compare with Valentine's experience in the forest outside Mantua. He too has become accustomed to his exile, 'How use doth breed a habit in a man! This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods/ I better brook than flourishing peopled towns', *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (5.4.1-3).

Stoicism encourages the sufferer to reinterpret his situation by questioning the merits of what he has lost and embracing the contentment to be found in deprivation. The transformation of a harsh landscape through the new perspectives of Stoicism is a much repeated and imitated convention. In *De Providentia*, Seneca describes how the German tribes and nomads who live along the Danube, outside 'Roman civilization', are oppressed by eternal winter and a barren soil:

they keep off the rain with thatch or leaves, they range over ice-bound marshes, and hunt wild beasts for food. Are they unhappy, do you think? There is no unhappiness for those whom habit has brought back to nature. For what they begin from necessity becomes gradually a pleasure.⁴⁷

For Duke Senior, custom has dulled the pain of exile and the comparison between court and country has redefined his position. He contrasts the meretricious and Machiavellian court with the simplicity and honesty of the forest that strips man of his pretensions revealing the 'poor, bare, forked animal'. Deprivation suggests how little man needs to survive and thus directs his thoughts away from physical desires and ambitions, turning them inwards. This is another classically Stoic point made by Seneca in *Ad Helviam* and by Plutarch in *Of Exile or Banishment*. Finally, the idea of the individual communing with the landscape and of Nature as a book wherein man may read the secrets of creation and of his own place in the universe is another idea expressed by Seneca. He describes how as long as the exile can look upon the heavens it does not matter upon which soil he treads.⁴⁸ Even the self-consciousness of Duke

⁴⁷ *De Providentia* in *Moral Essays*, vol. 1, 2-47, 33.

⁴⁸ *Ad Helviam*, 331. On reading Nature, see Seneca's *De Otio*, 191.

Senior's philosophising here may identify him with the Stoic.⁴⁹

Corin is another, perhaps more genuine, Stoic figure. He exemplifies the shepherd-as-'natural philosopher' that we earlier recognised as a convention of pastoral. Corin lives in harmony with the natural world and rejoices in his self-sufficiency:

Sir, I am a true labourer. I earn that I eat, get that I wear; owe no man hate,
envy no man's happiness; glad of other men's good, content with my harm;
and the greatest of my pride is to see my ewes graze and my lambs suck.
(3.2.71-5)⁵⁰

Corin would be an ideal role model for the impoverished exile yet the play seems to eschew his wisdom. He is mocked by the sophistry of Touchstone and prevented from sharing his philosophy with any of the other exiles. That the play advocates a derisory as well as an admiring attitude to Stoic consolations may also be surmised from Ganymede's position. He offers to cure Orlando of his love-sickness, promising that he will thus become more constant and less 'love-shaked' (3.2.355 italics mine). Ganymede describes the effect of his cure on another:

I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of
madness, which was to forswear the full stream of the world and to live in a
nook merely monastic. (3.2.402-5)

Here, to renounce love, to withdraw into solitude, to become constant, is equated with madness. It is no wonder that Orlando says 'I would not be cured, youth' (3.2.409).

⁴⁹ Geoffrey Miles remarks that the 'external, self-dramatizing strain in Roman Stoicism contrasts oddly with the "inwardness" of Stoic ethics, its theoretical stress on morality as "an affair of the inner life"' in his *Shakespeare and the Constant Romans* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 14. Paul Alpers also refers to the difference between pastoral and tragic modes here. The Duke's speech is not 'wrenched from experience' like Gloucester's. It bears witness 'not to the individual's attempt to make sense of his own and others' suffering, but to a common condition acknowledged as obvious', *What is Pastoral?*, 73.

⁵⁰ Corin's self-sufficiency is more ideological than material. He tells Rosalind and Celia in 2.4 that he is the shepherd to another man's flocks, 77-8.

Apart from Duke Senior, the play's exiles quickly forget about their condition. Stoicism becomes superfluous, even absurd, to them because they do not suffer. Such renunciation is opposed to love and to the pleasures of pastoral liberty which compose the main consolation for banishment in this play.

Rosalind and Celia recognise almost immediately the land of opportunity that awaits them outside the court: 'Now go we in content,/ To liberty. and not to banishment' (1.3.136-7). This opportunity is at first represented by the possibility of travel. Whilst this is viewed as a danger, it also glimmers with possibility. In Cardan's *Comforte*, he encouraged the exile to consider his wandering as a journey taken for pleasure. The banished Sedmond offers the same consolation to his sister, Clarisia, in the play *Common Conditions* (1576). He tells her to think only of the weariness consonant with travel and not of the exile's woes. She responds,

But, brother! we are no travellers, that useth day by day
To range abroad in foreign lands, to trace the beaten way.
We are constrained through very force, to fly from native soil;
We are compelled though cruelty to undertake this toil.
The traveller may keep the way that likes him best to go;
We are constrained to shroud ourselves in woods for fear of foe.
Then, brother, tell me whether he or we do take most pain,
Considering: when he please, he may return to home again!⁵¹

In contrast, Rosalind and Celia are far more willing to view themselves as travellers. Though the journey is tiring and they arrive in Arden hungry and depressed, no mention is made of banishment. Touchstone deplores their condition but remarks that 'travellers', not exiles, must be content.

⁵¹ *Common Conditions in Five Anonymous Plays* ed. by John S. Farmer (London: Early English Drama Society, 1908), 187-8.

The disguise which travel requires, the need for Rosalind to become a man and Celia a poor country maid, is similarly relished. There may be a kind of glee in Celia's transformation of herself into someone lower-class and dirty, 'I'll put myself in poor and mean attire,/ And with a kind of umber smirch my face' (110-1). Rosalind too partly forgets the practical reasons for male attire as she perceives its satiric potential (113-21). Nor do the characters regret the abandonment of their former roles. Celia has not been officially banished (as in Lodge's work) but chooses exile out of love for Rosalind. She casually dismisses her birthright: 'Let my father seek another heir' (98). The adoption of the name 'Aliena' is only half relevant to her self-alienated state and suggests the extent to which banishment is an opportunity for theatricality. It is natural that Touchstone the fool should join this company of players.

Davis writes of the disguises adopted in *Rosalynde*: 'Each of the roles, it should be noticed, transforms the merely privative state of those who have lost their place in society into a positive ideal of unrestricted action'.⁵² It is Rosalind who will make the greatest use of the liberties offered by disguise in Shakespeare's play. Rosalind in love is already transformed and in a particular sense liberated. Her feeling of self-expansion and self-discovery through love is expressed in geographical metaphors. In suspense for news of Orlando, she declares 'One inch of delay more is a South Sea of discovery' (3.2.192-3); later she tells Celia that her love cannot be limited, 'My affection hath an unknown bottom, like the Bay of Portugal' (4.1.197-8). This potential is recognised by Orlando who describes his Rosalind as composite perfection:

Therefore heaven nature charged
That one body should be filled
With all graces wide-enlarged.

⁵² *Idea and Act*, 88.

Nature presently distilled
 Helen's cheek, but not her heart.
 Cleopatra's majesty,
 Atalanta's better part,
 Sad Lucretia's modesty. (3.2.138-45)

When Ganymede represents womankind he includes less attractive qualities, to encompass the full range of emotions, virtues and faults. He describes how, in the guise of a woman, he would 'grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles' (3.2.395-7). This all-inclusiveness is also the expansiveness created by love as Rosalind describes it. Yet it is her role as Ganymede which allows for the release of all kinds of repressed folly and wisdom, including love. Disguise brings power and particularly empowers the woman in courtship. As Ganymede, Rosalind is able to deride, manipulate and command Orlando and to woo him without commitment. She can teach him what to expect from his Rosalind and ascertain his likely responses to her desires for liberty in their union. Yet Ganymede also allows Rosalind to experience the painless severing of social bonds which previously defined her. Her new role celebrates the alienation of exile.

Rosalind's alter ego claims to have remained in one place all his life and it is as the contented native that he criticises wanderlust. Jaques has been boasting about his melancholy, fashioned from 'the sundry contemplation of my travels' (4.1.15-9, 17). Ganymede responds:

A traveller! By my faith, you have great reason to be sad. I fear
 you have sold your own lands to see other men's. Then to have
 seen much and to have nothing is to have rich eyes and poor hands.
 (4.1.20-3)

Then, ignoring Orlando's greeting, he continues

Farewell, Monsieur Traveller. Look you lisp, and wear strange suits; disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are, or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola. (31-6)⁵³

Coming from Ganimede, this speech is entirely logical. The youth has supposedly never left the forest and yet has received a superfluity of education and 'experience', suggesting the redundancy of travel. When Orlando questions how he came by his accent in 'so removed a dwelling' (3.2.332), Ganimede explains that he was educated by a religious uncle, 'an inland man', who was once at court (333-6). There is clearly some mystery about Ganimede's origins. In another pastoral drama, the discrepancies in his story might have marked him out as a foundling. His natural gentility shines through the pastoral garb.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, his criticism of Jaques fits the story of Ganimede's youth and his current position as a landowner. As the possessor of his own cottage and flocks, Ganimede might well mock the man who throws his inheritance away in pursuit of melancholy. Similarly, the exiled Rosalind might find Jaques' attitude irritating or offensive. The latter has apparently thrown away his inheritance where Rosalind had hers forcefully taken (and bestowed upon Celia who then abandoned it). Jaques upbraided *himself* for voluntarily leaving the court for exile with Duke Senior. Again, Rosalind might compare her enforced absence from the court. Yet Ganimede's attack reveals a surprising hypocrisy in Rosalind for its opprobrious terms also apply to her. She wears the 'strange suits' of male attire. Knowing that her father is in the forest, indeed

⁵³ When this passage receives critical attention it is usually for its conventional anti-travel sentiments. Agnes Latham refers to it as a 'stock diatribe' offering *King John* 1.1.189ff as another example, *As You Like It* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1975), p95, 4.1.31n. We might also compare this passage with Samuel Purchas' critique of those gentlemen travellers who attain experience only with 'the losse or lessening of their estate' in the preface to *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes, Contayning a History of the World, in Sea Voyages & Lande-Travells, by Englishmen & others* (London, 1625) 5 vols., vol. 1, no pg. nos.

⁵⁴ Consider for example Guiderius and Arviragus in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* (1609). These two were stolen as babies from their true father, King Cymbeline, by Belarius in revenge for his unjust banishment. Belarius wonders at their inherent nobility: 'though trained up thus meanly/ I'th'cave wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit/ The roofs of palaces, and nature prompts them/ In simple and low things to prince it much/ Beyond the trick of others' (3.3.82-6). Innogen similarly perceives their paradoxical greatness (3.6.79-84).

having met him, Rosalind continues in her disguise as if 'out of love with [her] nativity'. Nor can she still plead necessity since the dangers that required disguise are passed. Rather, Ganymede provides Rosalind with the same voluntary alienation for which s/he criticises the traveller.

Despite Ganymede's supposed place in the forest, he is remarkably free of ties. He has a sister, Aliena, but no parents are mentioned. The magician uncle does not appear. Moreover, Ganymede eschews communication with the other shepherds. There are no singing competitions or shared repasts and no talk of pastoral love. He observes the courtship of Phoebe and Silvius as a pastoral diversion in which he interferes to uphold the status quo. The secret of Ganymede's true identity obviously creates a boundary between himself and the other inhabitants of Arden, most obviously Phoebe, whilst the perceived distinction in class, though apparently unfounded, keeps him away from Corin and Silvius. Yet Ganymede will take no part in the courtly world either. When he meets Duke Senior he boasts that he is of as good parentage as the duke and then runs away. There is no one with whom Ganymede may not interfere or conjure. Towards the end of the play, he promises to defy human space and time by making Rosalind appear before Orlando. With his uncle, Ganymede has lived 'obscured in the circle of the forest' and his association with magic suggests his liminality. He exists on the margins of aristocracy, of masculinity, even of humanity.

Rosalind/Ganymede's anti-social liberty and taste for satire are reflected in Jaques. On hearing that Frederick has been converted by a hermit, Jaques asks if it is really true that 'The Duke hath put on a religious life/ And thrown into neglect the pompous court' (5.4.179-80). Jaques is clearly attracted to Stoicism as matter for his own solipsistic posturing. The true

Stoic would hardly prize such a 'humorous sadness', aiming at an altogether more tranquil state of mind. Yet he is the only character at the end unwilling to partake of the festivities and to rejoin society. Rosalind's pleasure in alienation, a pleasure she partly shares with Jaques, must obviously be renounced if she is to rejoin the world. As she returns to the place in society dictated by her birth so she must also relinquish the freedom of vacillating between two sexual identities.

In the First Folio and in subsequent editions, Ganimede's speeches are explicitly attributed to Rosalind through speech prefixes. However, Lodge uses 'Ganimede' or the masculine pronoun (as I have done here). Catherine Belsey similarly refutes the idea that Rosalind has a continuous identity in the play, that we see Rosalind through Ganimede, rather than a figure whose sex is indeterminate. Instead the play suggests the possibility of plurality, an expansion of that theme of inclusiveness we have already identified in Rosalind. When she does reveal herself to her father and to Orlando in her wedding dress, Rosalind's identity contracts. She is now singular, feminine and reified, to be handed from one man to the other. She is displaced as the kingdom's heir by her husband and interrupted by Hymen at the wedding, though her reappearance to deliver the epilogue, still playing on the male and female possibilities of her character, partially redeems this impression. On the resolutions of *As You Like It* and of *Twelfth Night* Belsey writes:

At the end of each story the heroine abandons her disguise and dwindles into a wife. Closure depends on closing off the glimpsed transgression and reinstating a clearly defined sexual difference. But the plays are more than their endings, and the heroines become wives only after they have been shown to be something altogether more singular – because more plural.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ 'Disrupting Sexual Difference: Meaning and Gender in the Comedies' in *Alternative Shakespeares* ed. by John Drakakis (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), 166-90, 187-8.

The kind of self-aggrandisement enjoyed by Orlando is altogether more lasting because achieved through socially-approved rather than subversive means. Exile, a state apparently antithetical to society, allows him to find a place in that other world through the blessings of the goddess Fortune, but also through education, patronage and marriage. Montrose describes Orlando undergoing the same process of self-discovery as Rosalind:

In a playworld of romance, Orlando and Rosalind experience separation from childhood, journeying, posing and disguising, altered and confused relationships to parental figures, sexual ambiguity, and tension [...] The forest sojourn conducts Orlando and Rosalind from an initial situation of oppression and frustration to the threshold of interdependent new identities.⁵⁶

However, as Montrose argues so persuasively, this maturation must be seen in a specific social context. Orlando is located as a younger brother in English Renaissance society whose ambitions are foiled by the system of primogeniture. His situation reflects the difficulties of the adolescent in a patriarchal conspiracy to delay the maturation of its young men by keeping them firmly subordinated and delaying marriage (38). Montrose imagines the effect of *As You Like It* upon ambitious younger sons and on the Elizabethan/ Jacobean audience in general, each man's future to a large extent circumscribed by his class.

That *As You Like It* is explicitly and even aggressively concerned with ambition has been recognised by a number of critics. Judy Kronenfeld anticipates Montrose's perception that shepherds may negotiate a conflict between Christian and aristocratic values.⁵⁷ Applying this to *As You Like It*, she finds a surprising ambiguity in the depiction of courtiers' virtue relative

⁵⁶ Louis A. Montrose, "'The Place of a Brother'" in *As You Like It: Social Process and Comic Form*, *Sh. Q.* 32 (1981), 28-54, 40. Montrose suggests that the audience takes a similar imaginative journey in its withdrawal into the theatrical space. The Epilogue conducts it back across the threshold into the 'real' world.

⁵⁷ Judy Z. Kronenfeld, 'Social Rank and the Pastoral Ideals of *As You Like It*', *Sh. Q.* 29 (1978), 333-48, 335.

to that of shepherds.⁵⁸ Ralph Berry sees the play's characters driven by the urge to dominate one another as they negotiate the new hierarchy which exists in the forest, one that turns out to be almost an exact replica of that which previously existed in the court.⁵⁹ It is partly the forest's similarity to the court world that will enable Orlando to achieve his ambitions. The education he receives in the forest qualifies him to wield power in the world outside. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Valentine regrets that his friend Proteus will not join him in his journey to the Emperor's court:

I rather would entreat thy company
To see the wonders of the world abroad
Than, living dully sluggardized at home,
Wear out thy youth with shapeless idleness. (1.1.5-8)

Where Proteus is merely shapeless, Orlando believes himself to have been 'marred' by a brother's neglect (1.1.30-2). On the assumption that he is neither illiterate nor without grace (Oliver confirms that his brother has somehow educated himself), Orlando needs a sojourn at court to mould him into his desired and his natural shape. This is exactly what exile in Arden offers him. At home Orlando has been painfully aware of his imagined bestiality (1.1.9, 13-4, 17, 35). When he and Adam stumble into the forest, Arden seems to take on the savagery of which Orlando would accuse himself. It is an 'uncouth forest' of predatory animals in which he expects to meet only what is savage. Against this backdrop, he begins to identify himself with civility. Nevertheless, when he bursts upon the Duke's feast and offers to take food by force, Orlando is once again identified with the uncouth. The Duke responds that either he must be in desperate circumstances or a 'rude despiser of good manners' Orlando responds:

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 344-7. Kronenfeld refers to the debate between Touchstone and Corin as 'a contrast between the pretended gentleman and the real shepherd – a contrast not disadvantageous to the real shepherd' and finds other such representations of the artificiality of the courtier.

⁵⁹ 'No Exit from Arden' *MLR* 66 (1971), 11-20.

You touched my vein at first. The thorny point
 Of bare distress hath ta'en from me the show
 Of smooth civility. Yet am I inland bred,
 And know some nurture. (2.7.94-7)⁶⁰

Orlando now urges the exiles to prove *their* civility:

If ever you have looked on better days,
 If ever been where bells have knolled to church,
 If ever sat at any good man's feast,
 If ever from your eyelids wiped a tear,
 And know what 'tis to pity, and be pitied,
 Let gentleness my strong enforcement be. (113-8)

Orlando assumes that if they have known city life, they have known 'better days' and must therefore be ashamed to contemplate their fall. His speech is ironic in the context of life in Arden. Firstly, Duke Senior has already uttered a eulogy based on Arden's superiority to the 'envious court'. He welcomes the absence of 'painted pomp', flattery and corruption. Moreover, the forest can provide community, religion, philosophy and entertainment (2.1.1-17). As if to prove this, the experiences Orlando takes to imply civility have all lately been found in Arden. Jaques has lately wiped a tear from his eye over the fate of the deer (65-6). They are at this moment enjoying a good man's feast. The Duke has mentioned the possibility of sermons in stones and we will shortly be introduced to Sir Oliver Martext, the hedge-priest (3.3.58-98). Nevertheless, Duke Senior accepts Orlando's use of the past tense and repeats, 'True is it that we have seen better days ...' (120). There is no hint as to his tone. It could be melancholic or accompanied by a wry smile. For exile in this forest is as courtly and civilised as one makes it.

⁶⁰ See Madeleine Doran's article, "'Yet am I inland bred'" on the language of civility and baseness in Shakespeare. *Sh. Q.* 15 (1964). 99-114.

At the beginning of the play, Orlando complained that his elder brother barely recognised him as a De Boys and that he was denied the education this title merited. In the forest of Arden, these injustices are symbolically and then literally redressed. Whilst Rosalind challenges the very question of identity through the playing of multiple roles, Orlando needs to be recognised and defined by society. When Orlando relates his parentage, the Duke endorses his claim to be Sir Rowland's son by perceiving the knight's features 'Most truly limned and living in your face' (198). Orlando's value is seen to increase as a result of this name and he is given a position at the woodland court as one of the Duke's foresters. There is an obvious comparison to be made between this scene and Orlando's presentation to Duke Frederick after the wrestling. There his name inspired displeasure and denied him the reward for his victory (1.2.213-9). Moreover, Orlando's education in eloquence begins with the Duke's request that he speak. Duke Senior calls on him to relate 'all his fortunes' (2.7.203), something that Orlando has longed to do. In the first scene, he rehearsed the injustices he had suffered to Adam, a man who had heard the story many times. When Orlando finally expressed his frustration to Oliver the latter had to be violently constrained to listen. Violence is a form of self-expression for Orlando, one perhaps easier than language, and the threat to rip out his brother's tongue suggests his discomfort at Oliver's eloquence (1.1.55-8). Similarly, the wrestling contest may be the only opportunity the younger brother has to make a place for himself in the world (1.2.175-81).⁶¹ In the forest of Arden, Orlando quickly learns that civility, particularly the art of rhetoric, and not violence will get him what he wants.

In *The Metamorphoses of Shakespearean Comedy*, William C. Carroll describes how any

⁶¹ In *Rosalynde*, the wrestling is presented as degrading to one of Rosalind's birth and an indication of his desperate circumstances. Lodge describes how the ladies 'grieved that so goodly a young man should venture in so base an action', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 2, 171. Shakespeare suggests only that it is beneath the ladies of the court to watch it, 1.2.127-9.

kind of transformation will bring about a linguistic crisis.⁶² The loss of speech is central to the tragedy of banishment. In *As You Like It*, Touchstone finds his witticisms falling upon deaf ears and laments this condition. As he explains to Audrey:

When a man's verses cannot be understood, nor a man's good wit seconded with the forward child, understanding, it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room. Truly, I would the gods had made thee poetical. (3.3.9-13)

Touchstone's forebear, an exile whose wit was wasted upon savages, is Ovid. The Fool tells Audrey 'I am here with thee and thy goats as the most capricious poet honest Ovid was among the Goths' (3.3.5-6). But if Touchstone's wit lacks an audience then, again like Ovid, this in no way prevents his verbosity. Moreover, if he is misunderstood by the natives, there are plenty of courtiers around to appreciate him. This is also the precondition for Orlando's linguistic development. The language of Arden is profoundly familiar. It is still presumably French, the exiles' native tongue, and its mode is literary, specifically, the language of pastoral romance. The popularity of *Rosalynde* ensured that Shakespeare's play would be familiar to his audience. In fact, the hermeneutic confidence that the reader or audience might feel when confronted with such a world is expressed by Lodge's exiles. Ganimede spies familiar characters engraved in the trees which he takes to be the work of shepherds. Aliena replies:

No doubt [...] this poesie is the passion of some perplexed shepheard, that being enamoured of some faire and beautifull Shepheardesse, suffered some sharpe repulse, and therefore complained of the crueltie of his Mistris. (181)

Just as the trees' language can be understood, so the significance of any carving in trees is easily accessible. When Orlando comes to Arden, trees are already linguistic artefacts and

⁶² *The Metamorphoses of Shakespearean Comedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 33-4.

animals partly allegorical through the conventions of pastoral. Of course it depends upon the context in which one reads the forest. As a philosopher with marked Stoic tendencies, Duke Senior finds the forest expounding the meanings he desires to find there and which Stoicism helps him to write upon it. Nevertheless, he attests to the transparent meanings of the forest, the 'tongues in trees, books in the running brooks' and the 'sermons in stones' (2.1.16-7). Alan Brissenden describes the forest as 'a schoolroom'.⁶³

Orlando responds to the wordiness of this forest and to its literary antecedents by following pastoral tradition and composing his own verses on the trees. This in itself is an expression of his transformation. In *Rosalynde*, Rosader is adept at poetry before he enters Arden. When Rosalynde rewards him for his victory at wrestling, he thanks her by immediately composing a 'sonnet' of two quatrains and a couplet (172). At the same point in Shakespeare's play, Orlando not only fails to write a poem but is struck dumb. He is reduced to 'a quintain, a mere lifeless block' (1.2.240). This may be a more realistic response to the sudden feelings of love Rosalind inspires in him. Yet Shakespeare's alteration of his source here also serves to contrast this Orlando with the courtier he will become, adorning the forest with his expressions of love.

The eloquence Orlando discovers through his encounter with Arden and with the linguistically dextrous Ganymede, is not merely important for his chances of wooing Rosalind. It is also essential to his renewed claim to civility, to nobility and power. The legend of Orpheus whose eloquence called cities into being is frequently cited in Renaissance

⁶³ Alan Brissenden ed., *As You Like It* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 42.

pastoral.⁶⁴ In *Mucedorus*, the protagonist delivers a lengthy encomium to his own education through a comparison of himself with Orpheus. Mucedorus has just encountered the wild man, Bremo, who now threatens to kill him. Rather than respond with violence, Mucedorus describes his power to civilise the wild man through oratory. He relates how in the beginning, men lived in forests like beasts:

Behold, one Orpheus came (as poets tell),
 And them from rudeness unto reason brought:
 Who led by reason, some forsook the woods;
 Instead of caves, they built them castles strong;
 Cities and towns were founded by them then.
 Glad were they, [that] they found such ease,
 And in the end they grew to perfect amity.
 Weighing their former wickedness,
 They term'd the time, wherein they lived then
 A golden age, a goodly golden age.
 Now, Bremo, for so I hear thee called,
 If men which lived tofore, as thou dost now,
 Wildly in wood, addicted all to spoil,
 Returned were by worthy Orpheus' means,
 Let me (like Orpheus) cause thee to return
 From murder, bloodshed, and like cruelty.⁶⁵

Unfortunately, Bremo's enchantment does not last long and he is dispatched by Mucedorus with a sword. Yet pastoral dramatises other examples of dangerous outlaws who have been apparently redeemed by the instruction of a courtier. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Valentine is chosen by the outlaws as their leader in part for his linguistic ability. Although there is no suggestion that they choose him with a view to being *redeemed* by his language, that is in effect what happens. At the end of the play, Valentine presents them to the Duke thus: 'They are reformèd, civil, full of good, / And fit for great employment, worthy lord' (5.4.154-5). These are men who only a short while before had expressed no repentance, one

⁶⁴ See Tonkin on Spenser's association of poetry and social order in *Spenser's Courteous Pastoral*, 293-4.

⁶⁵ *Mucedorus* in *Dodsley's A Select Collection of Old English Plays*, vol. 7, 243-4.

of whom had murdered because the mood took him.⁶⁶

Charles in Heywood's *The Foure Prentices of London* faces a similar challenge as leader of a group of Italian banditti. He attempts to impose certain laws upon them. The Clowne responds that if the banditti had wanted to keep laws they would not have been forced out into the country.⁶⁷ Charles' ambitions reflect the exile's need to prove his 'sociability' by civilising others:

I'll make these villaines worke in severall trades,
And in these Forrests make a Common-wealth.
When them to civil nurture I can bring,
They shal proclaim me of these mountains King. (185)

This pastoral convention also reflects the old Robin Hood tradition where the outlaw leader creates an alternative justice in his society, partly through the giving of laws,⁶⁸ and finally leads his men back into the world. In *The Tale of Gamelyn*, Chaucer's retelling of the Robin Hood story that inspired Lodge's romance, the protagonist consistently acts as Justice.⁶⁹ Forced to flee the town by his tyrannous older brother, Johan, who has stolen his inheritance, Gamelyn joins a band of outlaws in the forest and finally becomes their leader. Elevated to the position of sheriff, Johan arranges Gamelyn's trial and when the latter does not appear he prepares to hang their other brother, Sir Ote, instead. But Gamelyn arrives in time and takes over the trial. He hangs the Justice, Johan and the twelve jurymen who found him guilty. The

⁶⁶ The unconvincing nature of their reformation was absurdly heightened in Mark Rylance's production of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* in 1996 at Shakespeare's Globe in London. Here the outlaws were presented as a gang of deformed and nightmarish creatures whose appearance did not alter in the course of this 'reformation'. Whilst this is an interesting comment on perceptions of the outlaw, it made Valentine's sincere recommendation impossible to accept.

⁶⁷ *The Foure Prentises of London* in *Heywood's Dramatic Works* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), 6 vols., vol. 2, p183.

⁶⁸ See also the laws dictated by Robin in *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, pp153-4.

⁶⁹ On the relationship between *The Tale of Gamelyn*, *Rosalynde* and *As You Like It* see *As You Like It: A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare* ed. by Richard Knowles (New York: MLA, 1977), 483-7.

King endorses Gamelyn's dispensation of justice:

The kyng loved well sir Ote and made him Iustise.
 And after, the kyng made Gamelyn bothe in est and west.
 Chef Iustice of al his fre forest;
 Alle his wighte zonge men the kyng forzaf here gilt,
 And sitthen in good office the kyng hem hath i-pilt,⁷⁰

Orlando does not have an opportunity to reform anyone but he describes his love poems as engendering a civilisation in the tradition of Orpheus:

Why should this a desert be?
 For it is unpeopled? No.
 Tongues I'll hang on every tree,
 That shall civil sayings show. (3.2.122-5)⁷¹

In a sense Orlando is right to place his love poetry in the context of civil sayings for it will literally engender a nation. Such carvings on the trees tell Rosalind that her love for Orlando is reciprocated. They also capture the attention of Ganymede and form an introduction between Orlando and the man who proclaims a cure for love. This relationship is explicitly represented as one of pupil and master and the former often speaks little. What Ganymede tries to counter in his pupil is a conventional idealism about Rosalind and eternal love. He prepares Orlando for difficulty and disappointment and for the independence of his Rosalind expressed as multiplicity and capriciousness. Moreover, through Ganymede's counsel, the solipsism implied by Petrarchan worship is rejected for a passion which 'can live no longer by thinking' (5.2.48). From the inherent sterility of the Petrarchan form with its equation of desire and death, Orlando moves towards a more earthly and equal union. The marriage of

⁷⁰ See *The Tale of Gamelyn* ed. by Walter W. Skeat (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1843), 2nd ed., ll 890-4.

⁷¹ This reference in pastoral to the 'desert unpeopled' is conventional and recurs in verse form in Lodge's *A Margarite of America* (pub. 1595). Here, the courtly lover, Minecius, puts on a 'pastorall habite' to woo Philenia. He carves a poem into a tree beginning, 'O desarts be you peopled by my plaints', *Menaphon* by Robert Greene & *A Margarite of America* by Thomas Lodge, 126. Where Orlando uses poetry to populate the forest, Minecius orders the native inhabitants to flee and leave him alone in his pose of despair.

Rosalind and Orlando is indeed a worldly affair. Despite his naïvete and idealism, Orlando's love will considerably enhance his social position.

In *Rosalynde*, the banished lovers fear for the social inequality of their match. Before exile, Rosalynde reflects that she is a princess and ought at least to marry a rich man not a penniless gentleman (174-5). In the forest, Rosader describes his aspiration to possess Rosalynde with a string of metaphors that echo his father's deathbed warning against ambition:⁷²

I, unhappie I, have let mine eye soare with the Eagle against so bright a Sunne, that I am quite blinde; [...] Ah shepheard, I have reacht at a star, my desires have mounted above my degree, & my thoughts above my fortunes. I being a peasant have ventred to gaze on a Princesse, whose honors are too high to vouchsafe such base loves. (201)

Of course, Rosader is guilty of litotes here, being far from a peasant. If he were, there is no doubt what his fate would be. In *Menaphon*, the eponymous shepherd realises that his love for Sephestia is impossible when her true parentage is revealed:

seeing his passions were too aspiring, and that with the *Syrian* wolves he barkt against the Moone, he lefte such lettice as were too fine for his lips, and courted his old love *Pesana*, to whom shortly after he was married. (108)

When the love between nobility and shepherd classes cannot be ignored but will be resolved in marriage, the shepherd/ess invariably turns out to be the other's social equal. Nobility has been hidden by disguise or a rustic upbringing but is nevertheless perceptible all along as in

⁷² Sir John of Bourdeaux warns his sons: 'they which stare at the Starres, stumble upon stones; and such as gaze at the Sunne (unlesse they bee Eagle eyed) fall blinde. Soare not with the Hobbie, least you fall with the Larke', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 2, 161-2.

the case of Pastorella and Calidore, Perdita and Florizel.⁷³ In *As You Like It*, the social barrier which exists between Rosalind and Orlando, one a princess the other merely a gentleman, has only been crossed by exile. Leo Salinger writes:

But for the misfortune of her father's exile, they might not have met in sympathy as at first; but for the second misfortune of her own exile, as well as his, they could not have met in apparent equality in the Forest [...] As in Lodge's story, it is 'the good housewife Fortune' who unexpectedly makes their courtship and marriage possible.⁷⁴

In Lodge's story and in Shakespeare's the social impossibility of the union is subordinated to the impossibility created by the lovers' gender.⁷⁵ Once Rosalind has been revealed to be a woman, there is no impediment to her match with Orlando and the other characters pair off accordingly. There is no suggestion that a match formed with the deposed heir to a dukedom is unworthy that princess when she is reinstated. This is partly because of the transformation that occurs in Orlando. He has moved from bestiality to exile to forester to lover and now he anticipates the inheritance of a kingdom. The eloquence Orlando has learnt will be used to pronounce laws among a real society of people rather than a circle of trees. As in a number of other pastoral romances and plays, the virtuous gentleman is rewarded beyond what he could have hoped for through his pastoral exile. That period of exile has been primarily characterised by the pursuit of education. Everything has been found in the forest for his improvement. At the same time, Fortune demands that he pass a small test, namely the

⁷³ In *Menaphon*, Sephestia and Melicertus are banished on account of their unequal marriage, though five years after the event. Separated by a shipwreck and believing the other to be drowned, they meet up again disguised in shepherd's clothing and fall in love. This love for a mere shepherd/ess is justified by both on the grounds of a perceived nobility in the beloved. Sephestia says of Melicertus 'his face is not inchacte with anie rusticke proportion, his browes containe the characters of nobilitie, and his lookes in shepheards weeds are Lordlie, his voyce pleasing, his wit full of gentrie ...', 56-7.

⁷⁴ *Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy*, 298. Ann Jennalie Cook suggests that this 'patently impossible match', impossible on account of its social inequality, unrestricted courtship and easy paternal acquiescence, is 'perhaps the high point of fanciful invention in the comedy', *Making a Match*, 59-60.

⁷⁵ Of course, not even this was necessarily insurmountable in contemporary drama as evidenced by Lyly's *Gallathea* (1585) or *The Maid's Metamorphosis*.

renunciation of her blessings for virtue's sake. When Orlando discovers his brother lying under a tree in danger from a lion and a snake, he delays in rescuing him from motives of revenge. There is also the consideration, again made explicit in Lodge, that Orlando has an opportunity to achieve his ambitions through his brother's death. That he does not take it, results in reconciliation between the brothers and Oliver's offering to Orlando what the latter might have stolen from him. With Duke Senior's reinstatement, however, Orlando will inherit not merely an estate but a dukedom.

The other exiles undergo varying degrees of transformation. Duke Senior may have learned something from his experience. Oliver has achieved a spiritual epiphany consolidated by the experience of falling in love and the social acceptance marriage signifies. Even Duke Frederick has entered the seclusion of the forest and found himself completely transformed. Exile is the precondition to metamorphosis in this play. Nevertheless, the social identity of characters is prized above all others. In the context of the Senecan/Ciceronian debate on philosophical leisure or public service, the play comes out on the side of Cicero. The exiles must return to society. They must merge some sense of inner self with socially-constructed roles. Rosalind's experience of exile is profoundly fulfilling because she recreates herself as Ganymede. This character offers her the authority of a man and landowner, with the liberty and the wonderful potentiality of the foundling. Where Rosalind plays at being an outcast, exile is an opportunity for Orlando to commit himself to society. His transformation in the forest is a process which replicates the stages he should have passed through in society: recognition of his birth, education, patronage, marriage and inheritance. Ultimately, exile is not the end of one's civic identity but the site of its rebirth. It is an opportunity to become more worthy of society and only secondarily to transform that society itself.

