Individual Identity in William Shakespeare's *Richard III* and *Macbeth*

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B.A., University of Northern British Columbia, 2006

Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfillment Of

The Requirements For The Degree Of

Master of Arts

In

English

The University of Northern British Columbia

April 2009

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-48786-0
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-48786-0

ABSTRACT

This thesis applies a cultural materialist approach to Renaissance conceptions of identity formation, inwardness, and transgression as presented in William Shakespeare's *Richard III* and *Macbeth.* The plays are examined in relation to relevant Renaissance political documents, using paradigms provided by cultural theorists such as Stephen Greenblatt, Jonathan Dollimore, Michel Foucault and Judith Butler. In both Richard's and Macbeth's usurpations of their respective crowns, neither character is ever fully extracted from the social, political, and cultural regimes that initiate their rebellious acts to begin with. Rhetoric of inwardness in the plays is a response to increased social regulation of appearance and conduct, but also allows each titular character to explore the limits of authority through transgression. These plays explore the ways in which the individual is politicized.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To those who have loved and supported me through this ordeal – you know who you are – your personal support warrants personal thanks; the value of your contributions is worth more than a brief mention in the acknowledgement page of a thesis that few people will ever read, and rightly so.

My graduate experience at UNBC has not been pleasant; it was a time of emotional and financial duress. In order to finish this degree, I elected not to fight the good fight, in turn compromising my principles for convenience. This is a mistake that I will *never* repeat but will forever regret. The best possible thing that could arise from this thesis would be if another potential grad student were to read this acknowledgement page, and elect to not pursue their education in the English department at UNBC. Too many exceptional students have fallen through the 'cracks' forged by a department void of integrity and ethics, painting a rather somber outlook for the future of academia.

INTRODUCTION

In 1860 Jacob Burckhardt wrote *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, declaring that Italian Renaissance culture fostered the birth of the individual and should be celebrated as such. Emphasis on man as "whole" (303) and "full" (303) as he conducts a "zealous and thorough study of himself" (303) has been one of the hallmark characteristics of essentialist humanism, or "secular essentialism" (Dollimore 174-75). Tony Davies affirms Burckhardt's opinion by stating that "Above all, Burckhardt's Renaissance was the epoch of the *individual* [...] as a free-standing self-determining person with an identity and a name that is not simply a marker of family, birthplace or occupation but is 'proper' – belonging to you alone" (16). However, Burckhardt's definition of both humanism and individuality is not representative of Renaissance culture in its entirety; for example, geographical, gender, and socio-economic differences have been shown to problematize Burckhardt's homogenizing views. Recent critical attention to the definitions and construction of both the self and individual have also challenged and contested Burckhardt's view, although he seems to remain credited for his "pioneering role in first raising these issues" (Kekewich 17).

Although Burckhardt's view that the Renaissance was the headwaters of individualism has played a significant role in Renaissance scholarship, it is a position that has more recently been challenged by the influx of new historicist and cultural materialist perspectives in literary studies, with a particular emphasis on Renaissance literature. Yet, both *Macbeth* and *Richard III* have strong performance histories and critical histories as

plays that value individualism as defined by Jacob Burckhardt, who believed that the Renaissance was the "epoch of the individual" (Davies 16) , assuming a type of self that exists *a priori* to cultural context. However, Shakespeare's plays invoke the tenuous definitions of 'self' and 'individual' that reflect the social and political changes of Renaissance England. Explorations of the New World introduced notions of cannibals and foreign culture that forced the people of England to reflect upon and reassess their concepts of selfhood in relation to otherness. The continual expansion of the English Renaissance's literature, society, and politics required a continual reflection on England as a nation and for people to subsequently reassess the 'individual self.' For many citizens