BEYOND THE REALM OF FANTASY IN *KING LEAR*¹

Banishment in *King Lear* is excessive. Nearly all the main characters are expelled from society: Cordelia, Kent, Edgar, Lear, the Fool, Gloucester. This tally of exiles is exceeded by *As You Like It* in which even Duke Frederick is finally drawn into the forest and yet the sense of alienation in *King Lear* is more profound. The tragedy is constructed upon successive images and acts of schism – the division of the kingdom, the separation of Lear from his kingship and his daughters, the ‘division’ hinted at between Albany and Cornwall, the sundering of Gloucester and Edgar. The self-consciousness of exile in the play is reinforced by Edgar’s deliberate assumption of the identity of Poor Tom, an archetypal outcast. Indeed, Leo Salinger has referred to *King Lear* as ‘largely a fable about alienation’.² This statement suggests the recurrence of banishment at a literal, figurative and allegorical level.³ In *As You Like It* also, the repetition of banishment creates a pattern which seems to be imposed upon the characters rather than to be convincingly generated within the fiction. Perhaps because the author of division seems to be working within pastoral conventions, thus promising reunion and regeneration, this pattern is less disturbing. But *King Lear* invokes this pastoral movement only to reject its consolations. Hence, the tragic excess of banishment in the play appears dangerously outside human control. More than in *As You Like It*, there may seem to

¹ I will be using the Quarto text of the play as included in the *Oxford Complete Works*. This text is more suitable to my argument in that it offers lengthier descriptive passages, for example the account of Lear’s condition on the heath, Albany’s condemnation of Gonoril and Cordelia’s reaction to the letter. The trial scene and the extended philosophising of Edgar in the Quarto are also reasons for using this text. In doing so, I am assuming that the Folio is a Shakespearean revision of the Quarto text and that the Quarto was performed before these revisions were made. On this question see Stanley Wells ‘The Once and Future *King Lear*’, 1-22, 11, and Gary Taylor ‘*King Lear*: The Date and Authorship of the Folio Version’, 351-468 in *The Division of the Kingdoms* ed. by Gary Taylor and Michael Warren (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).

² Leo Salinger, ‘*King Lear*, Montaigne and Harsnett’, *Aligarh Journal of English Studies* 8 (1983), 124-66, 125.

³ On the allegorical structure of the play see John F. Danby, *Shakespeare’s Doctrine of Nature: A Study of King Lear* (London: Faber and Faber, 1949), especially p. 52, and Maynard Mack who emphasises the play’s debt to folk tale motifs, the morality play and pastoral romance, *King Lear in Our Time* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1966), 43-80.

be some abstract alienating force at work. Nicholas Grene writes:

An irresistible movement is on towards the expulsion of the good, a movement so apparently arbitrary and convulsive as to suggest something beyond the observable concatenation of human characters and event [...] a pattern which we experience as mysterious and inscrutable, though much of the play is devoted to anguished efforts to understand it.⁴

In this chapter I will consider the excesses of banishment that might lead one to the perception of an abstract alienating force in *King Lear* whilst exploring the human and political motivations behind it. Banishment will be shown as a cruel disjuncting and as a playful refashioning of men.

We might posit the origins of Grene's 'irresistible movement' in Act 1 scene 1 of *King Lear*.⁵ The play opens with the division of the kingdom and Lear's renunciation of kingly sway. It is a division planned, where the banishments of Cordelia and Kent are not. The question of how the Jacobean audience would have regarded Lear's action, particularly when the play offers so little guidance as to its interpretation, is central to our perception of the succeeding acts of banishment.

In English chronicle history, the line of kings to which Lear belongs, beginning with Brutus and ending with Gorboduc, was remarkable for dividing Britain and it is partly through the retelling of these legends that *King Lear* was created. On 18 January 1562, the law students, Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, appealed to the Queen and her parliament to settle the question of the succession. Their play, *Gorboduc*, insisted on the necessity of one ruler in a

⁴ Nicholas Grene, *Shakespeare's Tragic Imagination* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1992), 162. Leah Scragg describes the acts of banishment in both *As You Like It* and *King Lear* as amounting to 'a universal phenomenon' in *Shakespeare's Mouldy Tales*, 141.

⁵ Jonas A. Barish and Marshall Waingrow ascribe to this first act of division the power to usher in 'an epoch marked by splitting, cracking, and parting of every sort' in 'Service in *King Lear*', *Sh. Q.* 9 (1958), 347-55, 353.

kingdom and of Parliament's approval in creating an heir. Civil war ensued when the succession was left uncertain. The Chorus begins:

When settled stay doth hold the royal throne
 In steadfast place, by known and doubtless right,
 And chiefly when descent on one alone
 Makes single and unparted reign to light,
 Each change of course unjoins the whole estate
 And yields it thrall to ruin by debate. (1.2.370-5)⁶

Gorboduc decides to abdicate and to split the kingdom between his two sons, 'To be above them only in the name/ Of father, not in kingly state also' as Philander puts it (1.2.158-9). The result is fratricide, filicide, regicide and rebellion. Before his decision, Gorboduc had been offered different advice by three counsellors. Only the last, Eubulus, opposed the plan entirely. He referred back to the first division of Britain under Brutus:

He, thinking that the compass did suffice
 For his three sons three kingdoms eke to make,
 Cut it in three, as you would now in twain.
 But how much British blood hath since been spilt
 To join again the sundered unity!
 What princes slain before their timely hour!
 What waste of towns and people in the land!
 What treasons heaped on murders and on spoils!
 Whose just revenge even yet is scarcely ceased;
 Ruthful remembrance is yet raw in mind. (1.2.272-81)

In *Gorboduc*, the division of the kingdom releases divisiveness into government which results in political and national chaos. As above, the image of sundering takes on bloody overtones. When *King Lear* was written such anti-division rhetoric was particularly topical, appropriated by James I in his plans for the reunification of England and Scotland. The King's supporters depicted him as the fulfilment of prophecy, the second Brutus, come to

⁶ *Gorboduc or Ferrex and Porrex* ed. by Irby B. Cauthen (London: Edward Arnold, 1970).

atone for his predecessor's original sin and the misfortunes it had brought about.⁷ In Anthony Munday's pageant 'The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia' (1605), the first Brutus pays tribute to James:

And what fierce war by no means could effect,
To re-unite those sund' red lands in one,
The hand of heaven did peacefully elect
By mildest grace, to seat on Britain's throne
This second Brute, than whom there else was none.
Wales, England, Scotland, sever'd first by me:
To knit again in blessed unity.⁸

In his first speech to parliament, James emphasised the unnaturalness, even the monstrosity, of division. He described the two realms united by language, religion, 'maners' and by geography. The natural boundaries of the island expressed the unity of these kingdoms. The King figures the relationship between himself and the two realms as that between husband and wife, head and body. To insist upon the individuality of England and Scotland is to profane the marriage, making the King a polygamist, or to insist 'that I being the Head, should have a divided and monstrous Body'.⁹ Not only is division an act of political dismemberment, it is an offence against Creation. This argument is expanded upon by Edward Forset, who argues thus in support of reunification:

Have we not had within this one land of England, the hideous Heptarchie of seven heads at once? nay hath not the whole Iland of *Britania*, being a bodie perfectly shaped, rounded, and bounded, with an invironing sea, beene a long time thus dissevered, and disfigured by that unluckie dualitie the authour of division? untill at the last the mightie and onely wonder working hand of

⁷ See John W. Draper. 'The Occasion of *King Lear*', *Stud. in Phil.* 34 (1937), 176-85, and Glynne Wickham 'From Tragedy to Tragi-Comedy: *King Lear* as Prologue', *Sh. S.* 26 (1973), 33-48.

⁸ 'The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia' in *Jacobean Civic Pageants* ed. by Richard Dutton (Keele: Ryburn Publishing, 1995), 119-36, 129.

⁹ 'A Speech, as it was delivered in the upper house of the Parliament to the Lords spirituall and temporall, and to the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses there assembled', 19 March 1603, in *The Political Works of James I.* a reprint of the 1616 edition, ed. by Charles McIlwain (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1965), 269-80, 271-2, 272.

God, wpying away the deformitie (not by any violent cutting off, but by a new moulding as it were of the two heads into one) hath restored it againe to his first right, imperiall, and most monarchiall greatnesse.¹⁰

James's incorporation of the two kingdoms invokes the principle of the king's two bodies (as discussed regarding *Richard II*). According to this theory, the realm (the land, its laws and government) is incorporated in the mystical crown which passes from one sovereign to another. This inheritance is figured as a divine body invested in the king's mortal one. The irony in James' appropriation of the two bodies' theory was that he consistently urged the king's proprietorial claim to the kingdom.¹¹ Where Plowden's theory proposed the realm as inalienable, inviolable and eternal, James argued that the king inherited a kingdom as a man inherits property and could thus bestow it as he wished. Plowden also explicitly condemned the division of a kingdom between heirs, particularly daughters. He warned that the crown must descend to the eldest alone, otherwise 'then shoulde the subiectes have dyvers rulers, and then woulde one rule one waie, and an other an other waye. *Et nemo potest duobus divis servire*'. He speaks of the 'muche inconvenience' arising from the division of a kingdom into six or seven parts!¹² James concurred with this advice, warning his son, Prince Henry, not to divide the realm and again using Brutus as an example.¹³ Nevertheless, the prerogative James I claimed is both claimed and acted upon by Lear.

In the context of such theory and polemic, Marie Axton posits Lear's division of the realm as the central fatal action of the play. The chain of events thus created is 'politically absolutely

¹⁰ *A Comparative Discourse of the Bodies Natural and Politique*, 58.

¹¹ See James' autocratic claims in *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* in *Political Works*, 53-70, 62.

¹² Quoted by Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies*, 31.

¹³ In *Basilikon Doron*, published before his accession to the English throne in 1599 and reprinted in 1603, James warns his son that 'by deviding your kingdomes, yee shall leave the seed of division and discord among your posteritie: as befell to this Ile, by the division and assignement thereof, to the three sonnes of Brutus, Lochrine, Albanact, and Camber'. *Political Works*, 3-52, 37.

coherent':

The old King's banishment, the storm, thunder, war, and death of Cordelia all stem from this act which divides the realm and places power in the hands of Lear's two evil daughters.¹⁴

Nevertheless, as Axton points out, Lear is not conscious of any crime against kingship and thus does not recognise the political origins of his tragedy. It is questionable whether the play will support such a reading either. Axton notes that after 3.4, there is no reference to Lear's responsibility as a king and that the audience is now asked to focus upon him as a man.¹⁵ Any political critique of *King Lear* confronts a certain amount of resistance from the play itself.

To interpret the immediate political significance of division in *King Lear*, we need to ask two basic questions: what is Lear's motivation for dividing his kingdom and what does he hope to achieve. Neither question is easily answerable from the material of Act 1 scene 1. In *Gorboduc*, the King expresses his desire to relinquish sovereignty in his old age. By placing his two sons in power whilst he lives, he will avoid contention over the succession (1.2.7-21) and he will also be able to teach his sons how to rule (47-76). In John Higgins' version of *A Mirror for Magistrates*, Brutus is already on the point of death. His formal announcement of division in the presence of his kindred and retainers is intended to prevent future discord.¹⁶ In neither scene does the King justify the division of the realm between his sons over the conventional primogeniture. In *King Lear*, we have even less sense of the policy behind the division.¹⁷ In both texts, the King expresses a desire to relinquish cares of state. Yet it is only in the Folio that Lear anticipates his death (1.1.40-1) and thus recognises the need to settle the

¹⁴ *The Queen's Two Bodies*, 137.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹⁶ *The First Parte of the Mirour for Magistrates* (1574) by John Higgins STC 13444, Fol. 11-3.

¹⁷ In the Folio text the King refers to his 'darker purpose', 1.1.36, whilst the Quarto obfuscates further with 'darker purposes', 1.37.

question of the succession:

We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. (43-5)

The absence in the Quarto of any political foresight on Lear's part is striking. Where Brutus and Gorboduc act in what they believe to be the national interest,¹⁸ Lear says nothing to suggest he has any conception of the nation. His definition of kingship is of cares and business (40) but not the preservation of Albion's interests. The succession is a private decision with ramifications for Lear's family but it is projected no further at this point. This is most evident if we compare the criteria for succession in *A Mirror for Magistrates* and *King Lear*.

In Higgins' poem, the division of the realm is founded on the feudal system of reciprocal bonds. Brutus' love test is primarily addressed to his counsellors not to his sons. He reminds the former of all that they have received at his hands. He has loved and rewarded them for their virtues and now they must express their gratitude by discharging 'the trust reposed in you':

Now must I prove, if paynes were well bestowde,
Or if I spent my gratefull giftes in vayne:
Or if these great good turnes to you I owde,
And might not aske your loyall loves againe.
Which if I wist what tonge could tell my payne,
I meane if you ungratefull mindes do beare:
What meaneth death, to let me linger here. (Fol. 12)

Britain's future depends upon the lords' and counsellors' fulfilment of their obligations: to

¹⁸ Brutus tells his audience that if they obey his will and precepts, 'There is no doubt, but evermore with fame/ You shall enjoye the *Britaynes* realme and name', Fol. 12. Similarly, one justification for Gorboduc's actions is that by empowering both sons equally he will prevent civil war (172-202).

uphold Brutus' will, to teach his sons to rule wisely and to work for peace. This passage anticipates Lear's insistence on asking for love, on proving love, and on the horrors of ingratitude. Brutus also anticipates Lear by bringing on a map.¹⁹ But Lear's love test is very different in its appeal to his daughters for expressions of affection rather than for a commitment to the future of the kingdom. Lear does not recognise the significance of Cordelia's bond of love and duty. He demands an excessive and passionate self-abnegation, apparently divorced from any political context as implied by the bond.²⁰ Ironically, this is the qualification for rule in Albion. The daughter who limits love within reasonable bounds, who lives more in the world than in her father's looks, is unfit to hold sway in the kingdom.

If Lear seems largely oblivious to the political responsibilities of a king, or to the implications of the bond to a feudal lord, he knows when he has received an affront to paternity. Lear presents himself before the court as the benevolent patriarch, referring to his 'paternal care' and his 'father's heart', and this image of him resonates throughout the scene in a way that his kingship does not. Lear describes the division as a generous act of love. Might we then see him as having subordinated kingship to paternity? This was one contemporary interpretation of Brutus's division of the realm. In 'The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia', Munday presents the figure of Britannia alongside the three kingdoms into which she was divided, Loegria, Cambria and Albania. Loegria rebukes Brutus for this schism:

¹⁹ See *The Mirror for Magistrates*, Fol. 12. There is no reference in *The True Chronicle Historie* to a map appearing on the stage though Shakespeare had already had recourse to one thus in *1 Henry IV*.

²⁰ John Turner describes this first scene as 'an improvised perversion of the feudal ceremony of commendation, when a subject openly declared his loyalty to the king, and the king in return granted him his particular charters', 'King Lear' in *Shakespeare: The Play of History*, 89-118, 100. Annabel Patterson rejects the idea that the play presents a feudal world but sees its archaism as a 'ruse' to permit analysis of socioeconomics and of social justice in Jacobean England. She considers the love test in *King Lear* as an attempt by the King to set up a contractual obligation between himself and his heirs (approximating thus to Brutus' feudal love test). Thus, she argues, Lear complicates the aristocratic system of inheritance by insisting upon a kind of tax. It is the beginning of the play's examination of the distribution of wealth and its insistence on a contract between rich and poor, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 106-19.

But she whom thou hadst made one monarchy
 To be so sever'd, to thy sons might show
 Some sign of love, to her small courtesy.²¹

Similarly, in *The True Chronicle Historie of King Leir* (1590)²², the monarch's actions are perceived in a dual context of paternity and kingship. Leir is planning to use Cordella's protestation of love for him to coerce her into marriage with the King of Ireland. Perillus warns him 'Yet to become so provident a Prince,/ Lose not the title of a loving father' (1.74-5). In a soliloquy before the love test and the division, Leir confesses: 'Oh, what a combat feeles my panting heart,/ 'Twixt childrens love, and care of Common weale!' (3.202-3). He makes the wrong choice and spends the rest of the play being punished for his paternal tyranny. Only with Cordella's forgiveness can he be restored to the throne. The tragi-comedy punishes the senex who tries to marry his daughter against her will and then banishes her. It punishes only incidentally the king who casts off his kingdom. There is no hint of a conflict between paternal and kingly duties in the first scene of Shakespeare's *Chronicle Historie*. The paternal seems to have subsumed all other considerations.

Of the many perceived parallels between Lear and James I, this emphasis upon paternity is significant.²³ In his political writings, the image of the father is one of James I's favourite metaphors for kingship. Fathers provide for their children materially but they are also the

²¹ *Jacobean Civic Pageants*, 128.

²² Reproduced in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, vol. 7, 337-401.

²³ Richard Halpern describes how James' wasting of the realm through the granting of monopolies and the creation of new titles may be reflected in Lear's wasting of his realm through division. He also draws a parallel between Lear's division of the sign and power of his kingship and that forced upon James I when he declared that the kingdoms were united but was unable to realise this union, or when he expounded his theories of autocratic monarchy whilst becoming more financially dependent upon Parliament. See *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Genealogy of Capital* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 231-4. On the Fool's reference to monopolies in the Quarto text see Gary Taylor, 'Monopolies, Show Trials, Disaster, and Invasion: *King Lear* and Censorship' in *The Division of the Kingdoms*, 75-119, 102-9.

source of affection, education and discipline. In return, the child owes an inviolable duty and obedience to the father. Whatever he may do to them, they must never rise up against him or threaten his authority for this would be 'monstrous and unnatural'.²⁴ James repeatedly used the image of an inviolable paternal authority to argue for the necessary cruelty of a king and to prohibit any thought of rebellion in his subjects. Four years after the first performance of *King Lear*, in 1609, James again invoked the image of the father in a speech to Parliament:

Now a Father may dispose of his Inheritance to his children, at his pleasure: yea, even disinherit the eldest upon just occasions, and preferre the youngest, according to his liking; make them beggars, or rich at his pleasure; restraine, or banish out of his presence, as hee findes them give cause of offence, or restore them in favour againe with the penitent sinner: So may the King deale with his Subjects.²⁵

King James subordinates the paternal to the regal in this metaphor. His father transparently acts as a king in banishing the child 'out of his presence'. Shakespeare's *King Lear* has behaved exactly as James describes. He first raises his youngest daughter above her sisters for preferment. He then banishes her from his presence when she offends him. But Lear has acted only as a father, that is, he foresees his actions in paternal terms alone. In fact, the banishment of Cordelia has enormous political consequences.

Despite contemporary reservations about the division of kingdoms, the play seems resigned to or at least non-committal about the original plan for a tripartite division. The first scene begins with a brief, rather opaque discussion between Kent and Gloucester on this plan (1-7). They depict Lear proceeding with neutrality, ignoring his prejudice for Albany by giving both sons-in-law equal portions. Harry V Jaffa has argued that the original tripartite plan was the

²⁴ *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies, Political Works*, 65.

²⁵ 'A Speech to the Lords and Commons of the Parliament at White-Hall', 21 March 1609, *Political Works*, 306-25. 308.

work of Shakespeare's greatest king at his most creative: 'an action predestined by the very means required to bring unity to the kingdom'.²⁶ He proposes that Lear's achievement in keeping the kingdom united thus far has depended upon alliances with lords at the extremities of his realm, formalised in the marriage of his daughters to Albany and Cornwall. By marrying Cordelia to Burgundy and bestowing England upon them, Lear will bolster the realm internally, ensuring the balance of power among the sisters, whilst also safeguarding it from European threat.²⁷

It is Cordelia's refusal to play her part that interrupts this piece of statecraft. Lear is moved to banish her and suddenly the world of the play has changed. The map must be redrawn to contain the absence left by Cordelia. Gonoril and Regan, whose insincerity and ambition have already been implied, become with their husbands the two pillars of the kingdom. France is enraged by his future wife's treatment and leaves at odds with Albion. Kent, Lear's loyal adviser, is banished. That this division may have national and even cosmic implications is expressed by Kent: 'Revoke thy doom, or whilst I can vent clamour/ From my throat I'll tell thee thou dost evil' (1.155-6).²⁸

In *Shakespeare's Festive Tragedy*, Naomi Conn Liebler describes the implications of division:

when the fundamental inscription of known national identity is altered, the definitions of all relations are destabilized, including [...] the definition of "human". At the spatial center of the play is the question of what that word

²⁶ Harry V. Jaffa, 'The Limits of Politics: *King Lear*, Act I, scene i' in *Shakespeare's Politics* ed. by Allan Bloom and Harry V. Jaffa (New York and London: Basic Books Inc., 1964), 113-45, 122.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Jaffa argues that Lear must favour a union with Burgundy over France. An alliance with the latter might inspire French territorial claims upon Britain, 124-5.

²⁸ Gloucester will later ascribe prophetic powers to Kent: 'He said it would be thus, poor banished man!', 11.151.

means, and with it the definition and possibility of civilization.²⁹

Yet this new map is created through the personal schism between Lear and his daughter. Liebler's focus on the structure of civilisation threatened by human action in *King Lear*, is both striking and illuminating. Nevertheless, where she views Lear's 'disintegration' as 'a sustained personified emblem' for the rupture of Britain (196), I see the play as more concerned with Lear's division from himself, as symbolized by the divided map but more powerfully by the withdrawal of the 'father's heart' from Cordelia's keeping.³⁰

The effect of his actions upon Lear is of immediate concern. Kent invokes a man by whom he and others are defined:

Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honoured as my king,
Loved as my father, as my master followed,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers – (1.131-4)

When Lear misinterprets Cordelia and her sisters, his own status as the source of definition in Albion is threatened. In Kent's eyes, Lear becomes a foolish rash old man, capable of madness and of evil. The banishments of Cordelia and Kent recoil upon Lear who is himself thus displaced and banished.

When we first encounter Lear, he seems utterly confident in his own power and centrality. Presiding over the map of Albion, he is reminiscent of the *Genesis* God presiding over Creation and wielding division as a creative power. Just as in the beginning all was good, so

²⁹ *Shakespeare's Festive Tragedy*, 198.

³⁰ Sears Jayne describes Lear's alienation from and reconciliation with Cordelia as 'the central incident, the main fable, the vehicular metaphor of the play', 'Charity in *King Lear*', *Sh. Q.* 15 (1964), 277-88, 278.

in Lear's fantasy Albion is uniformly fair. The portion bestowed on Gonoril is supposedly full of 'shady forests and wide skirted meads' (1.59). Regan's share too is 'no less in space, validity, and pleasure/ Than that confirmed on Gonoril' (76-7). The most bounteous and fecund region is reserved for Cordelia. In fact, Lear's map does not allow for anything but fecundity. It reflects perhaps his fantasy of himself as beloved, virtuous, bountiful. The act of bestowing the land upon his daughters and the nature of that gift reflect upon Lear himself.³¹

Hence Lear does not find the expressions of his daughters in the least excessive or suspicious. For Gonoril, Lear is apparently 'Dearer than eyesight, space, or liberty;/ Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;/ No less than life; with grace, health, beauty, honour' (51-3). Regan goes further, professing herself 'an enemy to all other joys/ Which the most precious square of sense possesses;/ And find I am alone felicitate/ In your dear highness' love' (68-71). Their responses are beautifully appropriate for they imagine Lear as an alternative landscape to that of Albion. They argue for his transcendence beyond the literal source of his power. This is exactly what Lear requires. He chooses to divorce himself from the kingdom in the belief that he will continue to embody Albion even when he does not possess it, disdaining the physical kingdom in the belief that Albion essentially lies within himself. Lear's desire to transcend material signification (without dying) is recognised by Charles Spinoza who poses a contemporary analogy for his action in the instigation of the 'use'. By this means, a man could relinquish his legal rights to land and invest it in another. He was dependent upon the good will and honour of the recipient to act according to the owner's instructions. Thus, Lear becomes the ceremonial king of Albion, dependent upon trust for his power, legally devolved

³¹ Curtis Perry suggests the importance of the concept of regal bounty to James' definition of kingship. The association of sovereignty with benevolence and maternal feeding was intended to redeem the king's notorious extravagance, whilst his imagined incorporation of the female would reinforce his claims to autonomy. See *The Making of Jacobean Culture: James I and the Renegotiation of Elizabethan Literary Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 115-137.

of responsibility. Lear's realm is to be found in the hearts of his subjects.³²

In disastrous contrast to her sisters' rhetoric, Cordelia rejects the 'kingdom of Lear' for other sources of pleasure. She predicts Lear's usurpation in her heart by a husband and crucially limits his significance in her life: 'I love your majesty/ According to my bond, nor more nor less' (84-5). Lear responds by negating all the bonds that tie him to her:

Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity, and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee from this for ever. (106-9)

This gesture of withholding something of himself from Cordelia is clarified a few lines later when Lear declares, 'So be my grave my peace as here I give/ Her father's heart from her' (117-8).³³ It is then literalised in Lear's withdrawal of her portion of the kingdom and the banishment of Cordelia from his sight (116, 253-5). Since Lear identifies himself and Albion as an idealised, cultured landscape, to leave his sight is to go into the wilderness. Such exile also recognises the unnaturalness of Cordelia's crime.³⁴ Ingratitude is monstrous and the offender is hence transplanted to realms devoid of Culture:

The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation
Messes to gorge his appetite,
Shall be as well neighboured, pitied, and relieved

³² According to Spinoza, Lear seeks 'to become king in right of the authority of the excessive (beyond habitual) feelings of warmth that reside in the hearts of his subjects for him. Such warmth is magnified in Lear's case because [...] Lear as king is already the one who shows his people that they have a recognizable, coherent national life', 'The name and all th'addition': *King Lear's* Opening Scene and the Common Law Use', *Sh. St.* 23 (1995), 146-86, 163.

³³ In *A Knack to Know a Knave* (1592) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963). Philarcus' father condemns his son's ingratitude with a similar gesture: 'as thou hast dealt unnaturallie with me,/ So I resolve to pull my heart from thee', ll 459-60. The father demands Philarcus' execution. The son pleads rather for banishment. The latter is granted by the King on terms favourable to the exile, ll 491-4, 551-4.

³⁴ It is worth noting that Lear never accuses Cordelia of treason. Her crime is solely against his fatherhood and thus a crime against humanity beyond that of treason.

As thou, my sometime daughter. (109-13)

The banishment of Cordelia is perhaps the most excessive alienation in Shakespeare's canon. She is exiled from her identity as Lear's heir and daughter (and thus from his flesh), from Lear's sight and thus from his kingdom, from Albion and thus from Nature. Lear drives Cordelia off the map of humanity as he knows it. He shows her to Burgundy as a creature entirely transformed, 'Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,/ Covered with our curse and strangered with our oath' (193-4).

Yet Lear's boundary-drawing is threatened almost at once, not only by Kent but by the King of France. Lear has believed that he can control the definition of the kingdom including its new limits, placing Nature in Albion and barbarity beyond. France, himself a representative of the Other, rejects these boundaries. Reassured that Cordelia has not committed any moral transgression (in particular any sexual act)³⁵ but has been insufficiently profligate in language, France rewrites the significance of her exile through a series of paradoxes:

Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised:
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon.
Be it lawful, I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods! 'Tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflamed respect. (241-6)

France not only reverses Lear's value judgement upon Cordelia and upon the outcast in general, he also rewrites the conclusion of Lear's curse, promising 'Thou lovest here, a better where to find' (252). Thus we anticipate Cordelia's happiness in marriage and in her absence from Albion. It seems significant that Shakespeare did not choose to dramatise her experience

³⁵ Cordelia's defence specifically denies any slur upon her chastity with its language of sexual transgression. She has committed no 'vicious blot', 'foulness', 'unclean action' or 'dishonoured step', 219-20.

in France, either representing that country as redressive or hostile to the exile. In *The True Chronicle Historie*, Leir and Perillus nearly starve in France and Leir bewails the sterility of the land:

Ah, my *Perillus*, now I see we both
 Shall end our dayes in this unfruitfull soyle.
 Oh, I do faint for want of sustenance:
 And thou, I know, in little better case.
 No gentle tree affords one taste of fruit,
 To comfort us, untill we meet with men:
 No lucky path conducts our lucklesse steps
 Unto a place where any comfort dwels. (24.2113-9)

But Shakespeare locates wilderness, exposure and starvation within Lear's kingdom.³⁶ To dramatise the scenes of Cordelia's happiness in France or to transport Lear there, would have been to distract from the personal geography of *King Lear*. There is no Golden world in Shakespeare's play within or without the limits of Albion but only in Lear's imagination.

Like Cordelia, Kent is another point of identification for the King. He reflects an image of Lear as all things, king, father, master, patron. There is also a suggestion that they share the same 'old-fashioned' values such as duty, courtesy and loyalty.³⁷ When Lear not only ignores but rejects these values in his devaluation of Cordelia, Kent offers him a new, distorted image, Lear as fool and madman. It is an image that the subject rejects as he banishes its 'maker'. Lear proclaims,

³⁶ Starvation in *The True Chronicle Historie* is partly the result of Leir's crime against Cordella. She is envisaged as a bountiful earth mother whose literal nursing Leir has forgone, turning honey to gall, grapes to sloes and sweet milk sour, 23.2048-62. Cordella's forgiveness of her father is signalled by the action of helping him to food and drink, 2179-80.

³⁷ On the association of Kent and Lear with such values see Rosalie L. Colie, 'Reason and Need: *King Lear* and the "Crisis" of the Aristocracy' in *Some Facets of King Lear* (London: Heinemann, 1974) ed. by Rosalie Colie and F. T. Flahiff, 185-219. Both John Turner and T. McAlindon describe the banishments of this first scene as representing the expulsion of certain values, Turner suggests specifically feudal values. See *Shakespeare: The Play of History*, 105, and *Shakespeare's Tragic Cosmos*, 188-9.

Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
 Which we durst never yet, and with strayed pride
 To come between our sentence and our power,
 Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
 Our potency made good take thy reward:
 Four days we do allot thee for provision
 To shield thee from dis-eases of the world,
 And on the fifth to turn thy hated back
 Upon our kingdom. (158-66)³⁸

In urging the King to revoke his curse upon Cordelia, Kent has pointed to a delay between the utterance and the performance of his will, literally a schism between 'our sentence and our power'. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the curse of banishment was unleashed by that word 'banished' and no attempt by the lovers to reinterpret it could limit its destructive power. In *King Lear*, Kent rejects the efficacy of Lear's vow (102-4), and suggests that the King can call back his words. Like Cordelia, Kent explodes the King's transcendent fantasy, anticipating what others will make of Lear when he is divested of sovereignty. The irony of Lear's speech is that, once again, he represents himself as a defender of unity, denying any gap between sentence and power, when it is he who has caused this breach through abdication.

Kent's response to banishment further undermines Lear's judgement and his power to curse. Exile will not be the suffering from 'dis-eases of the world' Lear envisages. Rather, the Earl

³⁸ The exact amount of time allowed for Kent's departure varies in Quarto and Folio texts. The Quarto allows four days so that Kent must leave on the fifth, whilst the Folio marks out five days for preparation with Kent leaving on the sixth. Both texts refer to Kent's death if he is discovered in the kingdom on the tenth day. The *Oxford Complete Works* replaces this apparent error with 'next day' in the Quarto and 'seventh day' in the Folio. For the reasoning behind these revisions see *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* by Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett and William Montgomery (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 532. In connection with this passage, I would refute Harold Jenkins' suggestion that the sentences of banishment upon Alcibiades in *Timon of Athens* and upon Kent are significantly alike. To observe any similarity is to ignore the existence of a formula for banishment which Shakespeare follows in all the plays included in this study. Within that formula, the two sentences have very little in common. See 'Kent and Alcibiades and the Dating of *Timon of Athens*' in *KM80: A Birthday Album for Kenneth Muir* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1987), 78-9.

declares, 'Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here' (171).³⁹ Once more, the boundaries Lear has imposed between Culture and the Wild are reversed. Furthermore, Kent argues that he need not be diminished by exile, reduced to a 'hated back', a 'banished trunk', but will remain himself: 'Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;/ He'll shape his old course in a country new' (176-7). The use of the third person singular may contradict this declaration, implying a divorce between speaker and subject but it may also express Kent's integrity which will allow him to put on a disguise without fear of dissolution. He becomes the chorus to his own drama.

Just as Kent's reference to freedom may remind us of Celia's maxim in *As You Like It*, so pastoral consolations are built in to the first acts of banishment in *King Lear*.⁴⁰ The tragedy draws upon the conventions which have been seen to define pastoral exile: a quest for liberty, disguise as a means of achieving love, social-climbing through marginalisation. Cordelia's marriage to France and Kent's promise to remain constant to Lear through disguise both partake of these conventions. Cordelia immediately finds love through being outcast. It is this that stirs France's passion for her. Kent uses disguise to remain true to his master in the tradition of the romance that sees a man adopt the identity of a servant to prove his fidelity, as in the plays *The Fair Maid of Bristol* (1604) or the *Timon* comedy (1602).⁴¹ Turner describes

³⁹ The Fool offers a similar interpretation of Cordelia's exile. He says of the King, 'Why, this fellow hath banished two on's daughters and done the third a blessing against his will' (4.98-100). See also the account in Seneca's *Ad Helviam* of Brutus' visit to the exiled Marcellus. Brutus is quoted as saying, 'I seemed rather to be going into exile myself when I had to return without him, than to be leaving him in exile', 332.

⁴⁰ On the pastoral structure of the play – banishment, a sojourn in the wild, a return to society – and on various other romance motifs see Young, *The Heart's Forest*, 73-103, and Snyder, *The Comic Matrix*, 137-79.

⁴¹ In the former, Harbart argues with his young friend, Sentloe, over the latter's relationship with a courtesan. Angered, Sentloe tells him to quit his company causing Harbart to disguise himself as a serving-man and to follow his friend to Bristol where he finds employment with him. This disguise will be a proof of his friendship. *The Faire Maide of Bristow* ed. by Arthur Hobson Quinn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1902), 1.3.131-4. Similarly, in the anonymous comedy *Timon*, Laches is dismissed by the now bankrupt protagonist but chooses to continue with him by adopting the disguise of a soldier: 'My face I have disfigured, that unknowne/ I may againe be plac'd in Timons howse', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources* vol. 6, 297-339, 2.1-2.

how these conventions are based on universal psychological strategies for dealing with injustice.⁴² If such fantasies console the exiled character, they give the audience reason to hope, creating the expectation of the exile's final recognition and restoration to his place in society. Familiarity with *The True Chronicle Historie of King Leir*, and indeed with any retelling of the Lear story, might have confirmed these assumptions.

Yet Shakespeare's play is not primarily concerned with these exiles but with the state, deprived and depraved by the banishments of Cordelia and Kent. Leah Scragg perceives a stark opposition between the 'regenerative potentialities of the outcast state' in *As You Like It* and *King Lear*'s focus on government and the 'negative aspects of proscription'.⁴³ The banishments of Cordelia and Kent are interpreted as prophetic, not merely of the state's corruption, but of something more ominous. In scene 2, Gloucester enters stunned at the news that Kent is banished, France departed in anger and Lear already dispossessed of power. But it is to the banishment of Kent that the Earl keeps returning. When he hears of Edgar's supposed treachery, Gloucester reflects upon 'the late eclipses of the sun and moon' which prophesy disasters:

Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide; in cities mutinies, in countries discords, palaces treason, the bond cracked between son and father.
(2.106-9)

Such portents provide a context in which to interpret banishment: 'And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished, his offence honesty! Strange, strange!' (110-2). In fact, it is Edmund who will make the connection explicit. When he repeats his father's doom-mongering for Edgar's benefit, Edmund adds 'banishment of friends' (142-3) to the list of catastrophes.

⁴² *Shakespeare: The Play of History*, 102-3.

⁴³ *Shakespeare's Moulāy Tales*, 142.

Gloucester has implied that Lear is not entirely responsible for his actions, that the strangeness could be supernatural. But Edmund insists that his father, himself and thus Lear should take responsibility for evil that is their own not 'a divine thrusting on' (120-1). If Lear's acts of banishment can be interpreted as conscious evil, Edmund consciously admires their effect and determines to exploit this evil. Lear has created the conditions in which the illegitimate son will thrive by punishing integrity and rewarding the appearance of love. For Thomas Van Laan, the King has facilitated the deceptions and usurpations of the play by destroying social roles and replacing them with play-acting. His initial divestiture of sovereignty is seen as the substitution of ceremonial kingship for the actual office. It is thus that Lear

sanctions a mode of action that can favour only masters of deceit like Goneril, Regan, and Edmund, who, because they lack any sense of the integrity of social and familial roles, are capable, both psychologically and morally, of making what Lear has introduced a truly viable mode of action.⁴⁴

The exiled Cordelia, Kent, and later Edgar, are forced from their socially sanctioned roles but take on other self-consistent parts. Acting in this still feudal world is conservative. Kent disguises himself to continue to serve Lear, in recognition of Authority (4.29). Yet in the society Kent leaves behind, acting has become a particular kind of self-fashioning which threatens the traditional hierarchy (so that an illegitimate son may become Earl of Gloucester in default of his brother) and pays only lip-service to values previously judged fundamental. Banishment itself creates the absences into which the dissembler can manoeuvre, for social roles do not disappear in the play. Gonoril, Regan, and Edmund have achieved power by

⁴⁴ Thomas F. Van Laan, 'Acting as Action in *King Lear*' in *Some Facets of King Lear*, 59-75, 64. See also David Margolies, *Monsters of the Deep: Social Dissolution in Shakespeare's Tragedies* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1992), 34, 37, on the new social codes.

pretending to be exactly what their fathers demand of them. The absence of Cordelia forces a revision of the original divided map of Albion and enables Lear's other two daughters to move into her position of favour. Edmund follows his king's example by arranging for the dispossession and banishment of his brother and then moving into the vacant position of heir.

It is the effect of these displacements upon Lear that must concern us most. From the beginning of the play, Lear has been an identity created from a matrix of different social roles though he identifies most strongly with the father. Lear's fantasy of self, that is, the permanence and transcendence of his identity, will be most profoundly affected by his own actions. His banishment of Kent and Cordelia and subsequent division of the realm do not enforce his own centrality as he had hoped. Rather, banishment recoils upon Lear so that he is increasingly marginalised to the point of annihilation. When no one recognises him, he can no longer recognise himself.

This experience of exile is alien to the self-assertive Cordelia and Kent but is anticipated in the experience of Edgar, Lear's godson. Unlike Kent who was banished the realm and Cordelia who was exiled from Lear's sight, Edgar is pursued that Gloucester may take his revenge mortally:

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. (7.167-71)

This reference to being 'proclaimed' indicates Edgar's status as an outlaw, that is, a man

stripped of legal protection.⁴⁵ In one of the Elizabethan retellings of the Robin Hood legend, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, the eponymous hero refuses Little John's words of comfort, saying, 'Am I not outlaw'd by the Prior of York?/ Proclaim'd in court, in city, and in town/ A lawless person?' (1.3, p112).⁴⁶ Huntington has lost all his goods and lands and he has been exiled for debt but his life is not immediately pursued. His transformation into the outlaw, Robin Hood, will reflect his new sylvan lifestyle and will facilitate his persecution of courtly enemies. It is also an opportunity for a particular kind of merry-making. With the announcement of this disguise he cries, 'Come, John, friends all, for now begins the game;/ And after our deserts so grow our fame' (2.2. p142). For Edgar, disguise is a necessity to preserve his life, a life which is already lost through exile:

My face I'll grime with filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hair with knots,
And with presented nakedness outface
The wind and persecution of the sky.
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,
And with this horrible object from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers
Enforce their charity. 'Poor Tuelygod, Poor Tom!'
That's something yet. Edgar I nothing am. (7.175-87)

If Edgar's decision to disguise himself after exile conforms to the pastoral tradition, bringing him closer to nature and back to his father, his choice of identity strikes a discordant note. Whilst a fall in status is conventional in pastoral, from princess to shepherdess, from Earl to

⁴⁵ Maurice Keen remarks that the outlaw had 'no more rights than a hunted beast' and that the price on his head was originally the same as that on a wolf's. See *The Outlaws of Medieval Legend* (London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), 9.

⁴⁶ The terms 'banishment' and 'exile' are still applied to this kind of expulsion from the community. Prince John, jealous of Marian's love for Huntington and enraged after their escape, promises 'I'll follow with revengeful, murd'rous hate/ The banish'd, beggar'd, bankrupt Huntington', 2.1, p130.

servant, Edgar literally strips himself, offering his body to nature's persecution.⁴⁷ His poverty makes him homeless and forced to beg from the poorest who yet retain some means of subsistence. His madness puts him further beyond the civilised, natural world. It is here that exile's excessiveness in the play is most apparent.

There are other disguises that might have saved Edgar's life. Shakespeare turned to the *Arcadia's* narrative of the Paphlagonian king and his sons for this part of the plot. Edgar's counterpart here does not adopt any disguise. Rather, Leonatus escapes murder to become a private soldier and is on the point of promotion when he abandons this life to lead his blinded father.⁴⁸ Edgar has chosen a disguise which parades the wretchedness of his condition and the stigmatization of his life. The Bedlam beggar's self-inflicted wounds, as copied by Edgar, reflect his own desire for mortification, perhaps out of guilt at his father's rejection, certainly out of shame for his condition.⁴⁹ What is perhaps most significant about Edgar's disguise is its peculiar expressiveness.⁵⁰ The disguise performs Edgar's suffering, literally in the case of those wooden pricks and nails, but it occludes his real drama. For Shakespeare's audience,

⁴⁷ Edgar's experience of disguise also differs from that of the pastoral exile in that it is too convincing. In pastoral a character's nobility was usually perceptible through his or her shepherd weeds. No one questions Edgar's appearance as a beggar though Gloucester notices that his accent seems to have improved as they 'ascend' Dover cliff, 20.7-8, 10. On the liberties taken with rank by means of Edgar's transformation see *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice*, 110.

⁴⁸ Sidney's *Arcadia*, Bk. 2, chp. 10, 278.

⁴⁹ On Edgar's guilt and shame with regard to Gloucester see Stanley Cavell, 'The Avoidance of Love: A Reading of *King Lear*' in *Disowning Knowledge in Six Plays of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 39-124.

⁵⁰ Stephen Greenblatt suggests that Edgar's suffering may reflect that of the Catholic Church. Shakespeare's borrowing of Harsnett's *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603), with its derision of the staged exorcism, may paradoxically inspire an audience with sympathy for the Catholic Church. Greenblatt identifies Cornwall, Gonoril and Edmund as the voices of scepticism whilst Edgar is forced into fraudulent possession and exorcism to save his father: 'The resemblance does not necessarily resolve itself into an allegory in which Catholicism is revealed to be the persecuted, legitimate elder brother forced to defend himself by means of theatrical illusions against the cold persecution of his skeptical bastard brother Protestantism. But the possibility of such a radical undermining of the orthodox position exists', 178-9. It is worth remembering at this point the banishment still imposed upon Catholic priests at this time and the necessity for those who returned from the Continent to do so in disguise, 'Shakespeare and the Exorcists' in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory* ed. by Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York: Methuen, 1985), 163-87.

Poor Tom the Bedlam Beggar, was popularly known as a man who adopted a particular costume, rhetoric and gestures, even mutilated himself, to 'enforce charity' as Edgar puts it.⁵¹ Just as the boundaries between deception and reality were blurred, the outcast and mutilated beggar both fraudulent and genuine, Edgar's performance of alienation reflects the annihilation of Edgar as it reveals his identity.⁵² Moreover, Poor Tom offers others a symbol of alienation with which to identify. Lear is instantly fascinated and proceeds to appraise him thus:

Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Here's three on's are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself. Unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! Come on, be true. (12.94-9)

Lear identifies him as something essential though, paradoxically, Edgar's nakedness is a disguise. Gloucester's son has the ability to slip out of his role as Poor Tom to comment on the action and will eventually throw off this shape. If the exile of Edgar diverges from the reassuring pastoral model, he does share with Cordelia and Kent a resilient sense of self.

Michael Long expresses it thus:

Through all three there runs a core of humane life which does not require the securities of role-definition to support it. The Law does not define or circumscribe their beings. Their human status is not just a function of a particular social status. Their 'attachment' to the Law is flexible; so that, tossed about by the crises of social life, they do not collapse into that characteristic disorientation which besets men whose entire definition of themselves has been made in terms of (say) Roman caste or Venetian courtesy. They have a peculiar capacity for being 'translated' in social role but unmoved thereby in essential being.⁵³

⁵¹ See William C. Carroll, *Fat King, Lean Beggar: Representations of Poverty in the Age of Shakespeare* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), 180-207, 193-5.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 203.

⁵³ *The Unnatural Scene: A Study in Shakespearean Tragedy* (London: Methuen, 1976), 204-5. See also Van Laan who contrasts Cordelia's adherence to her role as daughter with Lear's divestiture of kingship or with Gloucester and Edgar's loss of father and son roles, 'Acting as Action in *King Lear*', 63.

Marcia Holly quotes Sartre's dictum that to tell a lie one must know the truth. She writes of Kent and Edgar: 'They are able to disguise themselves to others because they themselves know exactly who they are; they also understand their unity with nature and remain constant to the purposes they set themselves'.⁵⁴ There are also suggestions here of playfulness in exile, of the creativity typical of pastoral, that allows the exiles to fulfil some aspect of their natures previously constricted or denied. Kent's invective against Oswald (7.13-22), his slapstick performance when he trips the servant, and his defiance of Cornwall suggest this. Whilst disobedience to authority is at times a moral obligation in the play,⁵⁵ it is also temporarily liberating for Kent.

Similarly, we might see in Edgar's frenetic changes of accent and costume a measure of creative exhilaration. On Dover Cliff, he transforms his own identity and recasts the landscape in Gloucester's imagination. Edgar's theatrical tour de force creates in Gloucester the belief that he has fallen and thus has been saved. In comparison with Kent, whose stage-management has only limited success, Edgar uses disguise to seize control of events and to gradually raise himself from beggar/madman to peasant to knight, thus gaining increasing control of the play itself.⁵⁶

The experience of the banishers, Gloucester and Lear, when they too are expelled into the wilderness, is tragically different. These men do not accept the need for adaptation but keep

⁵⁴ 'King Lear: The Disguised and Deceived', *Sh. Q.* 24 (1973), 171-80, 174.

⁵⁵ See Richard Strier, 'Faithful Servants: Shakespeare's Praise of Disobedience' in *The Historical Renaissance: New Essays on Tudor and Stuart Literature and Culture* ed. by Heather Dubrow and Richard Strier (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 104-33.

⁵⁶ Leo Kirschbaum suggests that Edgar is more a 'dramatic device' than a character with 'mimetic unity' in 'Banquo and Edgar: Character or Function?', *E. in C.* 7 (1957), 1-21, 9. See also Michael E. Mooney, "'Edgar I nothing am": Figureposition in King Lear', *Sh. S.* 38 (1985), 153-66, on the realistic, symbolic and choric nature of Edgar's role.

referring back to their former identities. Having exiled those who loved and recognised them, the two old men have no selfhood to fall back on. Lear becomes increasingly aware of his amorphousness, 'Doth any here know me? Why, this is not Lear' (4.220) and he warns Gonoril that he will resume the shape he seems to have cast off (302-4). Transformation becomes an agonising process. Lear describes Cordelia's ingratitude, 'That, like an engine, wrenched my frame of nature/ From the fixed place' (4.262-3). Rather than adopting disguises to await the circumstances for their return or to create that return as Edgar does, Lear and Gloucester insist on permanent and universally acknowledged identities in a world that recognises no such thing. They cannot resist transformation. Indeed, both men are subjected to a policy of marginalisation, leading to exile, by their enemies.

In the subplot, Gloucester is made to feel the irrelevance of age and tries to fight against it. The letter Edmund has contrived reads, 'I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny, who sways not as it hath power but as it is suffered' (2.47-50). Edmund confirms that his brother had often argued for the elderly father becoming ward to his son (71-4). In fact, it is Edmund who cannot wait for his inheritance to come to him once the true heir has been dispossessed. His associates appropriate Gloucester's house and deprive the Earl of the right to succour guests of his own choosing. When Gloucester's treachery is discovered, his title is stripped from him with his estate and all his goods. The plucking out of his eyes leaves him mutilated and in the dark, outside the world of men. Regan orders her servants, 'Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell/ His way to Dover' (14.91-2). Transformation has overcome Gloucester. Broken by such changes in the world and in himself, he seeks only the change that comes with death. When Edgar leads him to the supposed edge of Dover Cliff, he describes his father as standing near 'th'extreme verge'

(20.26). Gloucester's first attempt to dictate his own transformation or to embrace marginality by dying is also prevented. Edgar too, violently imposes another shape upon the Earl.

Unlike Gloucester, Lear is at first complicit in his own displacement. He admits the need to confer the kingdom upon 'younger years' and is preparing for retirement with Cordelia. Moreover, in his banishment of Kent and Cordelia, Lear enforces the association between age and senility. This misjudgement confirms his daughters' opinions of the 'unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them' (1.288-9). Regan confronts the king directly with his marginality:

O sir, you are old.
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine. You should be ruled and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. (7.304-8)

Lear has directly related his age to babyhood by referring to Cordelia's 'kind nursery' (1.116). It is an association that others will use to justify his exclusion from the adult and rational world (3.18-20, 4.166-71). His passions are redefined as childish tantrums or 'unsightly tricks' (7.315); his complaints are trivialised. This rejection crystallises into a policy of marginalisation whereby the King is thrust out beyond all defining limits. The question to what extent exile can be explained as a human action rather than the workings of a malevolent deity or author is simplified here. If Gonoril and Regan pursue a policy of banishment against their father they have seen such an action at work from the moment at which their power was first decreed. Their success has already depended upon the banishment of Cordelia.

The first hint of such a policy is given in Gonoril's orders that the King be treated with a 'weary negligence' by her servants (3.12. 22-3). Courtesy is crucial to Lear's self-definition, an indication of hierarchical standing but also an expression of love. The Servant who remarks on the rudeness shown to the King, speaks of a lack of 'ceremonious affection' (4.56). Lear concurs, perceiving in it 'a very pretence and purport of unkindness' (4.67). On meeting the King at Gloucester's house, Regan tells him that she is glad to see him. Lear looks beyond the commonplace greeting for an expression of duty and affection:

Regan, I think you are. I know what reason
I have to think so. If thou shouldst not be glad
I would divorce me from thy mother's shrine,
Sepulchring an adultress. (7.291-4)

As shown by servants, this discourtesy suggests the radical decentralisation of Lear in society. He has become only 'My lady's father' (4.76). Moreover, Gonoril uses the servants' ordered neglect to prove her argument that Lear can no longer command respect. She refers to his 'all-licensed fool' and his 'insolent retinue' and argues that he is no worthy master who would allow such riotousness (4.202-3). That the King has lost authority is explicitly suggested by Regan when she offers him the use of her servants: 'If then they chanced to slack you,/ We could control them' (7.403-4).

Gonoril's reduction of Lear's retinue to fifty knights is a more serious blow to his identity. Whether the knights have been riotous or not, their dismissal is politically expedient.⁵⁷ Since she was promised power, Gonoril has feared that the King might interfere or attempt to reclaim it (1.293-5), but long after Lear has ceased to be a threat, the two sisters are still

⁵⁷ 'Reason and Need', 199-200.

invoking the spectre of rebellion to justify their cruelty (7.462-4). The reduction of Lear's train is a calculated assault upon the name of the King. His presence is literally reduced by its loss, his bulwarks weakened against the onslaught of non-recognition.

Meanwhile Gonoril and Regan begin a process of physically shutting him out. In scene 2, Gonoril denies him access to herself and Albany. Regan takes this further by actually fleeing from her house when she hears that Lear is on his way, thus leaving the King beating in vain at her gates. Kent's disgrace, imprisoned in the stocks outside overnight, is a further manifestation of this attitude. When the King is finally granted an audience at Gloucester's house, he distinguishes Regan from Gonoril in an image of painful appropriateness:

'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in. (7.331-5)

Not only has Regan effectively done this by abandoning her house, but both she and Gonoril advocate opposing the bolt against Lear in this very scene, leaving him to wander the deserted heath in a thunderstorm.⁵⁸

In *The True Chronicle Historie*, Lear specifically refers to himself as 'banished' (24.2137). Ejected by Gonorill (who hopes that a little travelling might kill him)⁵⁹ and nearly murdered

⁵⁸ Liebler describes how violations of the home and the neglect of hospitality presuppose the existence of the liminal heath, the antithesis to these domestic, 'civilised' values, *Shakespeare's Festive Tragedy*, 204-8. Leah Marcus considers the poignancy of this denial of hospitality at the play's performance on St Stephen's Day, 1606, a feast day devoted to the succouring of the poor, *Puzzling Shakespeare*, 154-5. On the political significance of this succouring see this chapter, fn. 60.

⁵⁹ She ponders, 'He happely may, by travelling unknowne wayes,/ Fall sicke, and as a common passenger,/ Be dead and buried' (12.974-6).

by Ragan, Leir travels to France with his faithful servant Perillus to be reconciled with Cordella. On arrival he apostrophises his lost country: 'Ah, Brittain, I shall never see thee more./ That hast unkindly banished thy King:/ And yet not thou dost make me to complayne./ But they which were more neere to me then thou' (2136-9). In Shakespeare's play, Lear never leaves Albion but he is more completely exiled than any of those upon whom an official sentence has been passed. According to his own definition of exile, he finds himself part of the savage, the barbarous, the Wild. Crucially, he is not outside Albion but at its centre. Lear is finally brought to confront the fantasy that was his kingdom and thus the fantasy of his own identity as king and father. The landscape is not that lush pastoral idyll Lear imagined but a barren waste, its inhabitants half-naked men such as Poor Tom, shivering in a hovel. Such were Lear's subjects, dependent upon his munificence, but men of whose existence he had no knowledge: 'O, I have ta'en/ Too little care of this' (11.29-30).⁶⁰

If Lear can endure the discovery of his fantasy of Albion, its concomitant revelation of his own insignificance is much harder to bear. Lear had assumed a command over Nature and his battle with the storm is not merely for his own survival but for that imagined potency. The Gentleman who reports back to Kent on Lear's condition describes how Lear

tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury and make nothing of;
Strives in his little world of man to outstorn
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain. (8.6-10)

⁶⁰ Marcus explores the relationship between Lear's division of the kingdom and James I's struggle for reunification with particular reference to the Scots who remained outside the protection of English law and alienated within the kingdom. There may be a suggestion that Lear, like James, recognises his responsibility for those alienated men at 11.29-30. Marcus, however, suggests that Lear becomes one of them: 'A king becomes a beggar, looks for succor and is denied it, as a result of the "unnatural" division he has earlier unleashed: he becomes, in contemporary terms, an outcast "Scot" himself, suffering the same scanted courtesy to which King James's northern subjects had been unjustly treated in England', *Puzzling Shakespeare*, 154.

He is a frenzied conductor urging on the wind, cataracts and hurricanes to 'Smite flat the thick rotundity of the world' (9.7) and calling upon thunderbolts to 'singe my white head' (6). Yet, he also sees his relationship with the storm as a bitter conflict in which he is the intended victim of the elements' wrath. He rebukes Nature for fighting on his daughters' side against 'a head/ So old and white as this' (19-24). To what extent Lear is complicit with the elements or battling against them is a question he himself cannot decide. Nor can he perceive what the storm's purpose is. It could be a power summoned up by his daughters to punish him. Yet he also envisages it as an apocalyptic force in which he is only incidentally caught up. Lear's need to interpret the storm as related to himself is an expression of his need to defend his 'little world' and its meanings from the chaos outside, that is, from poverty, starvation, exposure and insignificance. Ultimately, he can find no reason to polarise the storm around himself. In this land Lear has no meaning and madness attends this discovery. But if Lear's meaninglessness drives him to the brink of madness, it is his confrontation with the meaningful Poor Tom which drives him mad.

The scenes on the heath are patterned by the reflections characters see of themselves in one another.⁶¹ When Gloucester finds Lear and his followers on the heath, he tells Kent that he too has nearly gone out of his mind at filial ingratitude (11.152-7). Later Gloucester will find his wits threatened by the spectacle of Lear's suffering, a pattern already established on the heath where others reflect one's own wretchedness. Who better to be such a mirror than Poor Tom? The Fool, another alien, deracinated figure, at first tries to counteract the dangerous influence of Poor Tom upon Lear but by scene 13, the Fool's witticisms and riddles have

⁶¹ Maynard Mack compares the reflective nature of Arden in *As You Like It* with the heath in *King Lear*. He finds that the natural world in the tragedy remains: 'curiously expressive, as in romance, of the protagonist's mental and emotional states'. The heath reflects Lear's condition as 'barrenness, tempest, and alienation, the defenseless suffering of his Fool, the madness of a derelict beggar ...', *King Lear in Our Time*, 66.

become as bewildering and even as maddening as Poor Tom's.⁶² For Lear, Poor Tom is an object of such misery as to represent his own suffering and almost to 'outface' him with it. Hence, the King assumes that the half-naked and apparently deranged beggar must have suffered the same misery as himself, 'Hast thou given all to thy two daughters,/ And art thou come to this?' (11.43-4). In the beggar Lear sees the universality of his suffering but also, specifically, he sees a better way to play that role. He strips off his clothing, externalises his demons, as Poor Tom does, by addressing Gonoril and Regan in the trial scene, and he goes mad in reality. Edgar may well remark later, 'He childed as I fathered' (13.103).

From his desire to become the archetypal king and a universal father figure, Lear has fallen to represent an opposite symbol. Ambitious to transcend his identity in the beginning of the play, Lear becomes the outcast man to the destruction of all other facets of his identity. It is to this reductive view of man that the mirror-imaging of the heath has tended. We may eschew the same vocabulary of education or redemption, perhaps appropriate to *As You Like It*, in the case of *King Lear*. It is the knowledge of 'the thing itself' that drives Lear to distraction. Yet the discovery of man as outcast is presented in the play as the perception of a kind of truth. Lear repeatedly identifies Poor Tom as a 'philosopher' (11.141, 159, 162), emphasising his wisdom as that of a 'most learned Theban' (144) or 'Athenian' (166) with whom Lear must have discourse. Lear's own experience of exile, as mediated through the outcast beggar, reveals something of the little world of man: the frailty of his body and the exorbitance of his self-deceit.

⁶² John Kerrigan considers Shakespeare's revision of the Fool from Quarto to Folio. He suggests that the Fool tries very hard to compete with Poor Tom in the Quarto but that the Folio, with its excision of the trial scene, depicts a more marginal Fool who declines to compete. It is partly because the Quarto Fool and Poor Tom seem to overlap that Kerrigan favours the Folio interpretation, suggesting that here we have a range of fooling, from real insanity to rational riddling. I would suggest that it is the very merging of sanity and derangement in these scenes and of the characters' identities that make the Quarto so rich. See 'Revision, Adaptation, and the Fool in *King Lear*' in *The Division of the Kingdoms*, 195-245, 226-30.

We might contrast the pairing of Lear and Poor Tom with that of Timon and Apemantus in the wilderness outside Athens.⁶³ The latter has come to find Timon, hearing that he has turned misanthrope, that ‘Thou dost affect my manners, and dost use them’ (4.3.200). Where Lear has indeed affected Poor Tom’s manners, both Timon and Apemantus reject the comparison. The former’s abhorrence of all men includes a special loathing and disdain for this one:

TIMON: Were I like thee, I’d throw away myself.

APEMANTUS: Thou hast cast away thyself being like thyself –
A madman so long, now a fool. (220-2)

In *King Lear*, the beggar is seen to offer some previously unknown insight into the human condition. Lear is susceptible to this wisdom through his identification with Poor Tom. In *Timon of Athens* (1607), the self-exiled man rejects any human identification at all and would purge himself of humanity. Yet, paradoxically, Apemantus is too low a man for Timon ever to imitate. Fortune has never smiled upon this Athenian and hence he cannot imagine the magnitude of Timon’s loss, one ‘Who had the world as my confectionary,/ The mouths, the tongues, the eyes and hearts of men’ (261-2). Where Lear debases himself to the level of Poor Tom but sees no debasement, Timon insists upon hierarchy. He may detest men and himself but he remains superior to Apemantus and proud of their difference. At the end of Timon’s eulogy for his former state, Apemantus asks ‘Art thou proud yet?’ to which Timon replies, ‘Ay, that I am not thee’ (278-9). Timon does not see his fall from power as connected to his delusions of grandeur but feels embittered at the men who brought him down. For this reason,

⁶³ The *Oxford Complete Works* dates *Timon of Athens* c. 1604 and places it immediately before *The History of King Lear*, a decision endorsed by James C. Bulman in his dating of the comedy, ‘The Date of Production of *Timon* Reconsidered’, *Sh. S.* 27 (1974), 111-28. I find the most interesting parallels for my study between *Timon* and *Coriolanus* (see the following chapter).

Apemantus too denies the comparison between them. Timon has not become a philosopher who willingly renounces the world, but a man consumed by bitterness and frustrated self-love.

G. K. Hunter contrasts the experiences of Lear and Timon, arguing that the latter play ‘does not explore the condition of the outcast as symbolic of basic humanity, but only shows the outcast *set against* his society’.⁶⁴ Where Timon atrophies with hatred, Hunter argues for Lear’s particular fecundity in exile:

When Lear leaves the warmth, the society, the ‘civilization’ of Gloucester’s castle he might seem to be leaving behind him all of the little that is left to make life bearable. But the retreat into the isolated darkness of his own mind is also a descent into the seed-bed of a new life; for the individual mind is seen here as the place from which a man’s most important qualities and relationships draw the whole of their potential.⁶⁵

We have already seen examples of Lear’s madness as self-expansion and as self-diminution. His experience seems at first to engulf the world and to redefine every relationship as that of Lear and his daughters. But gradually, there are also references to Lear’s insignificance and to his share of guilt, reflected once more in the condition of Poor Tom (11.76-85). From Lear’s abandonment of all pretensions to greatness and his subsequent self-knowledge, ‘I am a very foolish, fond old man’ (21.58), he is brought to a reconciliation with Cordelia. In their mutual recognition, Lear glimpses the possibility of a new world:

Come, let’s away to prison.
We two alone will sing like birds i’th’cage.
When thou dost ask me blessing, I’ll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness; so we’ll live,

⁶⁴ ‘Shakespeare’s Last Tragic Heroes’, 254.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 252. Harry Levin makes the point that grief has a humanising effect upon Lear but dehumanises Timon in ‘Shakespeare’s Misanthrope’, *Sh. S.* 26 (1973), 89-94, 94.

And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
 At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
 Talk of court news, and we'll talk with them too –
 Who loses and who wins, who's in, who's out,
 And take upon's the mystery of things
 As if we were God's spies; and we'll wear out
 In a walled prison packs and sects of great ones
 That ebb and flow by th'moon. (24.8-19)

Hunter's response to this speech is to suggest that Lear's isolation and self-sufficiency lead to an embracing of humanity, beatifically imagined in this prison cell with Cordelia, 'new and fresh words of civilization have risen'.⁶⁶ Yet this new civilisation is created out of the mutual sufficiency and isolation of Lear and Cordelia. Lear embraces marginality now as a defence against the world. In pastoral drama he would have to take this vision outside and redeem society with it. In Stoic philosophy, Lear would be advised to fully renounce the world in order to find contentment and true security. Neither of these solutions is available in the play.

Lear's determination to transform his punishment into joy and his seclusion into self-sufficiency may remind us strongly of Stilbo, as quoted by Seneca in his *De Constantia*:

There is no reason why you should doubt that a mortal man can raise himself above his human lot, that he can view with unconcern pains and losses, sores and wounds, and nature's great commotions as she rages all around him, can bear hardship calmly and prosperity soberly, neither yielding to the one nor trusting to the other; that he can remain wholly unchanged amid the diversities of fortune and count nothing but himself his own, and of this self, even, only its better part.⁶⁷

Stoicism is a philosophy deeply relevant to this play in the way it prizes marginality and its promise of invulnerability to suffering. The wise man will sever all ties that bind him to the

⁶⁶ Long, *The Unnatural Scene*, 213. Janette Dillon also uses the prison speech to endorse her argument that evil works through isolation in the play and that social bonds are the foundations of happiness, *Shakespeare and the Solitary Man*, 122, 128-9, 134.

⁶⁷ *De Constantia in Moral Essays*, vol. 1, VI, 3, p 65.

external world, including wealth, status, family and friends, but more fundamentally he will suppress the passions of desire and fear, anger and pity. *King Lear* is haunted by the longing not to feel and the quest for fortitude and constancy. Arthur Kinney perceives ‘a remarkably rich and pervasive strain of neo-Stoicism in *Lear* [...] a quiet but dazzling ability to suffer with dignity, with self-sufficiency’.⁶⁸ Edgar counsels himself and others, particularly Gloucester, with this doctrine of endurance. He flouts at Fortune:

Yet better thus and known to be contemned
Than still contemned and flattered. To be worst,
The low’st 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. (15.1-6)⁶⁹

Similarly, Gloucester’s emphasis on a patient and dignified end, on dying because he can no longer comply with the will of the gods and on his right to liberty through death should all be very familiar.⁷⁰ Cases have also been made for the Stoicism of Cordelia and Kent.⁷¹

Yet, as Gilles Monsarrat has suggested, Stoic sententiae are repeatedly undercut by the

⁶⁸ ‘Some Conjectures on the Composition of *King Lear*’ in *Sh. S.* 33 (1980), 13-26, 25. Kinney proposes a source for the play in Justus Lipsius’ neo-Stoic tract, *Sixte Bookes of Politickes or Civil Doctrine* (1594). He finds specific verbal echoes of this text in *Lear*, for example the Fool’s reference to ‘court holy water’ may be anticipated in the chapter on flattery wherein Lipsius advises the king to ‘freelie permit his Counsellors, to speake their minde boldlie, not loving this court holy water’, G2v. He also draws a parallel between Gloucester’s prophecy of universal discord and Lipsius’ consideration of the effects of civil war, Bb2-Bb2v, 19-20, 21-2.

⁶⁹ The Folio expands upon this Stoic defiance of Fortune adding, ‘Welcome, then,/ Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace./ The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst/ Owes nothing to thy blasts’ (4.1.6-9).

⁷⁰ In *De Finibus*, Cicero advises that ‘very often it is appropriate for the Wise Man to abandon life at a moment when he is enjoying supreme happiness, if an opportunity offers for making a timely exit. For the Stoic view is that happiness, which means life in harmony with nature, is a matter of seizing the right moment’, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* tr. by H. Rackham (London: Heinemann, 1983), 281. Seneca also referred to the liberating power of suicide: ‘He who has learned to die has unlearned slavery; he is above any external power, or, at any rate, he is beyond it. What terror have prisons and bonds and bars for him?’ in his *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales* tr. by Richard M. Gummere (London: Heinemann, 1917), vol. 1, p191.

⁷¹ See Hiram Haydn, *The Counter-Renaissance* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1950), 642-51, for an expanded consideration of *King Lear*’s Stoics.

actions and supposed motivations of the characters.⁷² Edgar's conceit that he can fall no further and his derision of Fortune are immediately contradicted by the appearance of his blinded father. His response is to weep, a refutation of Stoicism in itself, and to expostulate. 'Who is't can say I am at the worst/ I am worse than e'er I was' (15.23-4). Similarly, Gloucester's suicide is considered by Monsarrat as an act of despair rather than of cool rationality,⁷³ and the Stoic attitude towards suicide is denounced by Edgar from the Christian perspective. Gloucester comes to agree with Edgar that suicide is the work of fiends and takes Job as his example rather than Seneca, deciding to endure all until his natural end (20.75-7). As if to reiterate finally how far from Stoicism Gloucester is, his death is the result of passion (24.193-6).⁷⁴

The play recognises the agony of human interaction, particularly the cost of pity, but does not condone the alternatives. The Fool repeatedly pricks Lear's conscience over Cordelia and whilst the King laughs he attests to the bitterness of such company, describing the Fool as a 'pestilent gall to me' (4.110). On the heath, companionship is partly a solace but also exacerbates misery. Edgar weeps for Lear in the trial scene (13.55-6) and is utterly cast down when he sees the blinded Gloucester (15.7). Both Edgar and Gloucester then have to endure a meeting with Lear at which Edgar cries aloud, 'O thou side-piercing sight!' (20.85) and Gloucester, 'Alack, alack the day!' (170). Yet those who have the ability to detach themselves and to deny pity are depicted as monstrous:

⁷² Gilles Monsarrat, *Light from the Porch: Stoicism and English Renaissance Literature* (Paris: Didier Erudition, 1984), 146.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ The Jacobean audience would have attributed a broader range of meaning to this word 'passion' than is current now. *OED* definitions include the suffering of pain especially martyrdom; a painful affection or disorder of the body including a violent attack of pain; the fact or condition of being acted upon or affected by external agency; a poem, literary composition, or passage marked by deep or strong emotion.

That nature which contemns it origin
 Cannot be bordered certain in itself.
 She that herself will sliver and disbranch
 From her material sap perforce must wither,
 And come to deadly use. (16.32-6)

Monsarrat argues that neither *King Lear* nor any other Shakespearean play offers a 'representative' Stoic as found in the work of Chapman, Marston, Massinger and Ford.⁷⁵ From this conclusion he argues that there is 'little to be said about Stoicism in Shakespeare'.⁷⁶ On the contrary, I would suggest that the very fact of Stoicism's inconsistency in *King Lear* hints at a central paradox within the play: man's need for Stoic self-sufficiency in a world of pain, conflicting with his desire for companionship and love.

Perhaps the most important Stoic concept for the play is that of the microcosm, the kingdom of the mind. In his own *De Constantia*, Lipsius renders this inner world as an alternative to external reality, using a topographical metaphor. Like Hunter, Charles Langius proposes that the outcast will find contentment by introspection and solitude. Stoicism fundamentally rejects 'reality', proposing instead that man commune with nature and try to understand his place in the world. By reducing mankind down to its essence, 'the thing itself', he may abandon the facile dreams and fantasies that keep him vulnerable to Fortune and her caprices. Yet Stoicism also encourages fantasy in that it reduces life to the limits of the individual. Lear's dream of prison life with Cordelia is partly a Stoic microcosm. The King rejects any

⁷⁵ This distinction is based on Monsarrat's criterion that the character is clearly recognised by himself or by others as a Stoic though within this framework he may be inconsistent and fall from his philosophical height as occurs famously in Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*. Monsarrat refers to Shakespeare's 'Stoicism' as lacking this essential self-consciousness. What might be called Stoic virtues are 'not related to Stoicism as a deliberately assumed philosophy', 137. It seems at least perverse to suggest that Shakespeare cannot be seen to be influenced by the popular revival of neo-Stoicism unless he produces a stereotypical Stoic character. For a more detailed refutation of Monsarrat's requirements of the Stoic see Geoffrey Miles' study, *Shakespeare and the Constant Romans*, 4 n.8.

⁷⁶ *Light from the Porch*, 137.

integration with the world, or any identity it might offer, save that which Cordelia provides. Their imagined detachment, looking down upon the world as God's spies, supposedly places them beyond the reach of Fortune. It is an image of permanence in a state of flux, one of Stoicism's central aspirations (if the Stoic can be said to aspire):

and we'll wear out
In a walled prison packs and sects of great ones
That ebb and flow by th' moon. (24.17-9)

And yet Lear's permanence depends not only upon his reinterpretation of imprisonment as philosophy, leisure, love, but on the source of all these, the life of his daughter, Cordelia.⁷⁷ Lear's Stoic microcosm is in fact the lover's conventional displacement of the world for his beloved as microcosm. The self-sufficiency of living only in another's eyes is often a tragic enslavement to capricious Fortune. In *2 Henry VI*, the banished Suffolk tells Margaret:

'Tis not the land I care for, wert thou thence,
A wilderness is populous enough,
So Suffolk had thy heavenly company.
For where thou art, there is the world itself,
With every several pleasure in the world;
And where thou art not, desolation. (3.2.363-8)

This passage anticipates *Lear* in a number of ways. Suffolk's reference to 'every several pleasure in the world' may remind us of the declarations made by Gonoril and Regan that all pleasures were incomparable to Lear's love. What they express as policy, however, is for Kent perfect truth. Suffolk's passion anticipates the quality of Kent's devotion as he travels into the 'wilderness' with Lear. Finally, these lines evoke the foundation of Lear's vision of happiness. Where the king of 1.1 insisted upon himself as an alternative landscape, Lear has

⁷⁷ See also Joseph S. M. J. Chang who recognises Lear's prison speech as a Stoic failure in "Of Mighty Opposites": Stoicism and Machiavellianism', *Ren. D.* 9 (1966), 37-58, 51-2.

now deposed himself to replace that world by one created in and through his daughter.

Cordelia's death reveals the fundamental flaw in Lear's microcosm from a Stoic perspective. Invulnerability depends upon renunciation but Lear has dared to love and to hope. To my knowledge, no critic has perceived such a moral in Cordelia's death and I would suggest rightly so.⁷⁸ To remain unmoved and righteous in the face of the tragedy is to be susceptible to Lear's general condemnation of the Stoic: 'O, you are men of stones' (24.253). Not only in the perverted isolation of Edmund, Gonoril and Regan, but in the death of Cordelia, the Stoic is banished from the play's tragic cosmos.

Yet if the Stoic consolation for exile, glimpsed in the prison speech, is thus dispatched, Cordelia's death also destroys pastoral consolations. Exile cannot be redeemed by self-sufficiency without man turning monstrous but neither will the banished man in *King Lear* find the pastoral closure of recognition and reintegration. G. K. Hunter's critique is partly based on a pastoral reading of the play. He brings Lear out of the wilderness to reconciliation with Cordelia and the promise of a new world. The tragedy that follows does not affect Hunter's conclusions about the kind of exile Lear experiences. If the play ended after scene 21, Hunter would have his tragi-comedy. Cordelia greets Lear at Dover. 'How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?' (21.42). To know Cordelia is for Lear to recognise himself, as was clear from the first scene of the play. Yet this recognition scene is premature. It will be

⁷⁸ O. J. Campbell perhaps comes closest to this, suggesting that Lear's Stoic failure as revealed in the death of Cordelia becomes a Christian triumph. He describes Lear as one who 'has not arrived at utter indifference to external events, at that complete freedom from emotion, the disease of the intellect, which produces true stoic content. On the contrary Lear finds his peace in an active emotion – in all absorbing love. That it is which at last renders him independent of circumstance', 'The Salvation of *Lear*', *ELH* 15 (1948), 93-109, 106. I can see no evidence in the play for such Christian detachment any more than for the invulnerability of the Stoic.

enacted later as tragedy.⁷⁹ Lear's emergence from exile is aborted by the death of Cordelia.

Our expectations about the journey's end of the other exiles are also betrayed. On the heath, the Fool, Poor Tom, Kent and Lear seemed to regroup into an alternative society, marked by impoverishment and madness, but also by sympathy for one another. The pastoral undertones of this experience, the idea of human society recrystallising in the greenwood, might have led us to expect that they would all return to civilisation together. It is not so. The disappearance of the Fool is the most obvious example of the play's failure to achieve such closure, to draw all its fools back into a circle.

At the end of the trial scene, Gloucester enters with news that the King's life is in danger. He urges Kent to assist him in getting Lear into the waiting litter that will take him to safety at Dover (13.83-5). After the heath, Dover, where Cordelia and the French army await, might represent that return to civilisation which we expect to follow the pastoral sojourn. There is still a battle to be fought, as in *Rosalynde*, but this is the final deferral of the moment when the characters take up their positions in a newly-ordered state. But if the battle in *King Lear* does not go 'according to plan', neither does the return to Dover. Before Kent and the sleeping King leave the stage, the former turns to the Fool, 'Come, help to bear thy master./ Thou must not stay behind' (13.93-4). This remark stresses the Fool's continuing importance in the Quarto play. Kent still accords him a place in Lear's court and perhaps recognises some personal connection remaining between master and servant. Nevertheless, the Fool's exit with Kent is his last. We never see him at Dover nor is there any communication between himself and Cordelia though we were told that he had pined since she left the court (4.70-1).

⁷⁹ See Young, *The Heart's Forest*, 88-93, and Mack's *King Lear in Our Time*, 63-6, on the play's defiance of audience expectation.

The possible doubling of the parts of Cordelia and the Fool is a convenient way of accounting for this disappearance though it does not explain why Shakespeare omits to give the Fool any kind of exit line. Even when he does so in the Folio, the Fool's abandonment of Lear remains a riddle.⁸⁰ I would suggest that this absence, whether an oversight on Shakespeare's part or the casual dismissal of one who had served his purpose, contributes to the uneasy sense of continued alienation which the Dover reunion might have been expected to dispel. Although an audience may only become aware that the Fool is 'lost' at the very end of the play, his last exit takes place before the explicit departure of another character from Lear's retinue, that of Poor Tom.

It is noticeable that Kent does not extend the same invitation to Poor Tom as he does to the Fool in scene 13, though Lear had expressed a powerful desire to keep the 'philosopher' with him.⁸¹ In any case, Poor Tom seems voluntarily to part company with Lear. He has practical reasons for doing so:

Tom, away.
Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray
When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee. (103-6)

⁸⁰ In the Folio, the Fool's last line is 'And I'll go to bed at noone'. John Kerrigan refers to the flower called Goat's beard or 'Go to bedde at noone', which closed its petals at midday with the decline of the sun. He concludes that 'The Fool sees the lineaments of Lear's tragedy only too well. And he sees that he can do nothing to help his master, now far beyond the reach of a jest. So he resolves to call it a day at 'noone', to abandon the action at its mid-point, to absent himself from half the story', 229. Not only the absence of any such line but also the continued attachment between Lear and the Fool, as confirmed at the last by Kent, negates such a reading for the Quarto. See 'Revision, Adaptation, and the Fool in *King Lear*', 229. James Calderwood argues that the Fool disappears because he has become redundant, 'Creative Uncreation in *King Lear*', *Sh. Q.* 37 (1986), 5-19, 9-10. Curiously, King James I's fool, Archie Armstrong, was to be banished from the court of Charles I for general slanders and particularly words spoken against the Archbishop of Canterbury. See the *DNB*, 562, and *Archy's Dream, Sometime Jester to his Maiestie: but Exiled the Court by Canterburies Malice* (1641) in *The Old Book Collector's Miscellany*, vol. 3, no. 16.

⁸¹ There is perhaps no reason why Kent should see a place for Poor Tom in the king's retinue whether Lear is mad or sane. Nevertheless, the fact that the Earl ignores Poor Tom here may be an expression of a personal animosity towards the outcast which the latter notes at 24.206-7, a detail which serves to undermine the rosy view of a brotherhood of suffering on the heath.

Knight. He appears at the tournament: 'O, know my name is lost,/ By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit' (24.118-9). Edgar performs the banishment and restoration of his name. By defeating the usurper, he wins it for himself and also regains thus the identity of the legitimate and loyal son.

Kent's disguise too has practical applications. It allows him a position in Lear's service and preserves his life which would otherwise be forfeit under the terms of his banishment. There is, however, some deeper intent behind Kent's disguise.⁸² At first this seems to be the gathering of information on Lear and the newly divided kingdom. In the stocks, Kent reads a letter from Cordelia who has now been informed of his 'obscured course' and is on her way to Albion (7.162). In the following scene, Kent instructs a Gentleman to go to Dover and report to the French Queen, 'Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow/ The King hath cause to plain' (8.29-30). Even when Kent has brought Cordelia with her army and Lear together, he is still plotting some greater triumph, hence his refusal to cast off his disguise. But this plot is dependent upon the outcome of the battle (21.93-4). When that is lost, Kent reappears only to wish Lear a final farewell.

Both Edgar and Kent withhold the moment of self-revelation in pursuance of greater theatrical effects. Perhaps in a world so devoid of divine providence there is a need to stage such dramatic revelations, to substitute a *deus ex machina* for divine intervention.⁸³ Yet neither recognition scene comes off as hoped. Edgar defeats Edmund and wins general admiration when he reveals his true identity. It is a double victory over his brother.

⁸² See 4.1-4, 17.52-5 and 21.6-11.

⁸³ See Greenblatt's 'Shakespeare and the Exorcists' on the emptying out of the meaning of rituals and beliefs in the play.

Unfortunately, the effect upon Gloucester is also akin to victory. Edgar tells how he served his father in disguise:

Led him, begged for him, saved him from despair;
 Never - O father! – 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; but his flawed heart –
 Alack, too weak the conflict to support –
 'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
 Burst smilingly. (24.188-96)

On the assumption that he might be killed in the combat, Edgar has enlightened his father perhaps earlier than he would have liked. Yet it is still far too late. Edgar finally gets the recognition he desired from Gloucester but kills him by withholding the same.⁸⁴ Edgar's performance of the wretched outcast who forgives his enemy and saves that enemy's life is cruel. He justifies himself at the expense of Gloucester who cannot sustain the burden of guilt, not merely that of his original misjudgement of his son, but the guilt Edgar has imposed through his subsequent actions.

Nevertheless, Edgar's emergence from anonymity has still been a success. His father has recognised, admired and blessed his son. When Edgar reveals himself to Edmund and Albany, he is similarly met with a mixture of surprise and admiration (24.171-4). The final scene of Kent's exile is very different although there have been glimpses of a happy

⁸⁴ Cavell describes the avoidance of recognition in this play as cruel and even murderous. He suggests that Edgar's complicity in Edmund's scheme inspires in him a sense of shame which prevents him from revealing his identity to Gloucester. Cavell considers the putting out of eyes in the play in conjunction with the villains' horror of being seen. Gloucester apostrophises an imagined Edgar in his son's presence, 'Might I but live to see thee in my touch/ I'd say I had eyes again' (15.21-2) but Edgar fails to respond thus repeating the original blinding, *Disowning Knowledge*, 54-5. In response to Cavell see Harry Berger Jr, 'Text Against Performance: The Gloucester Family Romance' in *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic": Renaissance Essays in Honor of C. L. Barber* ed. by Peter Erickson and Coppélia Kahn (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1985), 210-29.

conclusion. In scene 8, Kent assures a messenger that he is a 'gentleman of blood and breeding' (31-3). When the Gentleman gives Cordelia a particular ring, she will tell him the identity of the mysterious figure whose message he delivers. Kent assumes a curiosity in others about himself. He anticipates his own discovery and others' responses to it again at 17.52-5. Finally, in his meeting with Cordelia, Kent is recognised by name and by his virtues. Cordelia greets him, 'O thou good Kent' (21.1). Yet the power to act in disguise and then to reveal oneself is finally lost by Kent, not only when the battle ruins his hopes but when Edgar reveals his identity.⁸⁵

In the final scene, Edgar narrates his meeting on the heath with a man he does not name. This man described Lear's sufferings 'which in recounting/ His grief grew puissant and the strings of life/ Began to crack' (24.212-4). This account bridges the gap between Kent's optimism at the end of scene 21 and his entrance after the defeat. Once his plans, whatever they were, are ruined, his position as observer, which perhaps fortified him against too powerful an emotional involvement with Lear's fate, is lost. Here, Edgar presents the Earl as mortally wounded by what he has witnessed. At this point Albany asks the identity of the man. Edgar replies:

Kent, sir, the banished Kent, who in disgrace
Followed his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave. (216-8)

Edgar has made the narrative dramatic and is doubtless met by exclamations of surprise. There had been rumours that both Edgar and Kent were in Germany (21.87-9). But Edgar

⁸⁵ Hugh Maclean contrasts Edgar's dynamism with Kent's relative ineffectiveness. He argues that the Earl adopts too passive a role, one that he cannot maintain consistently, and that he finally becomes too enamoured of disguise to judge the right time for disclosure. See 'Disguise in *King Lear*: Kent and Edgar', *Sh. Q.* 11 (1960), 49-54.

seems once again to have told a story at another's expense. The revelation of Kent's identity is surely Kent's and a crucial part of the exile's readmission into society. Edgar's revelation, this time of another's secrets, once again serves his own purposes.

Yet the bathos which greets Kent's entrance is only partly Edgar's fault. Kent has been immediately preceded by the Second Gentleman carrying a bloody knife, who thus announced the deaths of Gonoril and Regan. Albany is still trying to absorb this news and has just sent for the bodies to be brought in when Kent's entrance is announced. Albany regrets the reception the Earl must receive, 'the time will not allow/ The compliment that very manners urges' (24.228-9). When Kent does appear and asks to see the King he throws his audience into greater paroxysms with Albany's 'Great thing of us forgot!' (232). Next, Edmund reveals the plot to kill Cordelia and a messenger is dispatched in panic to countermand these orders. Then Lear enters with Cordelia in his arms. Kent's appearance in this scene is not that of a man who seeks to perform his self-revelation before the court. He does not expect to inspire wonder here. It is to King Lear that he must finally reveal himself and be known. Yet the anti-climactic nature of his reception expresses how irrelevant to the tragedy he has become as other dramas upstage his own transformation from Caius to Kent.⁸⁶ His irrelevance to Lear and Cordelia is painfully apparent. He has brought them together only so that the army should be defeated and Cordelia murdered. It is one of the play's ironies that the most valuable service Kent could perform for Lear finally comes too late. At the beginning of scene 24, Albany had asked Edmund for the prisoners but was refused. Only when Kent enters some 180 lines later and asks for Lear does Albany recall his question. By this point Cordelia is dead and Lear once more distracted and near death. Nevertheless, Kent

⁸⁶ On Shakespeare's failure to exploit the potential of Kent's disguise see Bertrand Evans who concludes, 'Shakespeare never brought a major practice to a lamer conclusion', *Shakespeare's Tragic Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 147-80, 166.

must still attempt to make himself known to Lear:

LEAR: Are not you Kent?

KENT: The same, your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?

LEAR: He's a good fellow, I can tell you that.
He'll strike, and quickly too. He's dead and rotten.

KENT: No, my good lord, I am the very man –

LEAR: I'll see that straight.

KENT: That from your first of difference and decay
Have followed your sad steps.

LEAR: You're welcome hither. (24.277-84)

So Kent goes on his journey to death unrecognised, uncalled by his master.

Lear too is plunged back into isolation and despair by Cordelia's death. The reconciliation of scene 21 is replayed here as tragedy. Now it is Lear who bends over the unconscious form of his daughter. In that scene, Cordelia kissed him, believing that she might thus bring him to himself:

O my dear father, restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips, and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made! (21.24-7)

Where she had previously revived him with a kiss, in the Quarto text Lear acknowledges that he has no power to restore her to life (24.300-3). Cordelia's death leads at once to Lear's disorientation and his final detachment from the world. Albany says 'He knows not what he sees; and vain it is/ That we present us to him' (288-9). Her loss is the destruction of that world he had imagined in the prison cell. It is the final expulsion of Lear from love and

centrality back into nothingness, an exile he will not survive.

For Edgar, the experience of exile has been one of suffering and of self-loss but it has ended with a semi-pastoral conclusion. Through his use of disguise and his own creative powers he has constructed an ending for himself which promises rewards beyond those he could have imagined, namely the inheritance of a kingdom. In this sense, he combines the creativity of Rosalind with the ambition of Orlando. Yet for the other exiles of the play, Kent, Cordelia, Lear, Gloucester, exile is a tragic alienation from others and from the self from which there is no return. For Cordelia and Kent, the hopes of reconciliation with King Lear and restoration to society are dashed. The excesses of alienation in this play mean that, even when recognition is possible, the character may be too 'flawed' to survive it.

CORIOLANUS: “THE BUILDINGS OF MY FANCY”

In *King Lear*, the King’s fictional world is destroyed when he discovers that nothing on the map in his head corresponds to reality. Coriolanus is also the inheritor of an institutional fiction that defines his identity. Just as the King is the embodiment of his kingdom, so every Roman supposedly finds Romanitas within himself and, through the performance of these virtues, identifies himself increasingly with an idealised and mythical Rome. Both ideologies ensure the centrality of Lear and Coriolanus in their worlds. Banishment, therefore, is not only an expulsion from the physical manifestation of that world, it is an expulsion from ideology and its proffered roles. On the heath, Lear is no longer a king, a father, a nobleman, even a man. Outside Rome, Coriolanus becomes ‘a kind of nothing’. Thus, banishment explodes the myths by which they have lived. It becomes clear that no one else believed in the King’s Two Bodies or Romanitas with their conviction and hence that their fulfilment of those roles was judged superficially, as a performance from which the actor walks away unchanged.

In *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare explores the inevitable chasm that opens up between the ideal city and its embodiment. He dramatises the dilemma of a character whose commitment to the myth is stronger than his commitment to reality. For the ruling class, Romanitas is politically expedient, promoting the valour, loyalty and self-immolation of the people for the sake of the city.¹ For the plebeians, it is an inspiring fable, a fantasy of valour and fame, extraneous to

¹ J. L. Simmons identifies pragmatic concerns as the *raison d’être* of the myth. He writes: ‘The practical need to defend, expand, and maintain the Earthly City had been successfully idealized into an ethos designed to secure Rome truly as the Eternal City’. See *Shakespeare’s Pagan World: The Roman Tragedies* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1974), 19.

everyday life. Until exile, Coriolanus fails to recognise that *Rome* is a political illusion, a place that only truly exists in his mind. His idealism is not only not appreciated by Rome but is declared dangerous. Loyalty to this ideal renders him profoundly anti-social.

From the beginning of the play it is clear that the word 'Rome' has become severed from a shared and stable meaning.² The Republic has only recently been established. Caius Martius fought against the tyrant, Tarquin, in his first battle and was hence one of the defenders of the Republic (2.2.87-9, 94-5). In the First Act we hear of the creation of the tribunes. Rome is in transition and as the political structure of the city changes, so 'Rome' alters semantically.³ The question of what Rome is and of who represents it, is forced into the marketplace for debate. The plebeians begin the play with a challenge to the economic and hermeneutic hegemony of Rome. The threat of starvation leads them to rebel, not merely in demand for food but as revenge upon the patricians who hoard grain. That one class should starve whilst the other enjoys a surplus leads the First Citizen to certain conclusions about the relationship between plebeians and patricians: 'The leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them' (1.1.18-23). He proposes a body politic in which the stomach's happiness and its identity depend upon the impoverishment and subordination of the other members. The patricians' superiority is created from the inferiority of the plebeians: 'We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good' (14-5). The storming of the Capitol is an attempt to appropriate the centre of patrician

² For a general discussion of the instability of language in the play, see James L. Calderwood, '*Coriolanus*: Wordless Meanings and Meaningless Words', *SEL* 6 (1966), 211-24.

³ Gail Kern Paster makes a similar division between the historical city of Rome and its abstraction, 'a symbol of human possibility', and discusses the play's conflicting definitions of Rome. See 'To Starve with Feeding: The City in *Coriolanus*', *Sh. St.* 11 (1978), 123-44, 125.

power. The plebeians are to move from an ideologically marginal position to the centrality represented by this edifice, to assert their Roman status. The empowering of their voices through the creation of four tribunes⁴ realises the Roman aspirations of the plebeians. One of the tribunes urges the question 'What is the city but the people?' (3.1.199), and in the course of the play the plebeians try to fulfil this role.

The patricians have their own view of the relation between the classes and it is a paternalistic one. Menenius stresses the utter dependency of the plebeians upon the elite with no sense of a reciprocal relationship (147-52). Their rebellion cannot hope to affect the state whose 'course will on/ The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs/ Of more strong link asunder than can ever/ Appear in your impediment' (67-70). Rome is as far from the reach of their staves as heaven (1.1.66-7).⁵ Menenius concedes the plebeians a part in the state sufficient to allow them into his body politic metaphor. Yet his rhetoric against rebellion is utterly inappropriate. He attempts to defend the patricians through their identification as the stomach, sending food all round the body. One meaning of the fable is that each body part must perform its allotted function but this is exactly what the patricians as stomach, as fathers and as guardians have failed to do. Hence the plebeians starve.⁶

Despite constitutional changes, the patricians retain a fixed, conservative conception of Rome based on the ideals of Romanitas, an aristocratic and martial code. The 'enfranchisement' of

⁴ The tribunes' definition of Rome further complicates the matter since it is entirely self-serving and thus continually vacillating.

⁵ Clifford Davidson points out that the belly was traditionally a symbol of state finances and is thus particularly appropriate to an oligarchy associated with hoarding and with usury. See 'Coriolanus: A Study in Political Dislocation', *Sh. St.* 4 (1968), 263-74, 265.

⁶ See Andrew Gurr, 'Coriolanus and the Body Politic', *Sh. S.* 28 (1975), 63-70, 67.

the plebeians is one of many acts of appeasement, such as the distribution of free corn, which are not intended to challenge the ideal of Rome but only to protect the physical manifestation of the city and its patricians. What can the plebeians know of government, asks Martius (1.1.189-94). Significantly, the word 'Rome' remains confined to the store of the patricians. The few occasions when it is used by them to embrace a shared civic identity occur when the plebeians are required to fight, as at Corioli (1.7.2), or when Coriolanus is praised or defended (2.1.159).⁷ At these times, the manpower of the plebeians is required and they are invited to locate themselves within the legend of Rome, forgetting the materiality of their lives and the discomfort of their empty bellies for Rome's metaphorical and diachronic body.⁸ The concerns of both sides are for a time subsumed in rituals of collective identity. The man who makes this possible is Rome's champion, Coriolanus.

Coriolanus' education in the legend of Rome is the inevitable result of his ancestry and his birth as a 'man-child' (1.3.16). Nevertheless, Martius has an unusually devoted and ambitious Roman mythographer in his mother:

I, considering how honour would become such a person - that it was no better than, picture-like, to hang by th'wall if renown made it not stir - was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. (1.3.9-13)

This metaphor of the painting brought to life in Shakespeare may remind us of Lucrece's identification with the Troy painting in *The Rape of Lucrece* (itself indebted to *Aeneid* I, 450-93). From her observations of Hecuba, Lucrece learns how to portray the tragic Roman

⁷ The one occasion when the plebeians alone represent Rome is in the anticipation of Coriolanus' invasion. Since the hero's banishment was their work, it is their city that will be destroyed. Cominius says: 'He'll shake your Rome about your ears', 4.6.103. This positing of the city as somewhere and something else echoes Coriolanus's own removed perspective.

⁸ See Arthur Riss, 'The Belly Politic: *Coriolanus* and the Revolt of Language', *ELH* 59 (1992), 53-75, 60-3.

matron (1465-70, 1496-8). She also relates the pollution of her body by Tarquin to the rape of Helen that began the Trojan War (1369) and to the infiltration of the city by the Trojan horse. Lucrece is inspired to loose the corrupted blood from her veins that the city of Rome may be purified and its survival assured.⁹

Volumnia's idea of Coriolanus brought to life from a painting is one expression of the pressure in all Shakespeare's Roman plays to reanimate the glory of Roman ancestors. In *Julius Caesar*, Brutus is drawn into the conspiracy in part to prove his relationship with the Brutus who expelled Tarquin.¹⁰ Coriolanus must live up to his Roman ancestors but also to his Trojan antecedent, Hector, as both Volumnia (1.3.42-5) and Aufidius remark (1.9.11-2).¹¹

Martius has been created by Rome to embody its code of Romanitas, the principles upon which the whole city supposedly stands: bravery and constancy, self-sacrifice, the pursuit of honour. These values are expressed in the eulogies uttered over Martius in private but also in public as rites of appropriation whereby 'Rome must know/ The value of her own' (1.10.20-1). After the battle at Corioli, Cominius looks forward to uniting the city, even against its will, in self-wonder at the hero's exploits. He imagines the scene:

⁹ Linda Woodbridge elaborates upon the symbolism of the body as state, with particular attention to the political implications of Lucrece's rape, in 'Palisading the Body Politic', *True Rites and Maimed Rites: Ritual and Anti-Ritual in Shakespeare and His Age* ed. by Linda Woodbridge and Edward Berry (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 270-95.

¹⁰ Robert Miola describes Shakespeare's habit of 'reworking dramatic situations and scenes in his Roman art' in *Shakespeare's Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 16.

¹¹ On Coriolanus' epic associations, see Reuben A. Brower, *Hero and Saint: Shakespeare and the Graeco-Roman Heroic Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 354-81; Richard C. Crowley 'Coriolanus and Epic Genre' in *Shakespeare's Late Plays: Essays in Honour of Charles Crow* ed. by Richard C. Tobias and Paul G. Zolbrod (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974), 114-30 and John W. Velz "'Cracking Strong Curbs Asunder": Roman Destiny and the Roman Hero in *Coriolanus*', *ELR* 13 (1983), 58-69.

Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles,
 Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,
 I th'end admire; where ladies shall be frighted
 And, gladly quaked, hear more; where the dull tribunes,
 That with the fusty plebeians hate thine honours,
 Shall say against their hearts 'We thank the gods
 Our Rome hath such a soldier.' (1.10.3-9)

The climax of Cominius' first eulogy on the battlefield is the renaming of the hero. Following Cominius' second eulogy, the hero is elected to the consulship. It only remains for the senate's choice to be ratified by the plebeians. The spectacle of Coriolanus in humble garb revealing the scars won for his country is a ritual that cuts to the heart of the Romans' attitude towards their mythic hero. The citizens view the wounds as if they too had shed blood for their country. Coriolanus has exhibited all the virtues they know themselves to possess but have not displayed so extravagantly:

He must live as they dare not. He must be in actuality what they can only behold in dream. While they can live in the actual and not very wonderful city of Rome, he must inhabit the institutional fiction of it which they have in their minds. He must excite them with displays of an excellence to which their earthbound souls cannot and dare not aspire. They know the need to live in the actual world: but they also cannot give up the 'religious' necessity for having one man amongst them who is, as Menenius says, 'too noble for the world'.¹²

However, interpretations of Coriolanus are by no means uniform, reflecting the ambiguous signification of 'Rome' and 'Roman'. Cominius recognises that the patricians will admire their hero only 'I th'end'. The plebeians' hatred for the hero, which has previously inspired them to plot his assassination, means that to praise him is to speak 'against their hearts'. The play opens with a scene in which various plebeians debate the ethics of their revolt. They

¹² Long, *The Unnatural Scene*, 75-6.

conclude that Coriolanus, the city's great hero, is no less rebellious. From the beginning then, the plebeians identify the hermeneutic dilemma at the centre of the play, namely how to interpret the hero.¹³ If he fights to defend Rome from its enemies, then he must be a patriot. However, his own assertions that he does not defend the plebeians but would rather fight them render these actions obscure unless Rome is seen as a community apart from plebeian life. If Coriolanus can be an 'enemy to the people' (1.1.8), 'a very dog to the commonalty' (27) and yet serve his country (28-9), the plebeians are left with a definition of country that completely excludes them. They find matter for their rebellion in the hero.

Martius' invective against the plebeians defines himself and thus Romanitas in opposition to them. In the first scene he complains of their inconstancy. They are hares when they should be lions, geese instead of foxes (168-70). Any reputation dependent on their opinions is unstable:

With every minute you do change a mind,
And call him noble that was now your hate.
Him vile that was your garland. (180-2)

Constancy is perhaps the central virtue of the Stoic doctrine and the one that most powerfully influences Coriolanus' actions. He apparently never changes his mind and is incapable of flinching from any task he has determined upon. It is this steadfastness that he wishes for his son (5.3.70-5). The more complex Stoic ideas of constancy will be discussed later in this chapter. It is enough for the moment to point out the simple contrast Coriolanus draws between himself and the plebeians. Plutarch writes that men 'marvel[ed] much at his

¹³ Menenius insists that the plebeians should not judge the warrior by his words, whilst Coriolanus demands that he be known by his deeds alone.

constancie, that he was never overcome with pleasure, nor money, and how he would endure easilie all manner of paines and travailles'.¹⁴ Coriolanus' Stoic disregard for wealth is also a much-praised virtue, as Plutarch suggested, and it too forms a part of Cominius' eulogy:

Our spoils he kicked at,
And looked upon things precious as they were
The common muck of the world. He covets less
Than misery itself would give, rewards
His deeds with doing them, and is content
To spend the time to end it. (2.2.124-9)

The hero is subsequently disgusted by the soldiers who scavenge in the ruins of the city for items that a patrician would consider worthless (1.6.4-8).

However, what Coriolanus finds most reprehensible and most incomprehensible in the plebeians is cowardice. Of all the values Romanitas encompasses at this early stage in Rome's history, heroic and martial bravery are the most admired: 'It is held/ That valour is the chiefest virtue' (2.2.83-4)¹⁵ and in this context Coriolanus stands alone, as exemplified by his victory alone in Corioles.¹⁶ His disgust at Roman cowardice finds expression three times in the play, most notably in imagined comparison with his own valour:

'Look, sir, my wounds.
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roared and ran
From th'noise of our own drums'. (2.3.52-5)

As each virtue of Coriolanus was seen to reflect his Roman philosophy, so Coriolanus

¹⁴ Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes* tr. by Sir Thomas North (London 1595), 235-57, 236.

¹⁵ Plutarch writes: 'Now in those dayes, valiantnes was honoured in ROME above all other vertues', *ibid.*, 236.

¹⁶ Lartius describes him as a soldier 'Even to Cato's wish' (1.5.28), Cato being the 'Censor' renowned for his advocacy of the traditional military virtues of Rome.

interprets the plebeians' particular 'philosophy' as denying their membership of Rome. Cowardice, materialism, inconstancy are diametrically opposed to what the Roman should be. Coriolanus' conviction that the plebeians are not truly Roman is expressed in a number of ways. At his trial before the people, he alludes to their foreignness:

I would they were barbarians, as they are,
 Though in Rome littered; not Romans, as they are not,
 Though calved i'th' porch o'th' Capitol. (3.1.237-9)

His references to them as slaves may also hint at their non-Roman birth, as well as to their alienation in aristocratic Rome (1.1.197, 1.6.7, 3.2.8-9).¹⁷ Yet, Coriolanus goes further by implying that the plebeians are anathema to any society. Their unfitness for political rights is expressed in his description of them as 'dissentious rogues' (1.1.162) and 'the mutable rank-scented meinie' (3.1.70). These terms reveal the bestiality central to Coriolanus' argument that they do not belong in society. They are 'curs', 'rats', 'the beast with many heads'. Coriolanus does not stop with bestiality but goes on to deny them any kind of completeness. They are only fragments, or shreds of men identified as voices, mouths, a multitudinous tongue. So inimical to society are these creatures that not only do they corrupt like an infection, they are themselves measles (3.1.82).

¹⁷ The word 'slave' was a common pejorative term which need not imply anything about the literal status of the recipient. Coriolanus applies it to Aufidius as well as to the plebeians. However, the repeated and unemphatic appellation of a messenger in 4.6 as a 'slave' may suggest Shakespeare imagining slaves in Rome. See Charles Wells, *The Wide Arch: Roman Values in Shakespeare* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1993), 140-3. Certainly, the practice of taking Volscians prisoner suggests that many would become slaves. Hence, Coriolanus may have been 'whooped out of Rome' by foreigners.

Christopher Givan is not alone in arguing that Coriolanus defines himself against the plebeians with such vehemence because in them he recognises what he may become.¹⁸ Specifically, the critic remarks how the terms of Coriolanus' vilification of the plebeians, that they are childlike and inconstant, objects and numbers, will be applied to the warrior in due course, the 'boy', the traitor, the 'thing' and the number of wounds.¹⁹ However, Givan does not explore one implication of this reification, that Coriolanus and the plebeians essentially compete for civilian rights. In Plutarch, Coriolanus supports a plan to rid Rome of some of its seditious and 'diseased' members by transporting them to Velitres, a city depopulated by plague (241). Martius 'did compell those that were chosen, to go thither, and to depart the citie, upon great penalties to him that should disobey' (242). Shakespeare may hint at this when Coriolanus welcomes the prospect of war 'to vent/ Our musty superfluity' (1.1.225-6). Furthermore, Leah Marcus 'localizes' the play in the struggle between city authorities and the Privy Council for jurisdiction over particular 'spaces' in London. The Lord Mayor and his aldermen chafed at the existence of liberties beyond their control, in particular Blackfriars and Whitefriars, as seen in the Elizabethan controversy over the London stage. James I made further attacks on London's autonomy by encroaching on its power to prosecute those within

¹⁸ 'Shakespeare's Coriolanus: The Premature Epitaph and the Butterfly', *Sh. St.* 12 (1979), 143-58. Janet Adelman concurs that Coriolanus 'uses the crowd to bolster his own identity: he accuses them of being exactly what he wishes not to be', that is hungry, malnourished. See "'Anger's My Meat": Feeding, Dependency and Aggression in *Coriolanus*' in *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays* ed. by Murray M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 129-49, 135. Arthur Riss suggests that Coriolanus needs antagonists from whom to defend his 'borders', and sees the plebeians fulfilling this role, 'The Belly Politic', 57.

¹⁹ 'The Premature Epitaph and the Butterfly', 143-4.

its limits.²⁰ Coriolanus is perceived by the tribunes as a violator of civic freedoms, one who disregards the people's 'liberties' and 'charters' (2.3.180) in pursuit of his own 'power tyrannical' (3.3.68). In Rome, and in London, Coriolanus is 'turned into a scapegoat whose expulsion both makes possible and bears witness to the expansion of the city and its "liberties".'²¹

Nevertheless, whilst casting Coriolanus as scapegoat, Marcus also suggests that banishment reflects his 'inability to function' within the republican system.²² Coriolanus' banishment has often been seen as essentially predetermined, as the inevitable realisation of his anti-social attitudes. These attitudes thus approximate to a fatal flaw. Janette Dillon writes, 'It is clear that Coriolanus's banishment is the logical consequence of his inward solitariness, and this inward solitariness is itself not a characteristic developed by particular events, but inherent in his nature'.²³ The precedent for such a critique is found in Plutarch who observes in relation to Coriolanus that 'all men that are wilfully given to a selfe opinion and obstinate minde, and who will never yeeld to others reason, but to their owne: remaine without companie, and forsaken of all men' (243). Whilst Plutarch predicts the 'banishment' of any man so flawed, he does consider this Roman's upbringing as a factor in the formation of his character:

for lacke of education, he was so chollericke and impacient, that he would yeeld to no living creature: which made him churlishe, uncivil. and altogether unfit for any mans conversation. (236)

Both Plutarch and Dillon suggest, then, that there is something in Coriolanus' being that

²⁰ Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare*, 165-8.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 203.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Shakespeare and the Solitary Man*, 145.

prevents him from living in society. What that might be is most famously explored by Aristotle in his *Politics*, a text which Shakespeare may well have recalled in the writing of his play.²⁴ Aristotle expounds on the naturalness of the city as an organism and of man's desire to live in a community since he is not self-sufficient: 'But he that can not abide to live in companie, or through sufficiencie hath need of nothing, is not esteemed a part or member of a Cittie, but is either a beast or a God'.²⁵ The anti-social nature of the solitary man is thus bestiality or divinity. Both these characters are assigned to Coriolanus after his banishment. He is imagined as a viper (3.1.263), a dragon (5.4.13) and a male tiger (5.4.29). At the same time,

He sits in his state as a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done is finished with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity and a heaven to throne in. (5.4.21-5)

Cominius describes Coriolanus' generalship of the Volscians:

He is their god. He leads them like a thing.
Made by some other deity than nature,
That shapes man better. (4.6.94-6)

Nevertheless, there is also an important sense in which Coriolanus chooses his nature and this is a perspective found in Shakespeare's play and in his sources. Plutarch suggests that the Roman's obstinate refusal to yield supremacy to anyone is thought of by him as 'a token of magnanimitie' (243). The reference to Coriolanus being '*wilfully* given to a selfe opinion'

²⁴ F. N. Lees makes this claim and proposes that Shakespeare most probably used the 1598 translation of the *Politics*, *Aristotles Politiques, or Discourses of Government. Translated out of Greeke into French, with Expositions taken out of the best Authours ... By Loys Le Roy, called Regius. Translated out of French into English. At London printed by Adam Islip Anno Dom: 1598*. See Lee's 'Coriolanus, Aristotle, and Bacon' in *RES* 1 (1950), 114-25.

²⁵ Quoted from 'Coriolanus, Aristotle, and Bacon', 119.

may also suggest self-determination. In the 1598 translation of the *Politics*, the translator, I. D., includes a number of revealing glosses of his own. In particular, he observes

if by chance there be any such monster extant, which by a particular inclination should shun and avoid Civill societie, hee ought to be reputed as most wicked, a lover and stirrer up of warres and seditions, and a most bloody and cruell tyrant.²⁶

I. D. suggests that the solitary man's desire to live by himself may be just that, a desire, an 'inclination', an ambition. He exemplifies the dangerous urge to solitude as that of the 'bloody and cruell tyrant', represented in many contemporary tracts as highly unnatural. The solitary man and the tyrant share an anti-social ambition.²⁷

This ambiguity seems to me important for our understanding of Coriolanus. The patricians do not find him unfit for their conversation though he was fashioned for the battlefield rather than for civilian life. Coriolanus' deliberate individualism is at first profoundly social. It reflects his ambitions for Rome. When the warrior becomes so passionate about the political situation in 3.1, he is grieving for a patrician city that was once self-determining but is now dependent upon plebeians for its security. This vulnerability alone makes it unworthy of itself and of Coriolanus. We need not see the hero's accusations that the plebeians are unworthy of society as a subconscious recognition of his own incivility. If Coriolanus is unfit for society it is for that cankered city which debases his idealised Rome. He has no desire to belong to this world. If Coriolanus is anti-social then is it not by the judgement of a society to which he has

²⁶ Ibid..

²⁷ For Aristotle the solitary man is partly dangerous due to a lack of restraint. He suggests that the man who is, in Homer's words, 'tribeless, lawless, and houseless' will seek war 'as being not restrained by the yoke of marriage', *ibid.*, 118.

no wish to belong?

The critical commonplace that Coriolanus is anti-social derives from two basic interpretations. There is the Plutarchan concept of a man essentially defective, a man who does not know how to live among men, without any agenda behind his solitude.²⁸ A historicised version of this argument is taken up by critics who see him as defective for a particular age, lacking for example the skills of political cunning and adaptability required by the city state. As Patricia Meszaros puts it he is 'caught in the historical process, the passing of an era'.²⁹ These representations of Coriolanus shade into the more sophisticated critique which views the hero as ideologically and consciously opposed to society itself or to a particular regime. Stanley Cavell and Janet Adelman represent the hero as rejecting the dependency and desire upon which reciprocal communal relations are founded. Specifically, Coriolanus' opposition to plebeian culture has been explored as an expression of aristocratic ideology, anachronistic in Republican Rome and in Jacobean England. Shannon Miller proposes that Coriolanus may be consistently identified with King James I. Both men insist upon the absolute authority of the ruling elite (or king) against the commons' 'ancient' rights. Both men express open contempt for the populace and shun the common gaze to the detriment of their popularity. For Miller, the play is a 'textual negotiation of the political tensions of the period' in which the hero's banishment is a subversive expression of anti-

²⁸ According to Willard Farnham, Coriolanus' pride renders him 'monstrously deficient as a human being', though this pride is also the source of his virtues. See *Shakespeare's Tragic Frontier* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950), 263. A similar approach is taken by Carol M. Sicherman in 'Coriolanus: The Failure of Words', *ELH* 39 (1972), 189-207 in her thesis that Coriolanus is incapable of using language. It is notable how often critics associate *Coriolanus* with failure, Coriolanus's failure or Shakespeare's.
²⁹ "'There is a world elsewhere": Tragedy and History in *Coriolanus*', *SEL* 16 (1976), 273-85, 275. John W. Velz also suggests that Coriolanus' heroic code is anachronistic in the new city state in 'Cracking Strong Curbs Asunder'

monarchical feeling.³⁰

I want to explore here, with reference to some of these arguments, the schism between Coriolanus' ambitions for Rome and for himself. Jonathan Goldberg writes:

Although it may look to our eyes as if *Coriolanus* plays the individual against society, nothing could be further from the truth. Coriolanus aims at devouring the world in order to become it.³¹

Sicinius refers to Coriolanus as one who would 'depopulate the city and/ Be every man himself' (3.1.264-5). As an expression of the hero's peculiarly civil and uncivil ambitions, this is particularly insightful. Coriolanus' famous isolation, his insistence upon acting alone, is an assertion of self but also identifies him as a potential microcosm. He will be the city alone. That aristocratic Rome reads this solitude as an expression of virtue is suggested by Menenius. He condemns the tribunes thus:

I know you can do very little alone, for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single. Your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. (2.1.34-7)

Zvi Jagendorf suggests that Coriolanus's solitude enacts a particular aristocratic fantasy, that of the private, self-sufficient body. His antagonism towards the plebeians is expressed as the

³⁰ Shannon Miller, 'Topicality and Subversion in William Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*', *SEL* 32 (1992), 287-322, 292-3. Miller suggests a parallel between Sir Edward Coke's quarrel with the King in 1608 and the tribunes' banishment of Coriolanus. She describes how Coke opposed James' attempts to increase royal prerogative, insisting 'The comon lawe protecteth the king'. James responded by reversing the sentence as Coriolanus does, 'the King protecteth the lawe and not the lawe the King'. Miller remarks that whilst Coriolanus cannot banish the city, the King is able to enforce his reversal of Coke's statement by law. For both men, the attempt to overcome the will of the commons may be seen as tyrannous and akin to rebellion, 305. For a consideration of Coriolanus and James I's absolutism see Jonathan Goldberg's *James I and the Politics of Literature* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 185-93.

³¹ *James I and the Politics of Literature*, 187.

conflict between the many-headed multitude with its clamorous voices, and the isolated, single and discrete body of Coriolanus that famously asks for nothing.³² Riss locates this private body within a Jacobean debate about enclosing common land which led to riots in 1607:

The rebels in the Midlands Revolt were protesting the landowners' policy of transforming traditionally public, open fields into centralized, fenced in, private property [...] In essence, just as the Midlands Revolt foregrounded the conflict between a communal and private organization of property, Shakespeare in *Coriolanus* dramatizes the conflict between communal and private notions of the body. The movement to enclose land is metaphorically linked to the constitution of the individualistic, enclosed self.³³

Whilst Coriolanus' insistence on the private body aligns him with the power behind enclosures, it also identifies him with the rebels. Coriolanus and the plebeians are agreed upon the materiality and particularity of the body in opposition to the metaphysical body politic.³⁴ The state requires that Coriolanus make himself available for public use and his refusal to do so renders him 'unfit' for society. Riss describes his commitment to 'a paranoid theatre of eternal warfare in which his body is ceaselessly invaded by and must endlessly be defended from others' (56-7).

Such a notion would well account for Coriolanus' horror at displaying his wounds. Whilst they no longer bleed, these breaches in his body can yet be invaded by the invasive gaze and even touch of the multitude. When the plebeians imagine themselves putting tongues in Coriolanus' wounds to make them speak (2.3.6-7), we hear an echo of Antony's response to

³² See Zvi Jagendorf, 'Coriolanus: Body Politic and Private Parts', *Sh. Q.* 41 (1990), 455-69, 462.

³³ 'The Belly Politic', 55.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 67. Riss argues that the state's unity depends upon its sublimation of the material into the symbolic. Both the plebeians and Coriolanus resist incorporation into metaphor.

Caesar's wounds, giving them 'the voice and utterance of my tongue' (*Julius Caesar*, 3.1.263-4). Antony's political career is nourished by his appropriation of Caesar's wounds. Similarly, Decius interprets the symbol of the bleeding statue as that 'from you great Rome shall suck /Reviving blood' (2.2.87-8). In *Coriolanus* also, the appropriation of the hero's wounds 'for his country's good' may require the annihilation of the individual.³⁵ Menenius prays: 'the good gods forbid/ That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude/ Towards her deserved children is enrolled/ In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam/ Should now eat up her own!' (3.1.291-5).³⁶

Coriolanus' defence of his body, that is, of his Rome, is partly a refusal to trade or to reciprocate with the enemy. Jagendorf describes him as 'the hero of a one-man economy that boldly distinguishes itself from the market and the getting, spending, exchanging of ordinary men'.³⁷ One of the most common insults applied by the patricians to the plebeians is that they are tradesmen. When he hears of the threatened invasion by Coriolanus and the Volscians, Menenius disdains the products of plebeian labour:

You have made good work,
You and your apron-men, you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation and
The breath of garlic-eaters! (4.6.99-102)³⁸

³⁵ Miola notes that in both *Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus*, 'the mutilated body of a Roman military hero establishes reputation and effects political change', *Shakespeare's Rome*, 179.

³⁶ See Terentius' gruesome account of the dismemberment of Sejanus' corpse. The Roman crowd is transported with delight by the possession of parts of his body and is described as trading in them. Their hands are covered with his warm blood even as they lament his destruction. *Sejanus His Fall* (1603) ed. by Philip Ayres (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), 5.815-42, 895-7.

³⁷ 'Coriolanus: Body Politic and Private Parts', 464.

³⁸ Volumnia anticipates such scorn: 'Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome./ And occupations perish!', 4.1.14-5.

The plebeians are so strongly identified with trading and manufacture and with their own material concerns that a process of metonymy takes place (3.2.7-9, 5.4.56-8).

Coriolanus is disgusted that he should pay 'the price o' the consulship'. However, the Third Citizen has already suggested that the bestowal of that office upon Coriolanus is inevitable. They will be morally compelled to give him their voices. Noble deeds demand noble acceptance (2.3.4-13). This is much closer to Coriolanus' ideal of honours given automatically through desert not desire. But the hero's disgust for the plebeians makes even 'kindness' too high a price to pay. He sees courtesy inevitably tending to flattery and self-loss. He cannot trade:

Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this womanish toge should I stand here
To beg of Hob and Dick that does appear
Their needless vouches? (2.3.113-7)

Coriolanus repeatedly opposes himself to the giving and receiving of food. At the opening of the play, he is associated with the withholding of corn by the Senate and later condemns its free distribution. Whilst he expects the plebeians to starve silently and with dignity like Romans, he offers himself as a model for that starvation. Janet Adelman has argued persuasively for an association between food and vulnerability in *Coriolanus*. To willingly starve is an expression of an individual's independence from the world and in particular of the protagonist's independence from his mother. Adelman points out the connection between the reciprocity implied by language and by feeding:

Asking, craving, flattering with fair words are here not only preconditions but also equivalents of eating: to refuse to ask is to starve; but starvation is preferable to asking because asking, like eating, is an acknowledgement of one's weakness, one's dependence on the outside world.³⁹

Coriolanus' failure to communicate is one of his most notorious anti-social characteristics. However, this can also be seen as a refusal to sully his words in a corrupt linguistic economy: 'Fickle, vacillating, mutable, constant only in capriciousness, the plebeians exercise a corrosive influence upon language'.⁴⁰ Coriolanus proposes a language in which sign and signified are inseparably joined without ambiguity or punning but in Rome this must be translated into a desire for private language or silent action.⁴¹ The idea of a private language is explored by John Plotz who sees juxtaposed within the play private truth, based on past and present selfhood, and public deception, directed towards future gain. Here, we find a defendant of Coriolanus' anti-social longings. Arguing against Cavell's criticism that Coriolanus ought to fashion himself to society,⁴² Plotz recognises his independence as a critique of society. He argues that despite the protagonist's inability to create a world elsewhere based on the private self and despite perhaps the undesirability of a private world, Coriolanus' stance is valuable.⁴³

At the ceremony of displaying wounds and asking for voices, Coriolanus is asked to betray

³⁹ "'Anger's My Meat'", 133.

⁴⁰ 'Wordless Meanings and Meaningless Words', 213.

⁴¹ D. J. Gordon writes: 'Shakespeare offers a show of the civil life in terms of empty, perverted, destructive relationships between speaker and utterance, word and subject, which is between man and man and man and himself. In this play no one is innocent, except Virgilia who is silent'. See 'Name and Fame: Shakespeare's Coriolanus' in *Papers Mainly Shakespearian* ed. by G. I. Duthie (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1964), 40-57, 49.

⁴² See Stanley Cavell "'Who does the wolf love?": Coriolanus and the interpretations of politics' in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, 245-72.

⁴³ John Plotz, 'Coriolanus and the Failure of Performatives', *ELH* 63 (1996), 809-32, 820-1.

his principles by trading in wounds and words. Furthermore, he is asked to do this by the patricians who supposedly share his principles. In fact, the patricians have long considered the warrior as a piece of merchandise in their own economy of honour. Volumnia imagines her son as a means to buy honour for herself (1.3.7-9). She encourages him to flatter the plebeians and thus win the consulship for the sake of his 'friends' (3.2.62-4). In anticipation of the honours to come, Volumnia and Menenius haggle over the number of wounds he bears and the price they will fetch (2.1.140-52). Coriolanus' resistance to such a trade is hypocritical. He has long been a trader in the ritual of winning honour for Rome and being honoured by the city, which includes the plebeians. Whilst he spends much of the play devaluing their voices and the honour they can bestow, Coriolanus is nevertheless outraged when that honour is not forthcoming. Plutarch makes this point in his comparison of Coriolanus and other men who refused to flatter the people. He commends Metellus, Aristides and Epaminondas because, unlike Coriolanus, they 'despised that which the people could give or take away'.⁴⁴ Subsequently, they did not bear a grudge when punished by the people, in particular when they were banished:

For he that disdaineth to make much of the people, & to have their favour, should much more scorne to seeke to be revenged when he is repulsed. For, to take a repulse and deniall of honour so inwardly to the heart. commeth of no other cause, but that he did too earnestly desire it. (260)

Despite his unwillingness to hear himself praised or to participate in rituals, even those for the benefit of the patricians, Coriolanus needs these rites as much as Rome does. Deeds must be named, skills acknowledged, honour must be requested and given for virtue depends on

⁴⁴ 'The Comparison of Alcibiades with Martius Coriolanus', *Lives*, 257-60, 259-60.

the acknowledgement of the community.⁴⁵ Whilst every act of appropriation is a recognition of Coriolanus' singularity, he is appropriated to the Roman legend *and* to the city of Rome.

This paradox is particularly signified by his renaming:

Giving the name "Coriolanus" to him is to give him fame, a name that will last, honour, a new individuality, like a baptism: 'By deed-achieving honour newly nam'd'. It asserts his uniqueness, but a uniqueness that is an *assertion*, a uniqueness given in relationship to those who gave it.⁴⁶

The name 'Coriolanus' is a part the hero is willing to take on. However, the patricians suggest that there are other names he must be willing to perform in order to be called Consul. He becomes an actor to be tutored in his part (3.2.106, 109-10). There are gestures of humility he must enact in the public space and words to go with them. Volumnia unflinchingly promotes diplomacy at the expense of truth and integrity. Her son must speak,

Not by your own instruction, nor by th'matter
Which your heart prompts you, but with such words
That are but roted in your tongue, though but
Bastards and syllables of no allowance
To your bosom's truth. (3.2.54-8)

Cicero also argued that the constant man should be prepared to change his role in society if the state required it. His principle of 'decorum', the foundation of a morally good life, requires man to act in consistency with his two characters. One character is universally shared by mankind, based on the Stoic ideal of man as dignified, self-sufficient, constant,

⁴⁵ Calderwood points out the contemporary relevance of this idea: 'In the Renaissance concept of honor, for instance, authentic honor involved a harmonious merger of self-esteem and public esteem, inner nobility publicly recognized as such. On this view, self-worth does not fully exist until it has achieved a station in the public consciousness as represented by fame, glory, good name, reputation', 'Wordless Meanings and Meaningless Words', 218. See also Gordon, 'Name and Fame: Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*', 46-7.

⁴⁶ 'Name and Fame', 51-2.

following the dictates of Reason rather than of Opinion. The other character is individual and encompasses particular talents and personality traits. Cicero writes:

we must so act as not to oppose the universal laws of human nature, but, while safeguarding those, to follow the bent of our own particular nature [...] For it is of no avail to fight against one's nature or to aim at what is impossible of attainment.⁴⁷

However, men must also seek to 'make the interest of each individual and of the whole body politic identical'.⁴⁸ When the two cannot be reconciled, Cicero suggests that the individual must adapt to the state's requirements. Coriolanus cannot do so. He remains constant to 'mine own truth'. Geoffrey Miles offers a brilliantly illuminating consideration of the two doctrines of Roman constancy in Shakespeare's Roman plays:

Ciceronian decorum is a moderate, social virtue, that of a good citizen who fulfils with consistency and temperance his proper role in society. Senecan constancy is the virtue of a heroic individual who stands alone like 'a Colossus' (*JC* 1.2.137) or 'a great sea mark' (*Cor.* 5.3.74), is primarily concerned with his own self-sufficiency and self-perfection, and aspires to the nature of a god. There is obviously a potential conflict between the two.⁴⁹

Miles suggests that Coriolanus is viewed from both perspectives in the play. The patricians imagine that he plays a role for the state in the Ciceronian fashion. Coriolanus views his steadfastness and self-consistency as that of the Senecan *sapientis*. The conflict between these two definitions of constancy comes in the scene where Coriolanus must humbly ask the plebeians for their forgiveness and for the consulship. For Volumnia, her son's self-betrayal is necessary to his political career and hence there is a consistency in this change. However.

⁴⁷ *De Officiis*, 113.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 293.

⁴⁹ *Shakespeare and the Constant Romans*, 14.

for Coriolanus, the acting of a different role would destroy the integrity of his whole personality, reflected in the image of each bodily part rebelling against the other (3.2.112-20). Coriolanus responds 'Rather say I play/ The man I am' (14-5), refusing to act whilst implying that, as the patricians believe, his career has been based on the performance of a particular role. The distinction lies in the commitment with which Coriolanus has played his part. Miles writes:

the man who despises acting comes to define his own moral code in terms of theatrical decorum. He has found an appropriate part, identified himself totally with it, and plays it with such unalterable consistency that he cannot step outside it [...] he endows decorum with the heroic absoluteness of Senecan *constantia sapientis*.⁵⁰

Ironically, Coriolanus has taken Ciceronian precepts on choosing a suitable role in society to Senecan and anti-social extremes.⁵¹ By investing his role with greater conviction,⁵² he becomes anathema to the state and is banished.

The interpretation of Coriolanus' banishment within the play is naturally complicated by the ambiguity that surrounds his Roman virtues. The official line is 'he is banished,/ As enemy to the people and his country' (3.3.121-2). This enmity has supposedly been expressed in a number of ways. He has inveighed against the people and both dismissed and threatened their sanctioned power. As such, the tribunes represent him as an enemy to 'all seasoned office' (67) in Rome, and thus to law and order. They infer from this that he is a 'traitorous

⁵⁰ Ibid., 159-60.

⁵¹ See *De Officiis*, 67. Miles writes: 'Out of context, Cicero's doctrine of the importance of consistent truth to oneself *could* be developed into an amoral and anti-social individualism which would clearly have appalled him', 36.

⁵² Volumnia criticizes her son for this: 'You might have been enough the man you are/ With striving less to be so' (3.2.18-9).

innovator' (3.1.177) with aspirations to become a tyrant. These capital offences should incur the death penalty.⁵³ It is Brutus' insistence that the people remember Coriolanus' past services to Rome that commutes his sentence to banishment (3.3.87-8). Effectively, Brutus tells the bloodthirsty mob to remember its past indebtedness to Coriolanus. Rome must not be ungrateful now. It may be that Menenius' words to this effect made a genuine impression (3.1.299-305) or more likely, Brutus encourages the plebeians to put a gloss upon their revenge, to make their decision appear more dispassionate and therefore just. If so, his attempt to preclude the charge of injustice fails utterly. Volumna and Virgilia upbraid the tribunes by remembering Coriolanus' deeds for Rome.⁵⁴ At Antium, Coriolanus himself describes the 'painful service' performed for his 'thankless country' (4.5.71) and Aufidius concurs, referring to 'ungrateful Rome' (131). Finally, Cominius and Menenius consider that Rome has deserved the revenge Coriolanus plans for it (4.6.115-23, 145-6).

Clifford Huffman has suggested that a Jacobean audience would not necessarily have invested this exile with any guilt or shame. He cites various instances in Shakespeare's Roman plays when the state is considered ungrateful and therefore responsible for the treachery of its citizens.⁵⁵ This association is certainly not confined to Shakespeare. In his survey of 'Roman' plays from 1585-1635, Clifford Ronan describes ingratitude as a major source of the factionalism such drama explored:

⁵³ In 3.1, the tribunes' instinct is to have Coriolanus executed (210-3). Later they justify this action to Menenius, arguing that exile would be too dangerous (288-90) though Menenius manages to dissuade them from executing him immediately. In their preparation for the final trial, the tribunes agree that whatever punishment they decide upon should be upheld by the plebeians, whether that is death, a fine or banishment (3.3.12-8).

⁵⁴ See 4.2.20-2, 30, 40-5.

⁵⁵ *Coriolanus in Context* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1971), 207.

Whether it be Rome toward its citizens or disaffected citizens toward Rome, each party jealously guards its power, casting the opponent as a being lethally unthankful. Rome's "civil broiles" and "factious ... tumultuous times" (*Agrippina* III.i.275-76) are usually caused by a need "to scourge th'ingratitude that *despiteful* Rome / Cast(s) on" the victims and their families (*Antony* II.vi.22-3).⁵⁶

Some contemporary interpretations of Coriolanus' exile focus on the injustice with which he is treated. In *The Consent of Time* (1590), Lodowick Lloyd describes how Coriolanus

profited *Rome* in divers services, in subduing the *Volscans*, in winning the citie *Corioles*, he invaded the *Antiates*, and often repressed the insolencie of the people, insomuch that the *Romanes* having many warres in those dayes, thus *Corolianus* [sic] was at them all: for there was no battell fought, no warre enterprised, but *Coriolanus* returned from thence with fame and honour. But his vertue and renowme gate him much envie: for hereby hee was banished *Rome* by the *Ediles & Tribunes* of the people, against the *Patricians* will ...⁵⁷

This ingratitude is often viewed in association with Athens and its policy of ostracism. Plutarch's 'Life of Aristides' tells of the Athenian, famed for justice and honour, whose reputation earned him the people's displeasure. He is banished by them 'with the Ostracismon: disguising the envie they bare to his glory with the name of feare of tyrannie'.⁵⁸ Plutarch explains that this exile is only practised against great men 'in estimation above the common people. either in fame, nobilitie, or eloquence' (349).⁵⁹ He continues,

⁵⁶ "Antike Roman": *Power Symbology and the Roman Play in Early Modern England, 1585-1635* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 81.

⁵⁷ *The Consent of Time*, STC 16619, 496-7. In *The Strategems of Jerusalem* (1602), STC 16630, Lloyd argues that Rome should have been grateful that Coriolanus changed his mind about invading the city, 312.

⁵⁸ See 'The Life of Aristides', *Lives*, 348-68, 353. Cimon is another Athenian ostracised as Plutarch describes in 'The Life of Cimon', *Lives*, 524-39, 537. See the reference to Greek and Roman exile, including this practice, in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* 3rd edition ed. by Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

⁵⁹ Plutarch describes here how Damon, the tutor of Pericles, was banished because the people resented his wisdom, 349.

to give it an honest cloke, they saide it was onely a pulling downe and tying short, of too much greatnesse and authoritie, exceeding farre the maner and countenance of a popular state. But to tell you truely, it was none otherwise, then a gentle mean to qualifie the peoples envy against some private person: which envy bred no malice to him whose greatnesse did offende them, but onely tended to the banishing of him for tenne yeares. (353)

In other explanations of ostracism, this envy of the rich and famous is a correlation of the democracy for which Athens was renowned.⁶⁰ That Coriolanus was too extraordinary (particularly in his opposition to plebeian power) may similarly be implied by his suggestion in Shakespeare's play that 'The cruelty and envy of the people' banished him. It would also deflect the accusation of tyranny that Plutarch referred to as a 'cloke' for their true purpose. Coriolanus' banishment may be interpreted as a sign of his greatness.⁶¹ In his *Treasurie*, Thomas Milles makes this claim. However, in his earlier condemnation of the democratic state, Milles proffered a different idea of the exile. The popular state or commonwealth is

the source and refuge of all turbulent spirits, mutiners, seditions, and exiles: who give councill comfort and resistance to the sillier sort, to make havocke and spoile of the greater.⁶²

Milles employs the traditional interpretation of the exile before reinventing the concept for men such as Aristides and Coriolanus.⁶³ Within Shakespeare's play, exile is both a source of

⁶⁰ *The Treasurie of Auncient and Modern Times* by Thomas Milles (London 1613), STC 17936, Bk. 8, chp. 32, 817.

⁶¹ Miola reads *Timon of Athens* in parallel with such contemporary literature on Athenian vices. He writes that 'by a perverse but persistent logic, banishment from the corrupt Athenian city, voluntary or otherwise, was a sure sign of private rectitude', 'Timon in Shakespeare's Athens', *Sh. Q.* 31 (1980), 21-30, 29. Elsewhere, Miola suggests that in *Coriolanus* too the protagonist's expulsion 'demonstrates integrity and courage' and proves that he values 'personal honor more than comfortable life', *Shakespeare's Rome*, 191.

⁶² *The Treasurie of Auncient and Modern Times*, 816.

⁶³ We may recall here the similar debate upon the terms of exile, whether it was resonant of depravity and treachery or of heroic suffering, between Sir William Cecil and William Allen as referred to in the introduction.

degradation and of self-aggrandisement for the protagonist. Like Milles, Coriolanus refers to exile, before his own experience of it, as shameful, as 'vagabond exile'. For the Jacobean audience, the term 'vagabond' had grave connotations of anti-social inclinations, of an underworld of displaced men. Moreover, the audience might have recalled the legislation of 1597 'An Act for the Punishment of Rogues, Vagabonds, and sturdy Beggars' which included banishment for the recalcitrant offender.⁶⁴ Coriolanus further recalls the shame of being 'Whooped by th'voice of slaves out of Rome'. The emphasis upon the plebeians hooting and roaring him into exile recalls not only the scene of his exile but also the means of it: the tribune's sentence was ratified by the popular tongue.

Banishment poses questions about the exile. For Coriolanus, it resolves the dilemma about Rome. He tells the plebeians, 'Despising/ For you the city, thus I turn my back' (3.3.137-8). These words allow Coriolanus to perform his own banishment, to take artistic control. Coriolanus suggests here that it is he who voluntarily shuns Rome and not the other way around. More importantly, these words repeat the sentence Coriolanus has already spoken against his country:

You common cry of curs, whose breath I hate
As reek o'th'rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air: I banish you. (124-7)

Coriolanus' banishment of the city works on a number of levels. It is an assertion of superiority, a linguistic revenge, a prophecy of Rome's tragic self-alienation (though

⁶⁴ See introduction.

unfulfilled).⁶⁵ Perhaps primarily, ‘I banish you’ dramatises Coriolanus’ belief that he is the only true citizen and it is they who betray Rome. Such a reversal is central to the consolations we have already seen consoling the exiles of Shakespeare’s drama. One striking anticipation of this trope in *Coriolanus* occurs in Cicero’s *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, Paradox IV. Here, Cicero defies the sentence of exile proclaimed against him by the Consul, Clodius, in 58 BC. He makes a qualitative judgement of what is and is not a state in order to deny the possibility of exile. He writes:

For what is a state? every collection even of uncivilized savages? every multitude even of runaways and robbers gathered into one place? Not so, you will certainly say. Therefore our community was not a state at a time when laws had no force in it, when the courts of justice were abased, when ancestral custom had been overthrown, when the officers of government had been exiled and the name of the senate was unknown in the commonwealth.⁶⁶

Clodius’ acts have proven him a criminal, an enemy of the people and so worthy of exile. The fact that he has not been officially condemned but remains in the city does not make him any less of an outcast. Cicero asks, ‘Do you distinguish a citizen from an enemy by race and by locality, not by character and conduct?’⁶⁷ These arguments are echoed in Coriolanus’ identification of the plebeians as barbarians, whether or not they have been born and bred in

⁶⁵ Stanley Fish describes Coriolanus’ ‘counterbanishing’ of Rome as a challenge to the city’s declarative power. The sentence of banishment depends upon the hearer and subject’s compliance. Coriolanus refuses to give this compliance but insists on equal authority to banish Rome. ‘What Coriolanus does opens the way for anyone who feels constrained by the bonds of a society to declare a society of his own, to nominate his own conventions, to stipulate his own obligations ...’, 216. See ‘How To Do Things with Austin and Searle: Speech-Act Theory and Literary Criticism’ in *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cam., Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), 197-245, especially 215-8.

⁶⁶ *Paradoxa Stoicorum* in *De Oratore III*, 279-83, 279.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 281.

Rome. They also reflect the play's obfuscation of friend and enemy.⁶⁸ Coriolanus says that Rome exiles its best defender because it cannot make this distinction. Similarly, the First Watchman outside the Volscian camp asks Menenius how he can ask for mercy, 'when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and in a violent popular ignorance given your enemy your shield' (5.2.41-4).

Cicero declares 'everybody thinks that with my departure the commonwealth went into exile'.⁶⁹ Coriolanus locates the city of Rome as barbarous and uncivil. This reversal may also be found in *Timon of Athens*. Here, the self-exiled Timon apostrophises the city wall from the outside:

Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall
That girdles in those wolves, dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens! (4.1.1-3)

Wolves have long been associated with what is marginal and savage.⁷⁰ In this play, the locations of civilisation and wilderness are repeatedly inverted: Apemantus remarks 'The commonwealth of Athens is become a forest of beasts' (4.3.349-50). Timon finds the species of beast amongst which he now dwells *kinder* than the Athenian species in both senses of that word.

⁶⁸ See in particular the meeting between the Roman and Volscian spies, 4.3. Shakespeare's other main source, *The Romane Historie of T. Livy* translated by Philemon Holland (1600) repeatedly uses the term 'enemie' in this way. Most obviously, Veturia (Volumnia) goes to plead with Coriolanus at the Volscian camp and asks 'Let me know [...] before I suffer thee to embrace me, whether I am come to a an enemie or to a sonne, whether I be in thy campe as a captive prisoner, or as a naturall mother', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 5, 504.

⁶⁹ *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, 283.

⁷⁰ See "Antike Roman", 136-40.

Through banishment, Coriolanus discovers the schism between his ideal Rome and its physical manifestation. From the beginning of the play, he has invested himself with the essence of Romanitas, has aspired to be the city himself. By banishing the city he expresses this belief that he carries Rome within him. When Coriolanus leaves Rome, his quiet demeanour and Stoic platitudes seem to suggest that he will be satisfied with his linguistic and philosophical revenge, with 'I banish you'. His reference to being recalled, 'I shall be loved when I am lacked' (4.1.16), remembers his prophecy that Rome would shortly be invaded and would require his services. To wait patiently until needed is by implication Plutarch's advice for the man banished unjustly. He praises Scipio for going quietly into exile:

For he would not come against his country with ensignes displaid, neither would he sollicite strange nations and mighty kings to come with force, and their aide, to destroy the citie, the which he had beautified with so many spoyles and triumphes.⁷¹

Of course, this is exactly what Coriolanus and 'divers others' have done, as Plutarch remarks. Coriolanus promises his family and friends that they will hear nothing from him but what was like him formerly (4.1.53-4). When they do hear of him, he is the commander of the Volscian army who has raided their territories and is advancing on Rome. There is no explanation for this apparent change of heart. Before his encounter with Aufidius, Coriolanus' soliloquy accounts for his revenge only as part of a universal betrayal whereby friends become enemies and vice versa (4.4.12-22). This is not the chaos that Gloucester predicted in *King Lear*, 'in cities mutinies, in countries discords, palaces treason' (2.107-8), but something more logical,

⁷¹ 'The Comparison of Anniball with P. Scipio African', *Lives*, 1171-3, 1174. In this case, Scipio has not been officially banished but chooses exile for the sake of peace.

set in motion by Coriolanus' banishment and sealed by his banishing of the city. He imagines his future as governed by this reversal formula: 'My birthplace hate I, and my love's upon/ This enemy town' (23-4).

Equally, his love is upon that enemy, Aufidius, and it is to him that Coriolanus reveals himself. He suggests the reasons for his banishment, 'Now this extremity/ Hath brought me to thy hearth' (4.5.79-80). As a preface to Coriolanus' revenge plotting, the reference to hearth is curiously domestic. Similarly, on his entrance into Aufidius' house the warrior has remarked 'A goodly house. The feast/ Smells well' (5-6). Both these references suggest the state of the exile, banished from his usual sources of food and shelter. In the late Roman Republic, following the exile's departure, a decree of *aqua et igni interdictio* would be declared, literally a denial of water and fire, excluding him from legal protection and condemning him to death if he returned.⁷² Coriolanus suggests that he does not care to save his life, as threatened by banishment. He comes

but in mere spite
 To be full quit of those my banishers
 Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast
 A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge
 Thine own particular wrongs and stop those maims
 Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
 And make my misery serve thy turn. So use it
 That my revengeful services may prove
 As benefits to thee; for I will fight
 Against my cankered country with the spleen
 Of all the under-fiends. (83-93)

The reference to his 'cankered country' might suggest that Coriolanus has a desire to purge

⁷² See *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 580.

Rome for its own good were it not that he offers his country to the Volscians so that they may also wreak their fury upon it. Moreover, the demonic wrath he claims here does not bode well for a curative revenge. Aufidius insists that he shares Coriolanus' personal motive:

Worthy Martius,
Had we no other quarrel else to Rome but that
Thou art thence banished, we would muster all
From twelve to seventy, and, pouring war
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
Like a bold flood o'erbear't. (127-32)

Aufidius' denial of any other cause suggests how powerful is the instinct to destroy in these two men. In 1.2, Coriolanus declared an indifference to the side for which he fought as long as he could oppose Aufidius (233-5). Similarly, hearing news of Aufidius at Antium when the two countries are apparently at peace, Coriolanus declares 'I wish I had a cause to seek him there' (3.1.20). Aufidius promises an indiscriminate wrath, engulfing the city like a flood, with an army of every Antiate from 'twelve to seventy'. Here, he anticipates the exorbitance of Coriolanus' revenge. The Messenger reports that Coriolanus vows 'revenge as spacious as between/ The young'st and oldest thing' (4.6.69-70). This richly evocative phrase reflects the bloodlust generally associated with the tyrant.⁷³ It is also a common feature of the tyrannical Roman in Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. In *The Wounds of Civil War*, Scilla promises revenge upon the city that has passed him over for the generalship in favour of Marius:

SCILLA: This Capitol wherein your glories shine
Was ne're so press'd and throng'd with scarlet gowns,
As Rome shall be with heaps of slaughter'd souls
Before that Scilla yield his titles up.
I'll make her streets that peer into the clouds,

⁷³ See chapters on *Richard II* and on *Henry IV* with reference to *Edward II*.

Burnish'd with gold and ivory pillars fair,
 Shining with jasper, jet and ebony,
 All like the palace of the morning sun,
 To swim within a sea of purple blood
 Before I lose the name of General.

MARIUS: These threats against thy country and these lords,
 Scilla, proceeds from forth a traitor's heart. (1.1.214-25)⁷⁴

Scilla makes good his promise. Banished, his goods and titles confiscated, his house razed to the ground, his friends executed, Scilla returns to revenge himself upon Rome. The scarlet robes of the Senate do bleed into the streets.⁷⁵ However, *The Wounds of Civil War* suggests how Roman such behaviour is with a sense of shame and admiration. The two generals, Scilla and Marius, are both accused of tyranny at various points in the play. They both prey upon Rome but do so in the name of Rome. Despite the laments of Antony and Granius that it is unnatural for Rome to prey upon itself (1.1.298-317), in fact the opposite seems true.⁷⁶ In Jonson's *Catiline* (1611), the conspirators reflect upon the golden age of Scilla's rule when Romans massacred their own kind without distinction. Women and children, old men, pregnant wives all fell. The living were piled up in heaps with the dead. Such is the ambitious Roman's exorbitance (1.1.229-53). Catiline promises 'And this shall be again, and more and more' (254).⁷⁷

Clifford Huffman has attempted to defend Coriolanus from such comparisons by placing his

⁷⁴ *The Wounds of Civil War* ed. by Joseph W. Houppert (London: Edward Arnold, 1969).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* Scilla declares, 'Your streets, where erst the fathers of your state/ In robes of purple walked up and down./ Are strew'd with mangled members, streaming blood', 5.1.5-7.

⁷⁶ In "*Antike Roman*", Ronan describes parricide as an expression of the *saevitia* which, like some other Roman qualities, 'exceeds the normal hierarchical bounds of humanity', 129. This transgression is particularly envisaged in the beast/god complex of the Roman tyrant, 125-50.

⁷⁷ *Catiline* ed. by W. F. Bolton and Jane F. Gardner (London: Edward Arnold, 1973).

revenge in the context of other Shakespearean drama. The citizen's invasion of his country with foreign troops is not uniformly condemned:

In *Titus Andronicus* the Gothic army virtually disappears after victory, as stress is laid on Rome's regeneration; and in *Macbeth*, the tyrant is "ripe for shaking" (IV.iii.238) by forces associated with Heaven and righteous government. In Shakespeare, then, approval is accorded foreign invasion only if it has positive, even religious, associations and does not thereafter harm the country.⁷⁸

Huffman has to admit that these extenuating factors do not play a part in *Coriolanus*. However, he proposes that the audience would have had other reasons to withhold their opprobrium from the invader. In the light of contemporary condemnations of democracy, characterising the tribunes as evil and popular rule as chaotic misrule, Huffman sees Coriolanus' invasion as an attempt to rescue his country. Furthermore, in James I's *Basilikon Doron* he finds a precedent for the ruler's revenge upon his own people if an injustice has been committed. Huffman argues that the Senate clearly views the banishment of Coriolanus as an injustice and therefore authorises the invasion. Hence, 'the audience would be forced to endorse, although not without horror, just and heroic revenge on a state now misled by tribunes' (211).

There are a number of objections that could be made to this critique, not least that it assumes the audience would support the absolutist assertions of James I. There seems little evidence to suggest that the Senate endorses Coriolanus' action. The patricians may argue that his revenge is just, but they did not intercede in his banishment. Moreover, Huffman suggests

⁷⁸ *Coriolanus in Context*, 210.

that the injustice endured by one man justifies the destruction of an entire city. The critic's location of *Coriolanus* in the context of Shakespearean invasions will yield a far more condemnatory portrait of the hero than he acknowledges. If we set Coriolanus alongside Lucius in *Titus Andronicus* and Alcibiades in *Timon of Athens*, we can see how malicious and utterly unpolitic or uncivic is his revenge.

In *Titus Andronicus* (1594), Lucius is banished for an attempt to rescue two of his brothers from execution. When he tells his father the news, after the execution of those brothers but before the discovery of Lavinia, Titus responds:

O happy man, they have befriended thee!
 Why, foolish Lucius, dost thou not perceive
 That Rome is but a wilderness of tigers?
 Tigers must prey, and Rome affords no prey
 But me and mine. How happy art thou then
 From these devourers to be banishèd! (3.1.51-6)

As in *Coriolanus*, we have the same imagery of Rome devouring its faithful warriors and, as in *Timon of Athens*, the city walls encircle a jungle, a place of ravening beasts.

Titus, Marcus, Lavinia and Lucius all make a vow to revenge the Andronicii family. Lucius' part is given him by his father. He is to gather an army from the Goths and advance on Rome (3.1.284-6).⁷⁹ In the event, there is no fighting. Titus performs his own domestic revenge in

⁷⁹ Hans-Jürgen Weckermann draws attention to the similarity between Lucius and Coriolanus' plots. In particular, he refers to Tamora's idea that she can woo Titus into dissuading his son from invading: 'None of these details were contained in Shakespeare's probable source for the Titus Andronicus story and so they can legitimately be attributed to his own fusion of the material about the stark warrior of Rome's late Empire with the well-known story of Coriolanus, that prototype of martial valour from the days of the early Republic'. See 'Coriolanus: The Failure of the Autonomous Individual' in *Shakespeare: Text, Language, Criticism: Essays in Honour of Marvin Spevack* ed. by Bernhard Fabian and Kurt Tetzeli von Rosador (Zurich and New York: Olms-Weidmann, 1987), 334-50, 334.

which Romans and Goths prey on one another but in the context of a banquet rather than on the battlefield. Although Lucius has only a minor role in this action, his planned invasion broadens the scope of the Andronicii revenge. They come to rescue Rome from the tyrant, Saturninus. Lucius tells his army that he has letters expressing Rome's hatred of the emperor 'And how desirous of our sight they are' (5.1.4). An unnamed Goth expresses his admiration for the Roman, 'Whose name was once our terror, now our comfort' and condemns 'Ingrateful Rome' (10, 12). Lucius relates his own tragedy in nationalistic terms. He recalls how he was turned, weeping, from his country and forced to seek relief from enemies (5.3.104-7). The subsequent description of Lucius' service to his country is intriguing:

I am the turned-forth, be it known to you,
That have preserved her welfare in my blood,
And from her bosom took the enemy's point,
Sheathing the steel in my advent'rous body.
Alas, you know I am no vaunter, I.
My scars can witness, dumb although they are,
That my report is just and full of truth.
But soft, methinks I do digress too much,
Citing my worthless praise. O, pardon me,
For when no friends are by, men praise themselves. (108-117)

Lucius reminds his audience of the glorious deeds he once performed for Rome to emphasise the injustice of his banishment. However, there is an ambiguity surrounding his use of the past tense. Lucius' narrative of his league with the Goths, is followed by accounts of himself shielding Rome from blows. This would imply a connection between the invasion and the defence of Rome. It is a sleight-of-hand but one that certainly serves Lucius' purposes which are to rewrite himself as Rome's hero and as its future emperor. As a comment upon *Coriolanus* this speech is similarly enlightening. The first of Shakespeare's Roman plays

teases us with an anticipation of his last. Lucius is described as one 'Who threats in course of this revenge to do/ As much as ever Coriolanus did' (4.4.67-8). In the event, Lucius' words speak louder than his actions. His final speech is exactly what is required by circumstances. Warriors since Coriolanus's day have accepted the need for politic speech and the ceremony of showing one's wounds is performed verbally (113). Lucius' appeal to the gratitude of Rome after the aborted invasion would have been an ideal model for Coriolanus had he returned to Rome. More than Lucius, Coriolanus could boast that he has 'preserved her welfare in my blood'. The closest he gets to such a speech is that delivered at the end of the play in Corioles, where there is no one else to praise him. Uttered in Rome, this speech would surely have confirmed the repeal of his banishment. Uttered in Corioles, the eulogy becomes an elegy.

In *Timon of Athens* (1607), we find an exiled warrior more akin to Coriolanus.⁸⁰ Alcibiades appears before the Senate to plead for the life of a friend condemned for murder. He expects to be granted his request but the senators treat him with contempt and finally banish him. The Athenian is outraged at their ingratitude and determines to invade the city. However, his invasion is also justified on less personal grounds. Alcibiades condemns the ingratitude shown to Timon, the senators' profits from usury and their licentiousness. Representing himself as the scourge of this 'coward and lascivious town' (5.5.1), Alcibiades claims for his invasion a patriotic motive. Yet he is quickly persuaded to pursue redress for his personal

⁸⁰ The idea that *Timon of Athens* preceded and influenced *Coriolanus* is put forward by Geoffrey Bullough. He proposes that 'while drafting *Timon* Shakespeare came to realize the thinness of his subject, and that Coriolanus would give a richer opportunity for a tragedy of wrath and ingratitude. I suspect that Shakespeare abandoned *Timon* to write *Coriolanus*', *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol. 6, 239. See the previous chapter on the dating of *Timon of Athens*.

injury but to ignore endemic Athenian corruption. He accepts the senators' arguments that an indiscriminate revenge would be immoral and unjust (22-44) but also responds to the possible rewards attendant on preserving the city from his own threat. The Senate promises to meet 'thy full desire' and fawns upon him (53). Alcibiades agrees to proceed against his enemies within the sanction of the Senate (56-8).

There are a number of reasons why we should question Alcibiades' disinterested pose. His justifications for revenge are unconvincing. For one, the Athenian's own moral standing in the play does not justify such self-righteous disgust at the Senate's vices, in particular lechery. His relationship with Timon and his knowledge of Timon's sufferings are both underwritten and confused. Moreover, in his immediate response to banishment he showed himself indifferent to the motives which he later claims:

Banishment!
It comes not ill; I hate not to be banished.
It is a cause worthy my spleen and fury,
That I may strike at Athens. (3.6.109-12)

Spleen and fury came before banishment, perhaps with the condemnation of his friend, but perhaps earlier. Banishment is an opportunity for self-expression. Alcibiades declares "'Tis honour with most lands to be at odds./ Soldiers should brook as little wrongs as gods' (114-5). Alcibiades' multiplying reasons for attacking Athens seek to justify his fell intent.

Although it is now thought that the banishment scenes of *Timon of Athens* and *Coriolanus*

were written by different dramatists,⁸¹ in reading the latter I am continually reminded of Alcibiades' phrase 'It is a cause worthy my spleen and fury' Coriolanus too uses banishment as an opportunity to release his pent-up rage against Rome. The spleen seems to have anticipated the cause.⁸² It is for both men a realisation of the ambition to prove themselves against their cities and to capture, spoil and even ravish them. However, Alcibiades' threatened revenge against the city is self-aggrandising in a political sense, that is, it proves to Athens how much it needs him. In contrast, Coriolanus does not threaten Rome to improve his position there. He will not parade the city's subjection like a squeaking Cleopatra but seeks to obliterate it. Plutarch makes a number of comparisons between Alcibiades and Coriolanus, to the detriment of the latter.⁸³ Perhaps most important is this question of the motivation for invading the city. He says of Coriolanus:

it appeared that he was entred into this cruell warre (when he would harken to no peace) of an intent utterly to destroy and spoile his countrie, and not as though he ment to recover it, or to returne thither againe. (258)

Coriolanus' identity as a microcosm for Romanitas depends upon his alienation from that city. To destroy Rome is to wrest the name 'Romanus' from it. As Sicinius prophesied he will 'depopulate the city and/ Be every man himself'. By showing mercy to Rome, Coriolanus has

⁸¹ The editors of the *Oxford Complete Works* assert that a considerable part of the play, including 3.6, was written by Thomas Middleton. See *The Textual Companion*, 501, and the forthcoming *Middleton and Shakespeare: The Case for Middleton's Hand in Timon of Athens* by R. V. Holdsworth.

⁸² See also *Catiline* in which Cicero condemns the conspirators for lacking any cause but their own ambition (3.2.101-2).

⁸³ Where Alcibiades only threatens destruction, Coriolanus' progress from Antium to Rome is marked by the ravaging of Rome's colonies. When Cominius accuses the plebeians of destroying themselves, he speaks not only of the invasion to come but of the Roman territory which has already suffered thus (4.6.85-7).

for the first time betrayed himself.⁸⁴ His decision not to destroy the city is to some extent a recognition of the legitimacy of Rome. It remains anathema to Coriolanus' ideal but he inadvertently endows it with some merit. Furthermore, his claims to self-sufficiency are not realised. Exile has been an opportunity for Coriolanus to stand alone but as he tries to fulfil his ambition for self-authorship, the self-loss that exile entails is equally apparent.

James Holstun describes Coriolanus' banishment as 'unique in Shakespeare for its dramatic effects upon both the person banished and the society banishing him'. For Coriolanus,

exile brings neither the Edenic green world it brings in the comedies and romances nor the elemental landscapes of tragic exile. More important, it does not bring their perspectival wisdom to Coriolanus; as he leaves Rome, he quite accurately predicts that Rome, will hear 'never of me aught/ But what is like me formerly' (IV.I.52-3).⁸⁵

Certainly, exile does not prompt Coriolanus to the madness and the epiphany of Lear. However, the moment of banishment is itself a devastating expression of the irrelevance of Coriolanus and his philosophy to Rome. His assertion of continuous and invulnerable selfhood is a response to the very loss of self experienced through exile. Exile is both an opportunity to realise his ambitions and a fall from grace.

⁸⁴ Various critics have condemned Coriolanus' volte-face as a betrayal of his own principles; for example Givan considers that 'in attacking Rome he is violating his own constancy and oath-keeping', 'The Premature Epitaph and the Butterfly', 144. Critics who have argued for Coriolanus' self-consistency here include Eugene M. Waith in *The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1962), 131, and Charles and Michelle Martindale in *Shakespeare and the Uses of Antiquity: An Introductory Essay* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 179-81, who see Coriolanus' treachery as part of an 'unwavering adherence to his political opinions and heroic pride' but resulting in 'the ultimate *volte-face*', 180.

⁸⁵ 'Tragic Superfluity in *Coriolanus*', *ELH* 50 (1983), 485-507, 500. Holstun's reading of the play centres on the superfluity of Coriolanus as a tragic, king-analogue and of the conventions of tragedy themselves in a play more closely akin to aristocratic satire. Although his arguments are compelling, his suggestions that Coriolanus suffers no transformation from banishment and moreover that the invasion cannot be taken seriously, that it is 'a distinctly nontragic and external threat' (501) seem perverse. The irrelevance of Aristotelian catharsis here (497) need not deprive these scenes of their significance for the protagonist.

When Coriolanus enters Antium his mood is one of triumph and of fear:

A goodly city is this Antium. City,
 'Tis I that made thy widows. Many an heir
 Of these fair edifices fore my wars
 Have I heard groan and drop. Then know me not,
 Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with stones
 In puny battle slay me. (4.4.1-6)

The paradox that governs these final scenes is that Coriolanus both eschews and demands recognition. He apostrophises the city because he wants it to know his victory over it. At the same time, he dare not reveal himself. He is at this moment disguised. And yet, whilst disguise protects him, it also reinforces the self-loss which banishment implies. To appear as Coriolanus in Rome, after banishment, is punishable by death. Similarly, the exile in Corioles must hide his identity in case of revenge. Yet the effect of banishment upon the self is akin to death and requires that the victim struggle for recognition. Weighing up the options in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Valentine reasons that banishment is no reprieve from death: 'To die is to be banished from myself,/ And Sylvia is my self' (3.1.171-2). Having been rejected by the place that had shaped his whole identity, Coriolanus needs recognition, to know that he exists beyond Rome.

The man who might offer this is Aufidius. From the beginning of the play, Coriolanus has identified with this man who apparently shares his valour, his fury, his honour. As such, Aufidius is uniquely placed to recognise Coriolanus as he deserves and to wipe away the taint of Rome's mis-recognition. In Plutarch's account, Coriolanus enters the house of Aufidius and is observed by his servants but not addressed for 'they durst not bid him rise'. Plutarch

explains that although 'as he thought no man could ever have known him for the person he was' due to his disguise yet 'there appeared a certaine maiestie in his countenance, and in his silence' that the servants were wary of (247). In contrast, Shakespeare's dramatisation of this scene undercuts Coriolanus' identity and comes near to making him look ridiculous. Firstly, Aufidius' servingmen do not recognise anything extraordinary about their guest. They try to turn him away because he is poorly dressed, arguing with ironic insight that this is no place for him (4.5.31). Coriolanus' assertion that he is a gentleman and other riddling answers suggest to the servingmen that he must be a clown or a halfwit: 'What an ass it is!' (43-4). This comic scene serves to lighten the tone and to build suspense before the encounter of the two great enemies. Nevertheless, the fact that such a mythic hero should not be perceptible through his rags, that he should be laughed at by servingmen, hints at Coriolanus' degradation since he was exiled.⁸⁶

In Plutarch, when Aufidius fails to recognise Coriolanus without his disguise, the hero names himself. Shakespeare's Coriolanus unmuffles and waits. Embarrassingly, the Volscian who has sworn to kill him even if he came upon him in his brother's house (1.11.24-7), has no idea who this stranger is. Considering that Aufidius goes on to describe the dreams he has had of his enemy (4.5.123-7), it is astonishing that he does not know that man's face. Yet Coriolanus refuses to give his name. What Shakespeare dramatises here is the fear that now haunts Coriolanus, that without Rome he is nothing. Presumably on the battlefield,

⁸⁶ Miola suggests that Coriolanus' arrival in Actium 'reenacts' Ulysses' return to Ithaca. Both men are in disguise, both meet insolent resistance to their ingress. Nevertheless, this comparison does not serve to alleviate the shame of Coriolanus' non-recognition by the servants or by Aufidius here. Ulysses has been a master of such deceptions so that disguise is in itself an expression of his identity. It can be no less than a betrayal of Coriolanus' sense of self. See *Shakespeare's Rome*, 193.

Coriolanus would be recognisable by his armour and his Roman colours. Without these marks of Rome and perhaps without a sword, even the man who fantasises about him does not know him. Moreover, it is not just a question of superficial disguise. His external transformation expresses the inner change of the man who has been stripped of his role as Rome's warrior and the defender of 'Romanitas':

My name is Caius Martius, who hath done
To thee particularly, and to all the Volsces,
Great hurt and mischief. Thereto witness may
My surname Coriolanus. The painful service,
The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country, are requited
But with that surname - a good memory
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me. Only that name remains. (66-74)

Aufidius eventually greets him with that admiration and passion that Coriolanus needs to inspire. Yet the final commentary of the servants undercuts Coriolanus' self-discovery once more. They pretend now to have recognised him from the beginning:

SECOND SERVINGMAN: Nay, I knew by his face that there was something
in him. He had, sir, a kind of face, methought - I cannot tell how to
term it.

FIRST SERVINGMAN: He had so, looking, as it were - would I were hanged
but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

SECOND SERVINGMAN: So did I, I'll be sworn. He is simply the rarest
man i'th'world. (156-63)

The joke is partly at their expense and may remind us of the Roman plebeians who habitually cast down the hero they had worshipped not long before and vice versa. What is most apparent however, is the ordinariness, the nothingness even, that they unwittingly

perceive in Coriolanus. They falter in their descriptions of him, not merely because they lack descriptive terms but because there is nothing there to know. Cominius describes his meeting with the new Volscian hero:

‘Coriolanus’
 He would not answer to, forbade all names.
 He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
 Till he had forged himself a name o’th’ fire
 Of burning Rome. (5.1.11-5)

Coriolanus is perceived by the Romans now as increasingly dehumanised. He becomes a kind of elemental force, Revenge, Wrath, Pride. He has lost the identity of a man. Hence it is no surprise when the Romans’ appeal to Coriolanus fails. He has apparently obliterated the memory of any origins from his mind. He seems no longer to distinguish one Roman from another.

When his mother, wife and child enter he determines to retain the detachment of the Senecan hero:

I’ll never
 Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand
 As if a man were author of himself
 And knew no other kin. (5.3.34-7)

Coriolanus has effectively denied his intimacy with Cominius and Menenius (5.1.8, 5.4.16-7) on the assumption that he has been utterly transformed. Indeed, he implies a physical metamorphosis. When Virgilia refers to their relationship as husband and wife, Coriolanus withholds recognition on the basis that ‘These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome’

(5.3.38). Yet Virgilia barely utters two lines before her husband recognises he will not be able to sustain his part: 'Like a dull actor now/ I have forgot my part, and I am out/ Even to a full disgrace' (40-2). The human nature Cicero also spoke of overcomes him. He cannot dismiss the bonds between mother, wife and child, for crucially he is not the author of himself but a man of flesh: 'I melt, and am not made / Of stronger earth than others' (28-9).⁸⁷ It is when his mother threatens to disown him that Coriolanus finally concedes. Volumnia has apparently failed in her mission and she prepares to leave with the jibe,

Come, let us go.
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother.
His wife is in Corioles, and this child
Like him by chance. (178-81)

In his mother Coriolanus knew his first home, was created from a legend and taught his philosophy. She describes herself as his land, his first kingdom being her womb, which she identifies with the soil of Rome upon which he will tread in the invasion (123-6). She rediscovers for him the site of his origins. Having lost Rome he clings to her recognition.

Janet Adelman has written with great perspicuity of our responses to Coriolanus' volte face:

We want him to acknowledge dependence, to become one of us; but at the same time we do not want to see him give in, because to do so is to force us to give up our own fantasy of omnipotence and independence. Hence at the final confrontation we are divided against ourselves, and no solution is tolerable: neither the burning of Rome nor the capitulation and death of our claims to independence. Nor is the vision of human dependency that the play allows any compensation for the brutal failure of our desire to be self-sustaining.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ See "'Anger's My Meat'" wherein Adelman suggests that the invasion against Rome is an expression of Coriolanus' subconscious desire to conquer and destroy his mother, 141-3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 144-5.

Banishment is an opportunity to realise this ambition. It is a fantasy of selfhood. By threatening to destroy his origins, Coriolanus takes his Stoic and Roman self-sufficiency to its extremes. If he is the city then that city no longer exists except through him. When Coriolanus relinquishes his plan to destroy Rome and thus literally to supplant it, he signals his dependence upon society, upon his mother and his mother Rome. Yet he refuses to return to the still debased form of his ideal. Only in a foreign city can Coriolanus continue to perform his Roman part. But this paradox proves to be a fatal one.

When Coriolanus returns to the Volscians, he is impelled once more to try to rescue that identity jeopardised by his banishment, now threatened by his capitulation to Rome. He tries to assert himself as the representative of all honour, constancy and pietas. However, Aufidius will not recognise him. He does not share his principles and has planned the downfall of the hero for his own political ends, just as he raised him up in order to vanquish Rome. Moreover, Coriolanus' Roman deeds equate to treason in Corioles. Martius' final outrageous testimony to his individualism, that he took the city alone, is tantamount to suicide:

If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
Fluttered your Volscians in Corioles.
Alone I did it. 'Boy'! (5.6.114-7)

Yet whilst he seems to reject life in favour of the kingdom within, where he is a constant Roman, this declaration is born of the longing to be recognised by the external world. Only if the Volscians write their historical records accurately, will Coriolanus become part of the myth from which he is derived and for which he has acted. He has never managed to

reconcile his philosophy of individualism with his desire for recognition.

THE LANDSCAPE OF EXILE IN *THE TEMPEST*

Of all the characters in the Shakespearean canon who endure exile, Prospero is in a unique position to transform his state. The shapes of his imagination can be embodied through magic. Where his forebears have felt vulnerable in their alienation, Prospero has the power to impose himself and his desires dramatically upon a hostile world. Moreover, exile has facilitated his transformation into the magician with the result that he is far mightier than he could ever have dreamed of being in Milan.¹ Yet behind Prospero's narrative of providential exile is a profound anxiety for what he has become. In Milan he chose to withdraw from his subjects in pursuit of the Neoplatonic magic that would allow him to transcend humanity. Hence, Prospero is implicated in his own banishment. But whilst this seems to be the fulfilment of his ambitions, it is also the source of a deep ambivalence about what it means to be set apart from human society. Exile implies alienation from humanity, the rejection of one pernicious to men. Central to an understanding of Prospero's exile is the fact that, from the first, his magic is not primarily channelled into any humanist or imperialist dream. The magician directs his power to the eradication of the stigma of exile, towards his readmission into the civilised world, and to his reinstatement as Duke of Milan.

Prospero's identity as magician is introduced as bathos. Miranda asks whether the storm is her father's work with concern but without surprise: 'If by your art, my dearest father, you have/ Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them' (1.2.1-2). But Miranda does not question the reality of the shipwreck. Indeed, she weeps for it, until Prospero reassures her that no one

¹ Harry Berger Jr writes, 'of all Shakespeare's human characters he is the only one to have become a god of power, to have attained to Hamlet's kingdom of infinite space in the nutshell of his microsphere, to have entered and passed through pure romance, to have achieved the dearest wish of hermetic sage or mage', 'Miraculous Harp: A Reading of Shakespeare's *Tempest*', *Sh. St.* 5 (1969), 253-83, 269.

has been hurt. One of the fascinating things about this scene is the coexistence of banality and wonder in the interpretation of Prospero's art. On the one hand, his power may be mere trickery and Miranda has wept for a tragedy that never took place. Yet the fact that Miranda (and those on the ship) could be so deceived also renders Prospero's power more wonderful. Miranda's complacent tone may heighten an audience's curiosity about the magician and a world in which he is commonplace. Nevertheless, the magician insists on his present insignificance:

I have done nothing but in care of thee,
Of thee, my dear one, thee, my daughter, who
Art ignorant of what thou art, naught knowing
Of whence I am, nor that I am more better
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell
And thy no greater father. (16-21)

There appears to be a sharp disjunction between the attitudes of Prospero and Miranda to the magician and those of an audience. For us and for the more superstitious seventeenth-century audience, the possession of magic may inspire, not only wonder, but curiosity, respect, even fear. For the 'islanders', however, it is civilisation, the political world, 'humanity', that beat in their minds and cause Miranda to exclaim at a 'brave new world'. In the speech quoted above, Prospero defines himself by his power to control others (to be the master) and perhaps by the possession of territory. He presents his experience on the island as limiting his authority to that of a father and his territory to the possession of a cave. The enslavement of Ariel and Caliban and Prospero's magical and colonialist possession of the island are all forgotten. Even without the benefit of hindsight, an audience must ask itself why a man who can command the elements should have such low self-esteem! As the scene progresses it becomes clear that Prospero denigrates his present state to elegise what he has lost. The

revelation of magical power is subjected to the far more important revelation of political sway:

Twelve year since, Miranda, twelve year since,
Thy father was the Duke of Milan, and
A prince of power. (53-5)

Where her father's power to cause a shipwreck was greeted matter-of-factly, this discovery throws Miranda into confusion. So impossible is it that he should have been Duke of Milan, Miranda questions whether Prospero is her father (55). Her inability to reconcile the two identities reveals the same assumption that to be Prospero is a position of inferiority in comparison with the lofty eminence of an Italian duke. The movement from one to the other is a tragic fall. Prospero describes his abandonment by Fortune such that, unless he acts on the present 'auspicious star', his fortunes 'Will ever after droop' (183-5).

That the tyrannical authority and awesome magical powers the magus exercises on the island could be seen as ill fortune is an ambivalence crucially dependent upon his self-image as an exile. For after twelve years Prospero remains the banished Duke of Milan. One might have thought that his new roles as magician and lord of the island would have at least consoled Prospero for his loss. Rather, his status as a magician and perhaps colonialist serves to reinforce his exclusion from other men, even his unfitness to live amongst them. Prospero's new powers re-enact that original banishment even before he directs them to that purpose.

The practice of magic in Elizabethan and early Jacobean drama often begins with figurative

or literal exile.² Magic is the attainment of the scholar who has dedicated a great number of hours to the contemplation of various texts.³ The practical demands of study, not to mention the illicit nature of conjuring at this time, require withdrawal and solitude. We first see Dr Faustus (1592) in his study pursuing 'concealed arts' and from there he removes to a 'solitary grove' (1.1.104, 155).⁴ In Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589), reference is made to 'Bacon's secret cell' (2.9).⁵ Prospero in Milan has largely confined himself to his library, 'being transported/ And rapt in secret studies' (1.2.76-7). The profession of the magus apparently demanded this kind of self-imposed exile and a psychological detachment from the 'vulgar' uncomprehending masses and from 'worldly ends'.⁶ Henry Cornelius Agrippa, whose *De Occulta Philosophiae* (1533) was a major text in the formation of the English Renaissance magician,⁷ described this work as deliberately elusive:

for we have delivered this Art in such a manner, that it may not be hid from the prudent and intelligent, and yet may not admit wicked and incredulous men to the mysteries of these secrets, but leave them destitute and astonished, in the shade of ignorance and desperation.⁸

² Elizabeth Sewell poses the question 'What is it to be a magician-philosopher, and could it be that the commitment of oneself to such a vocation means, of necessity, one goes into exile?', 128. *The Tempest* renders this question somewhat banal in its equation of self-imposed exile with banishment which in turn facilitates magical power. Due to the scope of her study, Sewell's insights into Shakespeare's play are limited. Nevertheless, she raises the Neoplatonic theory of man as essentially exiled and hints at the incompatibility of political and magical power, an issue explored at length by Kurt Tetzeli von Rosador in 'The Power of Magic: From *Endimion* to *The Tempest*' *Sh. S.* 43 (1991), 1-13. See 'As I was Sometime Milan': Prospects for a Search for Giordano Bruno, through Prospero, Coleridge, and the Figure of Exile', *Mosaic* 8 (1975), 127-39.

³ Although considerable emphasis is placed on the magician's skill there is also an assumption that whoever possesses the magic books will be similarly empowered. In *Dr Faustus*, Robin has no problem conjuring Mephistopheles and the devil punishes him and Rafe for their frequent calls upon him, 3.2.

⁴ *Doctor Faustus and Other Plays* ed. by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1604 A-Text used here.

⁵ *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* ed. by J. A. Lavin (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1969).

⁶ See Barbara A. Mowat, 'Prospero, Agrippa, and Hocus-Pocus', *ELR* 11 (1981), 281-303, 284-5.

⁷ See the chapter on Agrippa's influence in Frances Yates' *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London and Boston: Ark, 1979, repr. 1983), 37-47. At 1.1.119, Faustus suggests that he too has been a student of Agrippa.

⁸ *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*: tr. by J. F. (1651) (Hastings: Chthonios Books, 1986), 3 vols., vol. 3, chp lxxv, p 555.

Enforced exile may facilitate such studies or allow for their fruition. In *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune*, the banished courtier, Bomelio, seems to have discovered magic during the course of his woodland exile. He has taken up residence in a 'darksome sell' in the company of certain books, works condemned as 'vile' and 'blasphemous' by Hermione.⁹ In *The Maid's Metamorphosis*, Aramanthus, a Duke deposed and banished by his brother, transforms himself into some kind of magician in the course of his exile. For his dramatic descendant, Prospero, the study of the liberal arts that he began in Milan is facilitated by his removal to the island.¹⁰ The precious books go into exile with him. There is abundant time and liberty for their perusal and the island is itself a strange, mystical, spirit-filled world. This sense of continuity in Prospero's fate, his movement from the isolation of his library to an island, has been interpreted as a kind of wish-fulfilment.¹¹ Berger sees exile as a corollary of Prospero's essential nature and the inevitable conclusion of his solitude in Milan:

His being set adrift on the ocean, committed to a course which washed away the old burdensome world of civilization and translated him magically to a new world, unpeopled and unreal - this removal and isolation fulfill the process by externalizing his self-sufficient insularity.¹²

The reference to 'insularity', derived from the Latin 'insula' for island, makes explicit the appropriateness of the island setting. This association between islands and self-sufficiency is

⁹ *The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* ed. by John Isaac Owen (New York and London: Garland Pub., 1979), 3.609, 1356.

¹⁰ There are a number of similarities between *The Maid's Metamorphosis* and *The Tempest*. As has been said, both feature dukes banished by ambitious brothers. Where Prospero pretends to have lost his daughter and fabricates the drowning of Alonso's son, Aramanthus believes his daughter was drowned in a shipwreck but is reunited with her at the end.

¹¹ David Sundelson suggests that Prospero is aware of his inadequacies as Duke and longs to escape his own shame and weakness, 'So Rare a Wonder'd Father: Prospero's *Tempest*' in *Representing Shakespeare*, 33-53, 36.

¹² 'Miraculous Harp', 258.

one Plutarch uses extensively in his consolation *Of Exile or Banishment*.¹³ His arguments in support of 'insularity' are both Epicurean and Stoic. Solitude, peace, and liberty are all benefits of island retirement. Plutarch suggests that the exile congratulate himself thus: 'Exempt I am from civil tumults and seditions; I am not subject to the command of princes and governors; my hand is not in the charge and administration of state affairs, nor in any public ministries or services ...'.¹⁴ Similarly, the physical boundaries that prevent one from travelling are not viewed as a source of misery but as a blessing. Plutarch echoes the anti-travel bias of other consolations, describing the exile's deliverance from 'tedious travel and wandering pilgrimages up and down in the world from place to place' and from 'the perils of sea' (400). He cites the heavens as a pattern for men, suggesting that the fixed stars are in a 'better state' than the 'wandering planets'. Yet all the planets move 'in a peculiar and proper sphere of their own, as it were in a certain isle, keeping always a just order in their revolution' (401).

Island self-absorption has been identified as one of the excuses made for Britain's spectacular early failures in the race to colonise the New World.¹⁵ Yet, this self-absorption may also be interpreted as Stoic self-sufficiency. Plutarch quotes Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, who blessed fortune for driving him to his 'studying gown and philosopher's life again'. The

¹³ *Plutarch's Moralia* translated into English by Philemon Holland (1603), edited by E. H. Blakeney (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1911).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 398. This consolation is echoed, perhaps coincidentally, in *As You Like It*, when the Duke praises his exile as 'exempt from public haunt', 2.1.15.

¹⁵ Jeffrey Knapp has explored this connection in *An Empire Nowhere*. He offers various testimonies to England's insularity as an obstacle to its expansion. Of particular weight, is Robert Thorne's letter of 1527 asking Henry VIII to fund an expedition to discover a North-west passage. Thorne suggests that Britain's island status has been both an obstacle and an incitement to colonialism and exploration. He suggests that Britain is rightly self-absorbed whilst praising those explorers who have extended her boundaries and increased her treasure: 'God and nature hath provided to your Grace, and to your Gracious progenitors, this Realm of England, and set it in so fruitful a place, and within such limits, that it should seem to be a place quiet and aparted from all the foresaid desires', 29.

island is a place wherein the exile 'may live indeed properly to himself, being ranged within the centre and circumference of those things which are required only for necessity' (400). When the body is reduced to narrow limits and denied external, sensual experience, the mind becomes expansive. This is not only a Stoic doctrine but, more appropriately for *The Tempest*, a Neoplatonic one. Ficino advises that 'Every Soul should retire from the pestilence of the body and withdraw into the mind, for then fortune will spend its force in the body and not pass into the Soul'¹⁶ Such retirement was also central to the philosopher's acquisition of magic. Agrippa describes how the would-be magus must purify himself through abstinence, chastity and solitude, casting off human affairs in order to 'receive the gifts of the celestial dieties' [sic].¹⁷ Retirement from the world facilitates transcendence from it:

Hence it comes to pass that though we are framed a natural body, yet we sometimes praedominate over nature, and cause such wonderfull, sodain and difficult operations, as that the evil spirits obey us, the stars are disordered, the heavenly powers compelled, the Elements made obedient; so devout men and those elevated by these Theologicall vertues, command the Elements, drive away Fogs, raise the winds, cause rain, cure diseases, raise the dead, all which things to have been done amongst diverse Nations, Poets and Historians do sing and relate.¹⁸

Prospero's magic has been seen to share traits with the Neoplatonist's theurgy.¹⁹ The philosopher's transcendence begins with a careful study of the natural world. With the key of philosophy he will learn to perceive the symbols of divinity marked on every material thing. The arcane properties of flowers and stones, of certain words or rituals and the meanings of

¹⁶ *The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino* ed. by Paul Oskar Kristeller tr. by Virginia Conant (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), 298.

¹⁷ *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, vol. 3, chp lv, p 524.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, chp vi, p 357.

¹⁹ For a consideration of Neoplatonic magic and Prospero's relation to it, see Walter Clyde Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns* (Louisiana: State University Press, 1937), 141-59, 163-99, Barbara Howard Traister, *Heavenly Necromancers: The Magician in English Renaissance Drama* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1984), 125-50, and Karol Berger, 'Prospero's Art', *Sh. St.* 10 (1977), 211-39.

natural phenomena such as meteors will gradually be revealed to him. In the 1998 RSC production of *The Tempest*, directed by Adrian Noble, there was a striking image of the magus' command of nature. The sky- or sea-blue backcloth was taken up by Prospero as a cloak which empowered him to perform his magic, specifically to call upon Ariel. Neoplatonic thought suggested that the man who had penetrated the mysteries of nature would be able to harness the power of nature's guardians, its spirits or daemons. He would also thus be enabled to survey time via the gift of prescience and to act in accordance with Providence. In 1.2, Prospero reveals that he has commanded nature (by raising the tempest but controlling its destructive power) through the agency of the spirit, Ariel, and that he has done so in response to his foreknowledge of events.

Nevertheless, such power is obviously implicated in worldly ends. *De Occulta Philosophiae* promises to reveal things to the 'profit' of man, 'for the preserving of life, honor, fortune'. In the first book dealing with natural magic, Agrippa suggests ways of inspiring love and hatred, sickness and health in other men. There are charms to work against 'the injustice and corruption of Princes, and great men in power and for success of petitions, and to conduce to ending of suits and controversies'.²⁰ The Renaissance stage magician was invariably concerned with literal kinds of acquisitiveness and expansion. Magic promised the attainment of wealth, power and fame:

O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honour, of omnipotence
Is promised to the studious artisan! (*Dr Faustus*, 1.1.55-7)

²⁰ See *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, vol. 1, Preface to Reader, iii, on the profits of magic, and vol. 1, chp xlii, p 84 on the effects of a civet cat's guts on princes, great men and controversies!

There is a sense that the world now lies open to the philosopher, a rich, fruitful and virgin territory which will yield him secrets denied to other men. Most frequently, this plunder is envisaged as material treasure. Faustus imagines fetching gold from India and orient pearl from the ocean. He will 'search all corners of the new-found world/ For pleasant fruits and princely delicates' (86-7). The Duke and Duchess of Vanholt are amazed in 4.2 when he has grapes, then out of season in Europe, transported from the East. Friar Bacon too promises his dignitaries a great feast of 'candy' and 'spices' brought from Egypt, Persia and Africa (9.256-64). We might compare this 'extravagance' with *The Tempest* in which Ariel's circumnavigation and plundering of the Earth for Prospero has included the bringing of dew from the Bermudas (1.2.229-30).

Though Prospero remains apparently confined to the island, the Renaissance magician also expanded his mental horizons through travel. Faustus plunges into hell, ascends into the heavens to 'prove cosmography', and begins a European tour that takes in Germany, France and Italy (3.0.7, 3.1.1-19). Bacon remains in Oxford during the course of Greene's play but his opponent, Vandermast, boasts of his reception in various European cities. Indeed, the Renaissance magician, as a scholar, would expect to travel in pursuit of learning and of patronage. That this journeying could be far from pleasurable is suggested by John Dee in the preface to the first English translation of Euclid (1570). In a section called 'A Refutation of Slander', Dee defends himself from the charge of demonic practice:

Should I for my twenty or twenty-five years study for two or three thousand marks spending; seven or eight thousand miles going; and travelling only for good learning's sake, and that in all manner of weathers, in all manner of ways and passages; both early and late; in danger of violence by man; in danger of destruction by wild beasts; in hunger and thirst; in perilous heats by day, with toil on foot; in dangerous damp of cold by night, almost bereaving

life [...] should one (I pray you) for all this, not otherwise, nor mere warily or (by God's Mercy) no more luckily have fished, with so large and costly a net, for so long a time in drawing [...] to have caught and drawn up a Frog? Nay, a Devil?²¹

This passage reminds us of the context of national and imperialist expansion within which the magician was often perceived. Dee himself was committed to using his scientific and mathematical studies for the national good, in particular for the expansion of Elizabeth's realm.²² His genealogical studies confirmed what he saw as Elizabeth's imperial destiny, to be achieved through the enlargement of her navy and the adoption of the latest navigational arts. Though of secondary importance, Dee's conversations with angels were also pursued in the hope of attaining some secret wisdom such as Friar Bacon hoped to discover from his brazen head. Specifically, Bacon mentions his ambition to construct a wall of brass around England (2.24-9, 57-60).²³ Whilst the magician relishes the prospect of the renown he will thus secure, his magic is also represented as serving the nation's interests. In the magical contest between himself and the German, Vandermast, Bacon's victory is an honour to Oxford and to England (9.165-6). Similarly, Faustus' ambitions are both for his country and for himself as emperor. In a stunning example of the leitmotif of the magician's transgressiveness and desire, Faustus says of Mephistopheles:

By him I'll be great emperor of the world
And make a bridge through the moving air
To pass the ocean with a band of men;
I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore
And make that land continent to Spain,

²¹ *The Preface to Euclid* in *John Dee: Essential Readings* ed. by Gerald Suster (Crucible, 1986), 44

²² William H. Sherman elucidates Dee's practical applications of his learning in *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), 14-5, 148-200.

²³ Faustus also plans to place such a wall around Germany, 1.1.90. His nationalistic ambitions also include military expansion and the eviction 'from our land' of the Prince of Parma, a Spanish governor-general reviled in England for his oppression of the Netherlands, II 94, 95.

And both contributory to my crown. (1.3.105-110)

Thus before the Virginia project and before Shakespeare's *Tempest*, magical power was conventionally linked with territorial expansion and foreign conquest or annexation.

In contrast with his dramatic forebears, Prospero seems to lack any sense of magic as hedonism. He has apparently no interest in wealth and disdains the sparkly trash that Stefano and Trinculo find so enticing. The sensual delight of the spirit banquet and the masque are mainly for the benefit of others. Furthermore, Prospero has no possibility of achieving fame on the island since there are so few natives to grant it and travel is not an option. Yet unlike the ambitious Faustus and Bacon, or the hermit-like Bomelio and Aramantus, Prospero creates an empire for himself to rule, even if it is only an uninhabited island. It is through magic that he claims the island for his own and preserves his lordship from the threat posed to it by Caliban and later by the shipwrecked men. Nevertheless, Prospero's magical actions are invariably demystified by recent critical approaches. His strange power becomes analogous to that wielded or desired by early seventeenth-century English colonialists.²⁴

Contemporary colonialism has been seen to cast light on Prospero's island project in two main ways. Shakespeare borrows both plot and incidental details from contemporary documents on the adventuring and colonial projects of the period. An account of Magellan's circumnavigation of 1519-22 might have provided the story of a mutiny by Antonio and Sebastian, the loyal subject Gonzalo, and details such as the god Setebos and the mysterious

²⁴ In "'This Tunis, sir, was Carthage': Contesting Colonialism in *The Tempest*", Jerry Brotton warns against colonial readings which recast Prospero as a 'prototypical English coloniser' and ignore the protagonist's strangeness as a magician and an Italian. See *Post-Colonial Shakespeares* ed. by Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 23-42, 30.

'scamel'. More famously, the miraculous preservation of the *Sea Venture* as retold in documents of the Virginia Company may have inspired Shakespeare's account of the shipwreck and of the island.²⁵ The second approach which now predominates explores Shakespeare's implication in 'colonialist discourse', most recently defined as 'a new way of thinking in which cultural, intellectual, economic or political processes are seen to work together in the formation, perpetuation and dismantling of colonialism'.²⁶ Yet what this often means for an interpretation of *The Tempest* is the play's perpetuation or contestation of the single discourse apparently expressed in a number of specific texts. Such texts have inspired much thought-provoking criticism: Stephen Greenblatt has explored the implications of Caliban's language lessons;²⁷ John Gillies considers *The Tempest's* parodic use of the Virginian topoi of fruitfulness and temperance;²⁸ the play's production of disorder to celebrate colonial authority is explored by Paul Brown.²⁹ Yet the delimiting effects of imposing upon *The Tempest* some paradigmatic colonial narrative have also been fruitfully examined in a number of studies that recall the marginalised and dissonant discourses of the

²⁵ See Charles Frey, 'The Tempest and the New World', *Sh. Q.* 30 (1979), 29-41, on the question of Shakespeare's New World sources.

²⁶ Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 54.

²⁷ Stephen Greenblatt, 'Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century' in *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), 16-35.

²⁸ John Gillies, 'Shakespeare's Virginian Masque', *ELH* 53 (1986), 673-707.

²⁹ 'This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine': *The Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism' in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* ed. by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 48-72.

play and that challenge the historical foundations of this colonial archetype.³⁰ Meredith Anne Skura writes:

In an age when real voyages were read allegorically, the status of allegorical voyages like Prospero's can be doubly ambiguous, especially in a play like *The Tempest*, which provides an encyclopedic context for Prospero's experience, presenting it in terms of an extraordinary range of classical, biblical, and romantic exiles, discoveries, and confrontations.³¹

Skura proceeds to undermine the notion of a single colonialist archetype or discourse by examining the multiple and dissonant voices which the Virginia project and other enterprises inspired. Even if we assume that the documents we have on English colonialist expeditions add up to a consistent discourse, *The Tempest* does not inevitably dramatise that text. Where the similarities are seen to matter, the differences are often ignored. Skura points out that, unlike the Indians of travel narratives, Caliban does not have a superhuman physique, does not wear animal fur, feathers or body paint, and disdains trinkets. Despite his name, Caliban is not a cannibal, nor is he fully native since his mother was an African.³² Prospero too, does not seem to fit the composite stereotype that some critics assume. Often occluded is Prospero's Italian identity, so that any colonialist project he undertakes is not English. Similarly, the fact that he is a magician who holds sway by supernatural means can be

³⁰ Ben Ross Schneider Jr explores Prospero's anger within a Stoic context in 'Are We Being Historical Yet? Colonialist Interpretations of Shakespeare's *Tempest*', *Sh. St.* 23 (1995), 120-45, whilst Jerry Brotton develops the Old World context of the play, 'This Tunis, sir, was Carthage' and Jonathan Bate considers the theme of education in 'The Humanist *Tempest*', *Shakespeare La Tempête: Etudes Critiques* (1993) ed. by Claude Peltraut, 5-20. Kathryn Barbour and Curt Breight both explore the play's presentation of power within the context of European and Machiavellian state practices. See Barbour, 'Flout 'em and Scout 'em and Flout 'em and Scout 'em: Prospero's Power and Punishments in *The Tempest*' in *Shakespearean Power and Punishment: A Volume of Essays* ed. by Gillian Murray Kendall (London: Assoc. Uni. Presses, 1998), 159-72. and Breight, "'Treason doth never prosper": *The Tempest* and the Discourse of Treason', *Sh. Q.* 41 (1990), 1-28.

³¹ Meredith Anne Skura, 'Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in *The Tempest*', *Sh. Q.* 40 (1989), 42-69, 47-8. The scope of this thesis does not allow for a detailed examination of *The Tempest*'s debt to classical, romantic and biblical exiles, though some of this material is covered in the chapter on *As You Like It* and pastoral exile.

³² *Ibid.*, 48-9.

strangely passed over, as can the 'detail' that he came to the island against his will and voluntarily abandons his power over it before returning to Milan. One of the most problematic assumptions about Prospero is that he has any interest in colonising the island at all.³³ Those texts which are often explicitly or implicitly acknowledged to inform readings of *The Tempest* and from which our ideas of the seventeenth-century colonialist are largely drawn can seem both slippery and treacherous on this question of Prospero's colonial commitment.

To begin, Prospero's appropriation of the island does not follow the procedures considered by Stephen Greenblatt in his study, *Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Columbus' claim to new territory was directed by formal rites of possession. Of particular importance were the naming of the island and some kind of physical alteration, even if only symbolic, for example the placing of stones or raising of mounds.³⁴ Virginia was involved in both rites. In 1594, Raleigh renamed this area of North America, previously known as Wingandacoa, in compliment to Queen Elizabeth. According to *A True and Sincere Declaration*, the Virginian colonists subsequently marked trees there with Christian crosses and other signs.³⁵ Prospero seems to have omitted both formalities. Naming is not only a manifestation of power, an idea derived from *Genesis* that to name is to command, or solely a legal matter although the act of possession necessarily required this.³⁶ Rather, as Greenblatt has argued, naming is an act of christening: 'the cancellation of the native name - the erasure

³³ Both Schneider and Knapp acknowledge this point in 'Are we being historical yet?', 123, and *An Empire Nowhere*, 221.

³⁴ Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 52-85, 56.

³⁵ *A True and Sincere Declaration of the Purpose and Ends of the Plantation begun in Virginia* (London 1610) STC 24832, 18.

³⁶ 'Marvellous Possessions', 82.

of the alien, perhaps demonic identity - and hence a kind of making new; it is at once an exorcism, an appropriation, and a gift'.³⁷

Alteration is not just a matter of possession but of 'colonial' ambition. Dr Faustus boasted that he could redraw the map of Europe through the manipulation of physical entities, land, seas, rivers, but he never fulfilled these vaunts. In contrast, Prospero suggests that he has dramatically changed the landscape:

the strong-based promontory
Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked up
The pine and cedar; graves at my command
Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth
By my so potent art. (5.1.46-50)

Yet Prospero's transformation or 'exorcism' is explicitly associated with black magic, suggesting that a demonic rather than a benevolent power has taken control of the island. The association with the enchanter is textually based on parallels with Ovid's account of Medea in *Metamorphoses* Bk 7.³⁸ This glimpse of Prospero's 'rough magic' is important because it suggests that he has the power to transform the island in other ways but does not do so.³⁹ We may also ask ourselves why in twelve years Prospero has not made any attempts at civilization even for his own comfort. He still lives in a cave by a fen nor has anything been planted. L. T. Fitz refers to the island as having progressed no further than a 'hunting and gathering economy'.⁴⁰ We should take care not to expect some kind of empire-building from

³⁷ Ibid., 83.

³⁸ 'Prospero, Agrippa, and Hocus-Pocus', 287-9.

³⁹ In the case of Bomelio and Aramantus at least, the inability to alter their condition or their environment seems to result from limited powers. On the convention of limited magic in these plays see Traister, *Heavenly Necromancers*, 39-40.

⁴⁰ See L. T. Fitz, 'The Vocabulary of the Environment in *The Tempest*', *Sh. Q.* 26 (1975), 42-7, 43. Compare this with Fiedler's assumption, I think an erroneous one, that Prospero sets Caliban to the cutting down of trees because he wants to subdue and order the island rather than because he wants to survive, *The Stranger in Shakespeare*, 235-6.

the early seventeenth-century colonialist, a symptom of how Victorian imperialism underlies some of our assumptions about Jacobean colonialism. More's Utopos may have created an island by cutting through a peninsular. He may have transformed 'a pack of ignorant savages into what is now, perhaps, the most civilized nation in the world', but that was a fantasy.⁴¹ Seventeenth-century colonialism was concerned primarily with establishing trade routes rather than with recreating Western civilisation abroad.⁴² So perhaps this lack of commitment on Prospero's part and his failure to cultivate the land would have met with recognition among those who read contemporary reports of Virginia that reiterated the laziness of the colonists and their dependence upon the natives for food.⁴³ Of course to do so, is to identify Prospero with the plebeian members of the colony and not with their leaders. Such a comparison may underline the fact that just as many of the Virginia colonists were not there by choice so Prospero is a reluctant coloniser, there by exile.

There is clearly a considerable discrepancy between Prospero's professed attitude towards the island, and the intentions of the Jamestown colony, as stated in *The True and Sincere Declaration*. These aims included the conversion of natives to the Christian faith, the creation of a 'Bulwarke of defence' against the Spanish, and the appropriation of all kinds of goods which England had previously been forced to import at great expense.⁴⁴ One of the most

⁴¹ *Utopia* ed. by Paul Turner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), 69-70.

⁴² See Palmira Brummett's *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* on sixteenth-century conquest and the emphasis placed on expanding trade routes and exploiting resources rather than redrawing national boundaries (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), as cited by Jerry Brotton, "'This Tunis, sir, was Carthage'", fn. 28, 41-2.

⁴³ Peter Hulme examines the apparent paradox that though the colonists were sometimes figured by the natives as magicians because of their firepower, those colonists were yet unable to feed themselves or to be in any way self-sufficient. Prospero literally possesses magical powers but remains dependent on Caliban's labour for his day-to-day existence, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492-1797* (London and New York: Routledge, 1986), 89-136, 127-32.

⁴⁴ *A True and Sincere Declaration*, 3-4.

marked differences then between Prospero's experience on the island and this testament to contemporary colonial ambition is the fact that the magician's 'acquisition' does not profit the Old World. The only plunder that Prospero will take back to Milan is his dukedom, an Old World institution and identity. There is no gold on the island. It seems rich only in curiosities. Prospero has little sense of the island's relation to Europe though again this may be partly determined by his exile. The magician no longer represents Milan and this may explain his failure to impose any culture on the island and his lack of interest in exploiting it.

Finally, I want to consider Prospero's rhetoric of redemption as regards his landing on the island. The planting of nations has often depended upon the wanderings of an outcast: Adam and Eve, and Cain in the Bible, Aeneas in Greek legend, Brutus in chronicle history. These founding narratives begin as tragedy but from a more removed perspective, even in the lifetime of the exile himself, they become providential. Shame is redeemed by the final triumph wherein the exile becomes a representative, not an outcast, of civilisation. The suffering attendant upon the journey and the early years in a hostile landscape become a penitential or heroic narrative.

Such rhetoric was a feature of some colonialist propaganda, particularly reports of the shipwreck of Sir Thomas Gates. *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia* (1610) insists on divine intervention to explain the survival of Gates and the other commanders setting out for the Virginia colony at Jamestown. We are told that it was God's hand that ensured the ship became wedged between two rocks in daylight and for sufficient time to allow them to remove all passengers and supplies before it sank. Similarly, it was Providence that ensured they landed on a fertile island where birds flew towards them as if

offering to be killed and eaten, just as God sent ravens to Elias.⁴⁵ The salvation of Gates and his party reflects the redemptive nature of the expedition. The colonists are doing God's work in spreading the gospel and rescuing the natives from ignorance and possibly damnation.⁴⁶ Similarly, in 1.2, Prospero describes how 'providence divine' brought him and his daughter from the perils of the sea safely onto land, also with such 'necessaries' as food, fresh water, rich clothing and Prospero's books (160-9). The magus extends this divine sanction to his subsequent tyranny over the island and its inhabitants. He envisages his arrival as an alternative harrowing of hell, an exorcism of the black witch, Sycorax, whose magic kept Ariel literally imprisoned in a cloven pine. For this spirit in particular the magus has been a redemptive figure, rescuing him from 'a torment/ To lay upon the damned' (290-1).

Yet just as the Virginia apologists used this rhetoric in answer to outspoken criticism of the project, criticism which interpreted the shipwreck as evidence of God's wrath against the colonists,⁴⁷ so Prospero repeats this providential narrative defensively. He is the only witness to the appreciable difference between his tyranny over the island and that of Sycorax. Ariel is still enslaved and threatened with imprisonment in a tree (295-7). Caliban has been taught Prospero's language but has apparently reverted to his bestial state. Crucially, the magus' reign does not seem to have made a significant difference to the island or its inhabitants.

But if these texts at least call into question Prospero's identity as archetypal or prototypical colonialist, they do not suggest that some connection was not made by the audience between English colonial ventures and Prospero's mastery of the island. Rather, these texts encourage

⁴⁵ *A True Declaration*, STC 24833, 17, 24, 25.

⁴⁶ *A True and Sincere Declaration*, 2-3.

⁴⁷ See Skura, 'Discourse and the Individual', 53-4.

us to perceive a different kind of colonialist. If Prospero is not as self-assured, as heartlessly tyrannical or ambitious, as *central* a figure as the contemporary 'type', then he may reflect a more subtle and unstable colonialist, one more in keeping with England's possible ambivalence about the project at this early stage in its colonising history. In the rest of this study I want to consider Prospero as a marginal figure without assuming the relegation of his colonial identity. Rather, the association between colonialist and exile is central to Prospero's liminal anxiety. In her study of colonialism and postcolonialism in general, Ania Loomba quotes an essay by H. K. Bhabha regarding the implications of the hybridization of colonial master and subject.⁴⁸ Where the subject may suffer a kind of identity crisis, being encouraged to imitate the European Other, but finding transformation impossible, the colonialist cannot replicate himself exactly either. The two depend upon each other for differentiation but are equally 'contaminated'. Loomba comments:

Colonial identities – on both sides of the divide – are unstable, agonised, and in constant flux. This undercuts both colonialist and nationalist claims to a unified self ...⁴⁹

This theory is particularly relevant to *The Tempest* in which Prospero spends so much time differentiating himself from Caliban and Sycorax. I would argue that the magician's encounter with the natives is primarily characterised by his fears of identification with them, and of the transformations wrought by the exile's contact with the barbarous.

Whilst Prospero would seem to be empowered by his transformation into the magician and the colonialist, both identities also reinforce the stigma of his exile and exacerbate his shame

⁴⁸ 'Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche, and the Colonial Condition', referred to in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, 176-78.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 178.

at that condition. Sycorax combines these roles of exile, magician and colonialist. She was born in Africa but has been forcibly ejected onto the island:

This damned witch Sycorax,
For mischiefs manifold and sorceries terrible
To enter human hearing, from Algiers
Thou know'st was banished. (1.2.264-7)

Prospero invokes the witch in order to differentiate from hers his magical powers, his banishment, and his subsequent rule over the island.⁵⁰ He argues that her punishment was not incurred by sorcery per se but because her magic was evil. This distinction is a dubious one. Although Prospero does not command devils to perform his magic, as Faustus and Friar Bacon do, his transgression in practising this forbidden art remains a grave one. In *Daemonologie* (1597), James VI distinguished between necromancy and witchcraft but considered them equally damnable. Sycorax has received a very lenient punishment, perhaps because she was pregnant, if we recall that contemporary European practice was to burn the magician or witch at the stake. James suggests that the magistrate who shows any mercy is not only failing in his duty but is himself committing a sin.⁵¹ If banishment was not literally applied to the magician, it recurs frequently as a metaphor for the magician's state of damnation.⁵² In *Dr Faustus*, Mephistopheles repeatedly attests to the agony that is absence

⁵⁰ For an account of these similarities with particular reference to Prospero's anger and possible abuse of power see Margreta de Grazia, 'The Tempest: Gratuitous Movement or Action Without Kibes and Pinches' *Sh. St.* 14 (1981), 249-65.

⁵¹ *Daemonologie (1597) and Newes from Scotland (1591)* ed. by G. B. Harrison (London: Bodley Head, 1924), 78.

⁵² Yates describes Dee suffering a 'semi-banishment' in Manchester after losing Queen Elizabeth's patronage. *The Occult Philosophy*, 91, whilst Sherman argues against such a romanticised view in *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing*, 12-26. Whatever the facts, Dee represented his state as that of near-vagabondage and exile in a letter to the Queen's commissioners pleading for succour, *The Compendious Rehearsal* (1597), *John Dee: Essential Readings*, 110.

from God and from heaven (1.3.78-81, 2.1.121-6).⁵³ Nevertheless, we have at least one seventeenth-century account which associates witchcraft with banishment and in a colonial setting. Curiously echoing *The Tempest*, a manuscript of 1638 describes the banishment of a number of Caribs by European colonists after the Caribs had successfully predicted the coming of a storm.⁵⁴ Just as Prospero forbids a certain kind of magic, close to his own, so the European colonists decide that a power they do not comprehend is similarly demonic, ignoring the 'magical' aspects of their own power, most obviously gunpowder. But the prerogative of Europeans and of Prospero may be further undermined if we pursue this connection between colonialism and exile.

One recurring feature of the exile's lament in English Renaissance literature is the reference to weary travelling along untrodden paths.⁵⁵ The exile is an unwilling expansionist forced to journey into the wilderness, even if this is only a forest within the country of his birth. In *The Maid's Metamorphosis*, Eurymine describes her fate: 'Banisht to live a fugitive alone/ In uncoth paths and regions never knowne'. Christopher Marlowe's plays repeatedly dramatise the alien in an alien land, often within an imperialist context, to satisfy the audience's recent

⁵³ See also one of Marlowe's sources, *The History of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus* (the English Faust-book) tr. by P. F. (1592) wherein the banishment of Lucifer from heaven is described. This is included in *Christopher Marlowe: The Plays and Their Sources* ed. by Vivien Thomas and William Tydeman (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 186-238, 199.

⁵⁴ Peter Hulme offers this example in his work *Colonial Encounters*, 100, and gives as its source the Egerton manuscript 'Concerning Hurricanes and their Prognosticks' in the British Library, 2395/619-24. In fact this document defends the natives from the charge of witchcraft and tries to offer a scientific justification of their success. It offers no instance of their banishment. I have still thought it worth citing Hulme's example though the source eludes me thus far.

⁵⁵ *Richard II* and *The Wounds of Civil War* both describe banishment in terms of 'stranger paths' or 'untrodden paths' respectively and in terms of the exile's weary steps. In *The Rare Triumphes*, Bomelio's song deploys a number of these tropes: 'Goe walke the path of plaint, goe wander wretched now/ In uncoth waies, blind corners fit for such a wretch as thou ...', 3.613-4.

taste for the foreign, for 'spectacles of strangeness'.⁵⁶ Yet the connotations of banishment in contemporary drama may also reflect English ambivalence about such journeying. We can see the way in which colonialism is both exalted and debased by its association with exile in John Floyd's description of the perils of the Virginia project.

In a sermon published in 1610, William Crashaw justified the exclusion from Virginia of atheists, players and papists.⁵⁷ The Jesuit, Floyd, responded in 1612 with *The Overthrow of the Protestants Pulpit-Babels*. He points out that if it had not been for papists Britain would never have been converted to Christianity in the first place but would have remained barbarous and savage, as will Virginia whilst her conversion depends upon the ministrations of Protestant priests. He describes the reluctance of any such ministers, including Crashaw, to journey to Virginia:

No *M. Crashaw*, the miseries which the enterprize of converting Savages doth bring with it, the wanting your native soyle, friends and Gossips, wherewith now after Sermon you may be merry, the enduring hunger, cold, nakednes, danger of death, and the like, but specially the want of the new Ghospells blessing, a fayre wife, too heavy a lump of flesh to be carryed into *Virginia*; these be such curses, & such hinderances, as you may speake of.⁵⁸

However, Floyd distinguishes between two kinds of exiled colonialist. First, there is the priest who willingly endures the sufferings concomitant with such a vocation. Then there is the colonist who has his mission thrust upon him. Floyd declares that the Protestant priests who do become colonists are in many instances 'the refuse of their [the Church's] Realme, whome they terme the very excrements of their swelling State' (324). Virginia's conversion depends

⁵⁶ See Emily C. Bartels' introductory chapter to her work *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 3-26.

⁵⁷ 'A Sermon Preached in London before the right honorable the Lord Lawarre, Lord Governour and Captaine Generall of Virginea', STC 6029.

⁵⁸ *The Overthrow of the Protestants Pulpit-Babels*, STC 11111, 321.

on men presented with the choice of banishment to Virginia or the gallows. They are men conscripted in taverns, at plays, even in hedges. It was Crashaw himself who condemned the purgation of England by the deportation of such ruffians to Virginia and its effect upon the colony. Floyd suggests that the Protestant Church actively promotes this. To leave England for Virginia is a sign of heroism and of divine vocation but it is also an indication of one's superfluousness to the state and even of criminality.

This ambivalence about one's status as an exile is crucial to the characterisation of Prospero and to his apparent motives in the play. It informs his remarkable speech after the shipwreck, that Miranda knows him only as the 'master of a full poor cell/ And thy no greater father'. Transcendence from the common lot of mankind also implies alienation from men, a state problematic by Aristotelian definition: 'he that cannot abide to live in companie, or through sufficiency hath need of nothing [...] is either a beast or a God'.⁵⁹ Whilst Prospero seems to have attained power beyond the abilities of man, he also fears that bestiality or some innate corruption may explain his banishment. His response to this dilemma is to project banishment onto others. A number of critics have referred to the magician's reenactment of the conspiracy that deposed him through the Antonio and the Caliban rebellions.⁶⁰ Peter Hulme sees this pattern of repetition working on a larger scale:

The courtiers must repeat Prospero's primary suffering: the distress at sea, the absence of food, and the powerlessness in a hostile environment. Prospero takes pleasure in their suffering and then, when the moment is right, brings the suffering to an end in order to obtain his final purpose.⁶¹

⁵⁹ For a consideration of this maxim see the previous chapter on *Coriolanus*.

⁶⁰ See 'Miraculous Harp', 261.

⁶¹ *Colonial Encounters*, 121.

Prospero creates a landscape of exile on the island and torments his captives with spectacles which reinforce the exile identity as monstrous and bestial. In doing so, he attempts to distance himself from this stigma, just as he tries to exorcise the spirit of Sycorax through repeated comparisons with his own providential exile. I would suggest that the magician's ambivalence towards his exile status may have been exacerbated by his relations with Caliban. To view Prospero as exile and Caliban as coloniser/native, is to significantly alter the power ratio between them.

Prospero's encounter with the 'native' seems to be informed by a number of 'colonialist' assumptions: that the native has no language of his own; that he is 'saved' through his education by the European; that he will quickly revert to violence and lust because he is little more than a beast. Caliban's supposed parentage, a black witch for a mother, the Devil for a father, might also conform to contemporary stereotypes.⁶² Yet if there is any character with colonialist ambitions on the island it is Caliban. He is the one who desires to people the island with copies of himself (1.2.352-3) and his claim to it is based on Sycorax's usurpation of whoever ruled there before her. In contrast with this ruthless self-expansion, Prospero might have other motives for patronising Caliban. The magician seeks not so much to create a society as to be accepted by one. When Caliban 'betrays' Prospero in pursuit of his own ambitions, the magician finds the original expulsion from Milan reenacted. The paternal relationship/patriarchal society he proposes upon the island is declined. Of course, Caliban's position in that society would always be deeply inferior and a testament to the civilised and

⁶² William Strachey describes the terrible reputation of the Bermudas: 'such tempests, thunders, and other fearefull objects are seene and heard about them. that they be called commonly, *The Devils Ilands*, and are feared and avoyded of all sea travellers alive, above any other place in the world', *A True Reportory of the Wracke and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, Knight* (1610) in *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes*, vol 4, chp. 6, Bk 9, p1737. On the identification of the natives with devils see pp 1708, 1713.

virtuous qualities of his master. Yet Caliban's rejection of that offer also serves to reinforce Prospero's alienation.⁶³ The magus' response to Caliban here establishes a crucial pattern of exiling others and projecting his own supposed inhumanity onto them. Miranda tells their slave:

But thy vile race,
Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures
Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
Deservedly confined into this rock,
Who hadst deserved more than a prison. (1.2.360-4)

Crucially, Caliban describes his punishment not only in terms of confinement but of exile: 'whiles you do keep from me/ The rest o'th'island' (345-6). This sense of alienation is reinforced when we consider Caliban's profound connection with the island, something that always eludes Prospero.⁶⁴ For Caliban:

The isle is full of noises,
Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometime voices
That if I then had waked after long sleep
Will make me sleep again; and then in dreaming
The clouds methought would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked
I cried to dream again. (3.2.138-46)

Like Prospero, Caliban's experience with other men during the course of the play is characterised by rejection rather than acceptance. With Stefano and Trinculo, he finds some temporary community and is determined to prove useful and to serve them. Yet his appearance determines that he will never belong. Indeed, his human status is never fully

⁶³ According to Caliban, Prospero betrayed him. Caliban was offering the magus love which he rejected.

⁶⁴ John Gillies describes the landscape as unassimilable, present only to Caliban's imagination, 'Shakespeare's Virginian Masque', 702. It seems doubtful that Prospero desires any such possession.

determined. He is at first a fish, then a man-monster, rising in rank from servant- to lieutenant-monster (3.2.3,15). When Caliban refuses to obey one of Stefano's commands, the latter threatens to turn him 'out of my kingdom' (4.1.250-1). The whole situation suggests parallels with Prospero, Alonso and Antonio in the bargaining over kingdoms and the expulsion of the lawful ruler.⁶⁵

Nevertheless, the primary repetition of Prospero's original banishment is wrought upon the shipwrecked men. In an astonishingly powerful reworking of his own guilt and insecurity about what banishment implies, Prospero sets about to create not a colonial settlement nor the Golden World of Gonzalo's dreams but a landscape of exile on the island. It is a place not only beyond civilization and other human society but suggesting the Isle of Devils, hell itself.⁶⁶ He expresses not the perfection and order in his mind as the Platonic magus was supposed to do but instead unleashes bestiality and chaos, creating a place so fearful that it deprives men of their wits. Prospero's projection of exile onto his enemies deflects the accusation of inhumanity from himself onto the banishers. In *Coriolanus*, the protagonist declared 'I banish you' (3.3.127) in vengeance at his own expulsion. The unmetaphoring of the Roman's conviction that Rome lay within himself required the destruction of the city. Prospero has the opportunity to banish those who banished him through the magical

⁶⁵ Caliban repeats Antonio's role by offering to 'share' his kingdom with Stefano/Alonso in return for his support in overthrowing the present ruler. At the same time, Caliban as this usurped ruler reminds us of Prospero, particularly when he is threatened with exile by the man he has empowered.

⁶⁶ Whilst the Bermudas were known as the Isle of Devils, this name had also been given to Britain. Josephine Waters Bennett quotes Claudian 'In Rufinum Liber Primus' (I, 34-5): 'There is a place where Gaul stretches her furthest shore spread out before the waves of Ocean: 'tis there that Ulysses is said to have called up the silent ghosts with a libation of blood. There is heard the mournful weeping of the spirits of the dead [...] the inhabitants see the pale ghosts pass and the shades of the dead [...] Britain felt the deadly sound [of that place]', 'Britain among the Fortunate Isles', *Stud. in Phil.* 53 (1956), 114-40, 123.

transformation of this unknown and uninhabited island. He makes them experience the full horrors of self-loss he has known.

This peripeteia is recognised by the Neapolitan party to a limited extent. They surmise that their shipwreck has been caused by their own act of banishment.⁶⁷ But it is not yet Prospero of whom they think but Claribel. Their sea journey has been necessitated by the marriage of Alonso's daughter to the Prince of Tunis. On their return to Italy, the ship has been wrecked and Ferdinand supposedly drowned. Sebastian makes a link between Ferdinand's 'death' and Alonso's crime against Claribel:⁶⁸

Sir, you may thank yourself for this great loss,
That would not bless our Europe with your daughter,
But rather loose her to an African,
Where she, at least, is banished from your eye,
Who hath cause to wet the grief on't. (2.1.129-33)

Claribel merely serves her father's desire to extend his influence into Africa. This dangerously overreaching and expansionist ambition is subsequently punished by the loss of his heir. Yet, it is Alonso's earlier act of expansionism that concerns a vengeful Prospero. The magician does not leave his victims in ignorance long. After the banquet spectacle, Ariel descends as a harpy and addresses Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian in Prospero's words (3.3.85-6):

⁶⁷ The identification of shipwreck as exile, specifically the wreck of the *Sea Venture*, is made in *A True Declaration*, 34, and quoted by Strachey in *A True Reportory, Purchas his Pilgrimes*, Part 4, Bk. 9, chp. 6, 1756.

⁶⁸ Erasmus, as cited by Jonathan Bate, condemns foreign alliances on these very grounds that girls are sent away to marry 'men who have not similarity of language, appearance, character, or habits. just as if they were being abandoned to exile'. *The Education of a Christian Prince* tr. by Lester K. Born (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), 241. Such exile is a kind of death. Antonio describes Tunis as 'Ten leagues beyond man's life', 2.1.252.

remember,
 For that's my business to you, that you three
 From Milan did supplant good Prospero;
 Exposed unto the sea, which hath requit it,
 Him and his innocent child; for which foul deed,
 The powers, delaying not forgetting, have
 Incensed the seas and shores, yea, all the creatures,
 Against your peace. Thee of thy son, Alonso,
 They have bereft, and do pronounce by me
 Ling'ring perdition – worse than any death
 Can be at once – shall step by step attend
 You and your ways; whose wraths to guard you from –
 Which here in this most desolate isle else falls
 Upon your heads – is nothing but heart's sorrow
 And a clear life ensuing. (68-82)

The uninhabitedness that Prospero himself declared to be the island's curse (1.2.282-5) is reasserted here. Ariel describes a land of alienation and torment where Creation recoils from mankind. Immediately after this speech, Alonso attests to the horror of a nature that knows his crimes (3.3.95-9), perhaps reflecting Cain's punishment in *Genesis* when God asked:

What hast thou done? the voyce of thy brothers blood cryeth unto me, from the ground. And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brothers blood from thy hand [...] A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.⁶⁹

Moreover, Cain's punishment of lingering life, marked so that no man may kill him, may also be recalled in Ariel's sentence that 'Ling'ring perdition' will follow them.

Isolation from one another is one of the penalties that has been immediately enforced. Prospero explains the appearance of Ferdinand thus: 'He hath lost his fellows,/ And strays about to find 'em' (1.2.419-20). Separated from one another into three small groups, the shipwrecked men believe themselves to be the sole survivors of their party on an uninhabited

⁶⁹ *The King James Bible*, 4: 10-2.

island. They hear noises that might be wild beasts or damned spirits and meet monstrous shapes that might be islanders but they cannot be sure. They are acutely aware of humanity as a minority, even as an endangered, species. In fact, mankind no longer seems to bear the same defining shape or characteristics but exists in a state of metamorphosis or rather suspension between different levels of creation.⁷⁰ Prospero deliberately confuses the shipwrecked men by using spirits to perform many different roles that might or might not be human. In the masque of Ceres, spirits enact the parts of goddesses, nymphs and sicklemen. Ariel leads a pack of fairies as baying hounds and Caliban describes Prospero's meaner ministers who torment him in the shape of apes, hedgehogs and snakes (2.2.9-14). How these spirits are interpreted is personal and subjective. In very general terms, the shipwrecked men are united in their predilection to see devils, Gonzalo identifies men of differing kinds, whilst Miranda and Ferdinand perceive divinities at every turn. Prospero's magic tends to reinforce these convictions on the assumption that men thus recognise their own vices or virtues.

Act 2, scene 2 wherein Caliban, Trinculo and Stefano first encounter one another is built around repeated misunderstandings. Trinculo is identified first as a spirit, then as a monster, a devil and a Neapolitan. Stefano is a devil, Neapolitan and then a god. Caliban appears successively as fish, monster, islander-struck-by-lightning, devil and finally monster again. Their fears of trickery and devils are realised when Ariel fools Stefano into beating his fellow and then leads them into a 'filthy-mantled pool'. The magician's plan seems to be to inspire ambitions for greatness in these men only to cast them down as beasts. On emerging from the

⁷⁰ Richard Marienstras describes in the play 'the feeling of a fleeting, changing universe in which reality is elusive and all creatures and things are involved in a constant metamorphosis', 'Elizabethan Travel Literature and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*' in *New Perspectives on the Shakespearean World* tr. by Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 160-85, 171.

pool, they discover the glittering apparel Ariel has left for them (4.1.221-2). Glorifying in this false splendour, they are then hunted like animals and wracked with cramps and pinches (256-60). Prospero offers them glimpses of another life only to plunge them further into wretchedness.⁷¹

The same process is enacted with the court circle. At the sight of the spirits 'in several strange shapes' who bring in the banquet, they conclude that creation is far more expansive and wondrous than they had allowed, though with a note of irony:

SEBASTIAN: A living drollery. Now I will believe
 That there are unicorns; that in Arabia
 There is one tree, the phoenix' throne, one phoenix
 At this hour reigning there.

ANTONIO: I'll believe both;
 And what does else want credit come to me,
 And I'll be sworn 'tis true. Travellers ne'er did lie,
 Though fools at home condemn 'em. (3.3.21-7)

Gonzalo goes on to identify the spirits as the 'people' of the island, monstrous in shape but more gentle than the majority of 'our human generation' (30-4). Yet these are spirits rather than men and their gentleness becomes aggression when thunder and lightning interrupt the anticipated banquet and Ariel descends as an agent of fate. The spirit leaves them distracted with Sebastian and Antonio fighting imaginary fiends.

The victimization of Ferdinand also works as exile. First Prospero denies the Prince's identity: 'Thou dost here usurp/ The name thou ow'st not' (1.2.456-7). In a sense this is true.

⁷¹ Similarly, Antonio and Sebastian's ambitions to rule Naples through regicide are facilitated by Prospero's spell which sends the others to sleep, 2.1.212-4. The men are encouraged in these hopes only to be condemned later.

Ferdinand has claimed to be the King of Naples on the false assumption that his father is dead whilst the Prince has also moved Prospero to anger by referring to that other usurped title, Duke of Milan. But Ferdinand's rightful identity as a prince and as a man is magically denied him. Where the other shipwrecked men questioned their human status, Ferdinand is emasculated and enslaved. Prospero deprives him of the use of his sword and then puts his nerves into a state of 'infancy' (487). In this humbler state Ferdinand is manacled and set to the work of the slave, Caliban.

Yet despite the shame Ferdinand feels and Miranda perceives in this usage, they remain enamoured of one another's shapes and see themselves as excelling nature (3.1.46-8, 56-7). Where the shipwrecked men see devils, Miranda and Ferdinand see gods. At their first meeting, each independently assumes the other to be divine (1.2.421-5). Despite Prospero's attempts to temper his daughter's wonder by comparing Ferdinand to 'a Caliban', Miranda is obdurate: 'I have no ambition/ To see a goodlier man' (485-6). Of course the reference to the beloved as a divine being is a familiar trope but here it holds a deeper significance. There is a suggestion that rather than seeing each other half blinded by attraction, they see man more clearly for what he might be. Prospero forgives the son of his enemy and releases him from his servitude and the taint of bestiality. He explains that it was 'but my trials of thy love' (4.1.6) which Ferdinand has 'strangely' passed. Ferdinand is now placed on the side of the angels and Prospero shares with the couple his masque on the perfection of mankind until thoughts of Caliban interrupt and the spirits 'vanish heavily'. The significance of Caliban's interruption is partly his disruption of the polarity Prospero insists on between the bestial and the divine. Prospero managed to keep the lascivious Venus and her son, Cupid, away from the celebrations but thoughts of the darker aspects of humanity, exemplified in the rape and

violence that Caliban partly represents, still intrude. Prospero's degradation of Ferdinand and his oft-expressed anxieties about pre-marital sex (4.1.14-23, 51-4) suggest that the polarity he tries to establish between the divine and the devilish will not hold. Even the golden couple is corruptible. In fact, Caliban reconciles the elements of Prospero's paradox. He is responsive to the beast and the god within him.

We have already referred to Caliban's dubious human status and the ease with which he is translated to a beast. When Stefano threatens him with banishment, he does so because his slave refuses to gather up the 'glistening apparel'. Like Prospero, Caliban nearly gets himself banished for his rejection of the worldly and superficial in pursuit of the magician's books. That Caliban's higher purpose is the murder of Prospero and the possession of the island does not necessarily destroy the analogy. It is in the landscape that Caliban finds the seeds of a Neoplatonic transcendence to be perceived not through the symbols in Prospero's books but through his dreams. The heavens have promised to drop riches upon him and it is the promise of this splendour, if not deification, that leads Caliban to search the island for a god to worship.

Caliban further escapes the monster/devil stereotype through the qualities he shares with Miranda. A deliberate parallel is drawn between them in their aspiration after what is good via what is beautiful. For both, the island is the only world they have known or can well remember. Nevertheless, they make comparative judgements with great confidence. Caliban says that he has never seen a woman except for his mother and she cannot compare with Miranda's beauty (3.2.101-4). Miranda tells Ferdinand in a striking anticipation of the 'monster': 'I do not know/ One of my sex, no woman's face remember./ Save from my glass

mine own ...' (3.1.48-50). Nevertheless, Miranda cannot imagine a better man. Moreover, Ferdinand's 'brave form' (1.2.414) immediately leads her to assume that he is noble. Such references to forms and beauty as truth suggest that Prospero has already begun to educate his daughter in Neoplatonism. Yet this language appears instinctual in both of Prospero's pupils. Of course, they make mistakes. Miranda's naiveté in assuming that man must always be what he appears could prove dangerous and does not escape mockery (5.1.185-7). Caliban's judgement is even more faulty when he kneels to Stefano as a god and makes 'a wonder of a poor drunkard!' (2.2.164-5). Nevertheless, his desire to kneel is at first a recognition of superiority, the kind of beauty Miranda thinks she perceives and wants to adore in Ferdinand. The quest for divinity is also an expression of the transcendent in Caliban's nature. He wants to serve what is higher than himself and to be ennobled by it. When he discovers his mistake in Stefano and Trinculo, Caliban adores the magician as he once did and hopes to sue for 'grace' (5.1.299).⁷²

We have seen how Prospero's treatment of Caliban is informed by his desire to project alienation onto the 'native'. By designating Caliban as all that is savage and alien to the civilised Duke of Milan, Prospero seems to be rejecting that dangerous incivility within himself which banishment implies. Yet, this impulse to distinguish is also a recognition of likeness. Skura sees the relationship between these two characters as repeating a pattern established throughout the canon. Powerful figures who are forced out or voluntarily retire from public life continue to manipulate others in that world, thus revealing their fascination with what has supposedly been sloughed off (power, aggression, sexuality). The Caliban

⁷² There is obviously the potential for Caliban's submission here to be seen as a kind of colonialist wish-fulfilment wherein the master is finally kneeled to voluntarily. Yet this need not preclude the possibility that Caliban responds to something higher which Prospero does not embody but might lead him towards. On Caliban's suing for grace in the Christian sense see Bate, 'The Humanist *Tempest*', 18-9.

figure is one who epitomises the repressed will of the potentate and arouses in him passionate often apparently irrational feelings.⁷³ Prospero's formal recognition of Caliban as relating to himself, 'This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine', could be the tag-line to the film adaptation of *The Tempest, Forbidden Planet* (1956), directed by Fred M. Wilcox. Here, the monster is more mysterious and deadly than Caliban. It has destroyed the Krell civilization and the human colony of which Dr Morbius (Prospero) was a part. Only towards the end of the film is its identity revealed as the id, man's bestial subconscious. The Krell had unlocked the mysteries of nature and were perfecting themselves in a recognisably Neoplatonic way. They had achieved the power to create by thought but divinity was snatched from their grasp by their own subconscious. Morbius, the inheritor of this wisdom, similarly unleashes the monstrous id or Caliban. As the walls of the cell are being broken down, the professor confronts his own destructiveness, acknowledges the 'thing of darkness', and dies to save the other humans including his daughter.⁷⁴

Prospero's final acknowledgement of Caliban after so many disavowals echoes his decision at the beginning of Act 5 to recognise the humanity in himself. Until 5.1 we do not know what ultimate revenge Prospero may take upon his banishers. His forgiveness of Ferdinand may allow for optimism yet the magician's irascibility makes this far from certain. Whilst it was in his interests to encourage a union between his daughter and Ferdinand, Prospero might reclaim his dukedom more easily by the destruction of the present claimants than by

⁷³ Skura alludes to this paradigm at work in *The Merchant of Venice, Henry IV, As You Like It* and *Measure for Measure*, 'Discourse and the Individual', 61-3.

⁷⁴ This film offers a fascinating reading of *The Tempest* as well as succeeding in its own right. Its relation to the theme of banishment is oblique. Morbius and his daughter have not been banished but are the sole surviving members of a team who went to the planet voluntarily for study. In fact, it is suggested that the colonists were killed by Morbius' subconscious when they insisted on returning to Earth. Nevertheless, the themes of forbidden knowledge and the title (which is never explained) suggest that alienation I have described, though an alienation desired rather than imposed upon them.

depending on their voluntary renunciation of it. In fact, there is no reference to Prospero wanting to reform or redeem these men until the final act. He rejoices that they are in his power and at his mercy, but does not seem to anticipate being merciful until Ariel intercedes with a description of the royal party's distress. The spirit suggests that Prospero would have been moved by this scene, that Ariel would have pitied them if he were human. Prospero's response seems spontaneous, even impulsive. He decides to become human:

Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling
Of their afflictions, and shall not myself,
One of their kind, that relish all as sharply
Passion as they, be kindlier moved than thou art?
Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th'quick,
Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
Do I take part. The rarer action is
In virtue than in vengeance. (5.1.21-8)

The confusion Prospero has created on the island with men appearing to be devils, islanders and gods, comes to seem an expression of his own uncertainty about his human status. Through the 'banishment' of the shipwrecked men, Prospero has not only created the conditions for his reinstatement on the Milanese throne but has worked through his ambivalence about human identity, both bestial and divine. With his decision to recognise himself as one of their kind, Prospero proposes to drown his books and relinquish his magical power.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, if Prospero has found something cathartic in his revenge, his victims' experience has not been one of enlightenment or 'redemption'. In 3.3, Gonzalo argued that

⁷⁵ In *Forbidden Planet*, the Krell archives and power source have to be destroyed to protect mankind from its own superhuman ambition.

the three men of sin were partly responsible for their frenzy and thus he seemed to condone their punishment:

Their great guilt,
Like poison given to work a great time after,
Now 'gins to bite the spirits. (104-6)

By the final act, however, Gonzalo has changed his mind. The agonies of all three men are so extreme and self-destructive, that the lord cannot but locate their delusions outside themselves upon the island's evil influence:

All torment, trouble, wonder, and amazement
Inhabits here. Some heavenly power guide us
Out of this fearful country! (5.1.106-8)

Indeed, through paralysis, sleep and madness Prospero has seized control of their bodies and their reason, thus reducing them to a condition of bestiality. By controlling their volition, his victims degenerate further into non-beings, toys for the magician/tyrant to manipulate at will. Whilst in his power, the men of sin may be tormented with guilt but this guilt does not necessarily endure outside the confines of Prospero's charm nor need it inspire repentance. Rather, they are free once again to reject Prospero's morality. Thus Antonio and Sebastian appear unmoved by the former duke's reproaches and by his forgiveness. Exile has taught them nothing. Alonso does desire absolution but his renunciation of the dukedom is an act more indicative of despair over Ferdinand's supposed death, than of any soul-searching.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Alonso imagines rejoining his son at the bottom of the sea, 3.3.100-2, or drowning for him, 5.1.152-4. He is in despair before Prospero puts the charm upon him, declaring that since the shipwreck, 'The best is past', 3.3.51.

Moreover, if their madness were the result of individual guilt rather than a punishment imposed by magic, we would expect it to have some effect upon Gonzalo who at least condoned the banishment. Yet this is not part of Prospero's plan. From the beginning the magus has defended this lord, arguing that his providing food, water and clothing and most importantly of all books, cancels out the gift of a ship certain to take them to their deaths. Gonzalo must stand for unstained friendship and Prospero's greatest hope of a return to humanity. Within the charmed circle Prospero greets him thus: 'Holy Gonzalo, honourable man,/ Mine eyes, ev'n *sociable* to the show of thine,/ Fall *fellowly* drops' (5.1.62-4 italics mine).

Prospero's transformation into the former Duke of Milan is dominated by this need to embrace humanity. His appearance is a grand coup-de-théâtre in the succession of mistaken identities. Having divested himself of his magical garb for a hat and rapier, Prospero presents himself as 'The wrongèd Duke of Milan', a 'living prince', in proof of which he clasps Alonso (109,110). His embracing the men serves to demonstrate his substantiality since they have all believed him drowned for the past twelve years. Thus, Prospero demonstrates that he is not a ghost, a natural spirit or one of the visions of the island (179). Once the Neapolitan party has accepted that Prospero, Miranda and Ferdinand are living and human, the last scene revolves around the acceptance of humanity in the other characters which entails the recognition of bestiality and divinity in man. Miranda's original wonder at Ferdinand is repeated when she sees Alonso and his party. She greets these men of sin, only recently restored to their senses:

O wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!

How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world
That has such people in't! (184-7)

As if the moral crimes of these men were not enough to balance the wonder she perceives in man, the subplot characters enter to 'represent' bestiality. They are things to be bought and displayed back home at freak shows. Caliban is once again described as a 'plain fish' (269). Yet Prospero insists that these men be identified as human and belonging to them all in a particular sense:

Two of these fellows you
Must know and own. This thing of darkness I
Acknowledge mine. (277-9)

Prospero has tried to keep the two worlds separate, the bestial and the godlike, both on the island and within himself, banishing the human to leave only the divine. In renouncing his magic he accepts that even this power cannot separate them. Moreover, by rejecting the magic that enabled him to transcend the everyday man, Prospero accepts his own vulnerability and mortality. He achieves this only at the price of drowning the knowledge that he was ever anything more.

At the end of the play, Prospero is treated as a wonder until they accept he is real and human.

Then he becomes another victim of the island's magical power:

Was Milan thrust from Milan, that his issue
Should become kings of Naples? O rejoice
Beyond a common joy! And set it down
With gold on lasting pillars: in one voyage
Did Claribel her husband find at Tunis,
And Ferdinand her brother found a wife
Where he himself was lost; Prospero his dukedom
In a poor isle; and all of us ourselves,

When no man was his own. (5.1.208-16)

Yet whilst Gonzalo assigns everything to a divine plan, the audience and at least three other characters partly know it was Prospero who acted the role of Providence.⁷⁷ It was chance that brought the ship near to the island but it was up to him to act upon this and to create the reconciliations, the alliance of his daughter and Ferdinand, and the trials that would supposedly lead to redemption. Yet Gonzalo rejects all human responsibility for the events of the play. Not only does he ignore the unregeneracy of Antonio and Sebastian but the unhappiness of Claribel is subsumed by the fairy tale courtship of Ferdinand and Miranda, a courtship orchestrated by Prospero. The two are literally charmed with each other (1.2.422-3). Moreover, the twelve long years that were Prospero's exile and the entirely human and political rationale behind it are rejected in favour of a larger picture in which Prospero benefits from exile. That the magus has manufactured his own salvation and that the loss of self-knowledge suffered by the three men of sin was his work, as their recovery was his, are details wholly lost on Gonzalo. He tells a romance in which men have been lost and found through the agency of Providence, the story of *Pericles* or *Cymbeline* rather than of *The Tempest*.

Yet it seems unlikely that Prospero will tell a different tale. The deferment of narrative is a common feature of the endings of Shakespeare's plays.⁷⁸ Although the characters may need more information about the plot, the privileged insights offered to the audience usually allow

⁷⁷ That other characters should contest Prospero's official story seems unlikely. Miranda and Ferdinand have remained conveniently silent throughout Alonso's questions, Gonzalo's false summary and Prospero's prevarications. Nor is their knowledge of his powers extensive, for example they have never seen Ariel, and Miranda has only a hazy grasp of the plot perhaps because of her charmed sleep. Caliban's claims for the Duke's sorcery are unlikely to be given much credence nor does it seem likely that he will return to Italy with them.

⁷⁸ See Barbara Hardy, *Shakespeare's Storytellers: Dramatic Narration* (London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen, 1997), chp 3, 72-90.

it to leave the theatre with a sense of narrative closure. Two important exceptions to this convention are late plays, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. In the former, Leontes expresses the wish of the majority of the audience:

Good Paulina,
Lead us from hence, where we may leisurely
Each one demand and answer to his part
Performed in this wide gap of time since first
We were dissevered. (5.3.152-6)

Yet the audience is not allowed to follow and put the most obvious question of where Hermione has been for the last sixteen years. In this case, the dramatist's refusal to explain seems to be dictated by his wish to preserve the atmosphere of mystery and awe created at the end. In *The Tempest* we know that Prospero is a magician and that the play's reconciliations and resurrections are the products of his art. For Prospero to reveal this to his stage audience, however, would be to destroy what he has achieved by the end of the play, namely his acceptance as one of them. Thus, in response to their demands for revelation, Prospero urges patience:

Do not infest your mind with beating on
The strangeness of this business. At picked leisure,
Which shall be shortly, single I'll resolve you,
Which to you shall seem probable, of every
These happened accidents; till when be cheerful,
And think of each thing well. (5.1.249-54)⁷⁹

I would suggest that Prospero's use of the word 'probable' here supports the idea that the magician will not reveal his magical potency. The definitions offered by the *OED* and cited as

⁷⁹ Compare Prospero's deliberately ambiguous promise with the Duke in *Measure for Measure* who will relate 'What's yet behind that's meet you all should know' (5.1.538). One might argue that the Duke's future authority will partly depend on his maintaining some of the mysterious insight associated with Providence that his theatricals at the end of the play have given him.

Shakespearean usages include (2a) 'Such as to approve or commend itself to the mind; worthy of acceptance or belief' and (3a) 'Having an appearance of truth; that may in view of present evidence be reasonably expected to happen, or to prove true; likely'.⁸⁰ Gonzalo is clearly ready to believe it was all the work of Providence whilst Alonso too expects the revelation of a divine hand. For Prospero to have orchestrated events will be far more difficult for them to believe than Gonzalo's version.

In *Utopia*, More criticises Hythloday for trying to force his ideas on other people and despairing when they had no effect:

there is a more civilized form of philosophy which knows the dramatic context, so to speak, tries to fit in with it, and plays an appropriate part in the current performance [...] If you can't completely eradicate wrong ideas, or deal with inveterate vices as effectively as you could wish, that's no reason for turning your back on public life altogether. You wouldn't abandon ship in a storm just because you couldn't control the winds.⁸¹

On the island, Prospero has raised the storm himself, fortified the ship and held the whole company of mariners in his power yet he has not been able to 'eradicate wrong ideas or deal with inveterate vices'. However, I have chosen to conclude with this quotation because of its surprising irrelevance to *The Tempest*. It seems clear to me that Prospero's ambitions on the island are not for the redemption of Caliban or the three men of sin, but are simply for revenge and his return to the civilised world. It is tempting to read Prospero as the failed humanist, politician, or philosopher, empowered by magic, who subsequently chooses to return to Milan and to put what he has learned into practice. Like Hythloday, he may have

⁸⁰ Stephen Orgel proposes the first *OED* definition of 'probable' here, that is, 'capable of being proven' and glosses the line as 'my explanation will convince you', *The Tempest* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 201, n. 249. I have suggested that these are not the same.

⁸¹ *Utopia*, 63.

found that the 'appropriate part in the current performance' is not seclusion on an uninhabited island but the cut and thrust of Renaissance Realpolitik. Yet Prospero is one of Shakespeare's most fascinating banished characters, if you like, the Hamlet of exiles. because he reveals the absolute solipsism of that state. Banishment renders Prospero more introspective than he was in Milan and even less concerned with the government or perfection of society. He uses his magic to transform the island to reflect his own suffering. He brings down his enemies so that Prospero himself may triumph, casting off the shame of exile by imposing it on them. The 'redemption' he proffers to the shipwrecked men is another spectacle of his own power and 'humanity'. His dramatisation of the state of exile exemplifies the way in which banishment is performed and transformed in English Renaissance literature and in life. To see Prospero as a seventeenth-century colonialist will illuminate multiple facets of his experience on the island. But until he is perceived as an exile, with all that this might imply for the English Renaissance audience, he will remain a strange, contradictory and elusive figure.

MARGINAL SHAKESPEARE: SOME CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps the central preoccupation of Shakespearean criticism towards the end of the twentieth century is to discover the marginal in Shakespeare. It is hard to imagine an oeuvre less marginalised than Shakespeare's yet despite the dramatist's vast iconic status which has often been appropriated to serve as a force of oppression itself, acting as a sign of white male imperialism, Shakespeare's texts are being reexamined for their insights into liminal culture. Post-structuralist analysis of history insisted that there was no single authoritative account but rather a multiplicity of histories. By de-prioritizing and deconstructing the master narrative, the histories of oppressed peoples would be revealed. Feminist and post-colonial studies of Shakespeare in particular have set about deconstructing the master-narrative of his texts and their critiques. How Shakespeare uses contemporary stereotypes and is thus implicated in the perpetuation or the repudiation of these prejudices, whether he occupies some complex middle ground; these are all fruitful areas of debate.

In *Shakespeare from the Margins*, Patricia Parker is concerned with the edification of reader and audience from the margins of Shakespeare's text. Her aim is to illuminate some of the darker corners of the canon in which the prejudices surrounding Moors, Jews, women and artisans are expressed in a rich and revealing context of associative anxieties and fears. Parker focuses on the wordplay through which these assumptions are expressed, for example the play on 'Moor' and 'more' regarding the pregnant black African in *The Merchant of Venice* and on 'Barbary', with its connotations of African barbarousness and female aggression in *Othello*. What is particularly

interesting about Parker's 'marginalism' is its extensiveness. She evinces surprise that there is 'so much in the plays attributed to Shakespeare that has been either marginalized or ignored ...'.¹ This sleight-of-hand about attribution suggests the relegation of the author himself and, indeed, Parker is eager to work outside the parameters of criticism which prioritizes on the basis of authorial intention, and psychological or structural coherence or logic. She points out that wordplay has occupied a liminal, perhaps stigmatized position in Shakespearean criticism since Dr Johnson deplored Shakespeare's fondness for the pun, or 'fatal Cleopatra'. This association of puns and women expresses the marginal fate to which both had been consigned, considered as decorative and/or trivial. But Parker is also concerned with 'apparently inconsequential lines' that editors largely ignore and directors tend to cut, and with plays that have been relegated to a secondary position in the canon (*The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*).² Parker even spares a thought for those who compile the dictionaries of Shakespearean puns and the concordances she relies on, 'often products of the unsung labor of marginalized scholars'.³

With the prevalence of this critical approach to Shakespeare and the revelation that there is much still to reveal in the oeuvre, it seems ironic that Shakespeare's representation of banishment should continue to be ignored. When I came to the subject I was surprised at how little attention banishment received within monographs on individual plays let alone collectively. The investigation of the margins has necessarily involved the shifting of emphasis away from

¹ *Shakespeare from the Margins: Language, Culture, Context* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 16.

² *Ibid.*, 6, 15-6.

³ *Ibid.*, 18.

character-based studies. Yet the drama of banishment is not merely a psychological effect (though compelling in itself) but reveals some fundamental assumptions about the individual's relationship with society and the contemporary nexus of politics, economics and culture from which the plays derived their meanings. The predominance of Falstaff, Lear, Richard II and so on may have assisted in the diminution of other 'secondary' or marginal elements in Shakespearean drama. The subjects of exile in his plays are by and large white European men who wielded considerable power and influence before their exile. Thus, their experience of alienation is profoundly different to the ordinary obscurity of such as the Bedlam beggar. Nevertheless, as the 'marginalist' school of criticism continues to illuminate and startle us with its insights, it seems time that Shakespeare's exiles were considered in relation to these discoveries. In the transformation of great man to exile, of hero to despised outcast, as well as in the more occluded narratives, Shakespeare's plays examine the foundations of power and identity in society. The proximity of greatness to the alien and barbarous is repeatedly dramatized and the distinctions between them revealed to be ideological rather than founded upon any 'objective reality', pragmatic rather than fundamental, temporary and even random.

The idea of pushing characters to the limit, of uncreating them, is one of the most fascinating and repeated functions of banishment in the canon. The self-assured, socially-glorified character finds himself (and, less frequently, herself) in a situation where his (or her) function in society is filled by another, where they are derided or misrecognised, where they know not what to call themselves. Shakespeare allows these characters to deconstruct before our eyes. Certainly, there is a metatheatrical aspect to this drama. The sides of the tiring house can be the structure that

holds the subject's identity safe, the walls that repulse him, or the walls of some other town. If the character wears different clothing then an audience may not recognise him. He may be perceptually transformed due to the emphasis placed upon clothing as status and identity at this time. If he cannot give his name, as in Coriolanus' case, or if he changes his name to something else, as Kent does, then the extent to which that dramatic character still exists is perhaps a moot point.

The fictionality of self is also suggested by the conventions of exile biography that we have considered in this study. The exile as self-dramatist draws upon a number of different texts in order to account for his exile and to redefine himself. Falstaff might have turned to those defences of his literary and historical predecessor, Oldcastle, which celebrated the Lollard as a Protestant martyr. Touchstone invokes Ovid to explain the tragedy of being a brilliant poet exiled among savages. Prospero employs the providential narrative of the colonial apologist. Yet this possibility of literary self-fashioning leads to more serious questions about the contingency of all human identity.

The banishment of Romeo dramatizes the dependence of the self upon civic definition. Romeo's horror at that word 'banished' is not hyperbolic or embarrassing if we perceive the extent to which he is a Veronese creation. He has never imagined a life outside the city and the lovers' tragedy is at least partly dependent on that fact. This explains why Shakespeare chose to ignore the possibility of elopement altogether though he allowed his comic exile, Valentine, to embrace it. Where national and familial boundaries wholly define the lovers, in *Richard II* and *Coriolanus*

the protagonists endure a more sophisticated identity crisis. Here, a particular state-sanctioned mythology or ideology is central to the definition of king and warrior. It is not that the exile has never imagined a world elsewhere, but that he has been encouraged to believe in himself as a microcosm. Banishment reveals his insufficiency and his irrelevance. If Richard can be banished and deposed then his absolute security as the divinely-appointed king begins to look like mythology and his poetic conceits appear insubstantial. According to his noble spectators, kingship is a role that Richard plays unconvincingly, rather than his essential being. Similarly, in *Coriolanus*, the man who could not be banished because he was the embodiment of Rome finds himself not merely superfluous but redefined as the city's enemy and anathema to Roman Republicanism, though he was one of those who fought to establish that system of government. When Coriolanus refuses to prostitute his integrity for the sake of political expediency, Rome rejects its warrior, denying that he is any longer the hero denoted by his name. For both Richard and Coriolanus, a system of beliefs that they believed in or adhered to absolutely, is revealed to be irrelevant and disposable. Divine right kingship and 'Romanitas' do not reflect the reality of fourteenth-century England or of Republican Rome in Shakespeare's plays.

Yet Shakespearean drama also celebrates the suspension of social identity and of ideological constrictions. In *As You Like It*, exile means relinquishing centrality for the liberation of the margins. Rosalind at least is permitted to forget the limitations of her gender and of her political position for the opposite privileges of masculinity. Whilst Rosalind's pleasure is won through her maleness, it is also taken at the expense of men. In the fantasy realm of Arden it is hinted that the woman, the shepherd and the youngest son might be more worthy of power and influence than

those who currently hold sway. Nevertheless, there are a number of safety clauses built in to the play to curb its recklessness. The pastoral interlude is by definition temporary and when the tyrannical usurper has been deposed, the court appears once more far superior to the pastoral society. At the play's close the exiles are reabsorbed into the old world and normal hierarchy is resumed as signified by the marriage and silence of the women and the aristocratic patronage of the shepherds. Though Shakespeare's exiles may enjoy their liberty, they long to play the roles society has fashioned for them. Despite the self-authorship that banishment encourages, their own creations do not outface those of society. Even Prospero, the Neoplatonic mage, desires nothing more than to return to being Duke of Milan though he has the universe to play with.

Similarly, in *King Lear*, banishment is an opportunity for saturnalian self-fashioning but again the characters all seek to return to society and the play encourages the expectation that they will. What makes *King Lear* so significant to the study of Shakespearean exile is the fact that these expectations are foiled, that the marginal is not so easily reassimilated into society, and more important, the play's lasting valorization of the margins. Edgar's wild, demented, and naked beggar appears to Lear as the thing itself, as something he may once have known about humanity but has long forgotten. Of course, Edgar is not really a beggar and his 'philosophy' is not native wit or understanding. The disgust registered by Kent in his encounter with the beggar is a salutary reminder of the prejudice Poor Tom inspires in a sane man. Yet Edgar's suffering remains an epiphany that is only available to Lear outside society. The King's desire to remain a prisoner alone with Cordelia reinforces this suspicion of political and social structures and of prevailing ideologies. Gonoril and Regan complain that Lear has 'ever but slenderly known

himself' (1.283-4). Yet the King's misleading self-image is deliberately created by those around him: 'They told me I was everything; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof' (20.102-3). Lear has fostered such assumptions about the divinity that hedges a king in order to rule but he has also been duped. If kings can be so thoroughly created and destroyed by their own rhetoric then we must suspect the operations of this power on other subjects. If Poor Tom represents the truth about mankind, then the distinctions between the king and the beggar are revealed to be the kind of institutionalised fictions that Lear casts off with his clothes and with his sanity.

To briefly summarise then, Shakespeare's representation of the exiled king, warrior, and heir does offer a kind of marginal percipience into the foundations of identity and power in his plays and in society. The fact that the great man *can* be banished is more a reflection of his dependence upon others than a truism about the caprices of Fortune (as represented in *A Mirror for Magistrates*). Furthermore, the fact that the exile may suffer from hunger, exposure, and contempt, like the lowest stratum of society, and that he is often indistinguishable from such elements further blurs the boundaries between the centre and the margins. This emphasis on perception is crucial. In *Henry IV* Parts One and Two, we saw that Henry V could only become king by casting off the marginal taint of Eastcheap and by banishing Falstaff. His performance as king depended upon the popular reception of it. Shakespeare's dramatization of exile approaches with varying degrees of tentativeness and conviction the idea that greatness is bestowed by others. It is not just that great men fall but that great men do not know themselves to be great – they need others to tell them. Yet those who are responsible for an individual's self-perception may be actively pushing a particular ideology or may be passively in thrall to one. Banishment

dramatizes the individual's dependence for a conception of himself upon a consensual discourse or system that serves the interests of society and not the individual. Shakespeare's plays do not seem to suggest that society should suffer for the hero's integrity but they do present the fictionality of identity and the trauma of its loss as tragedy.

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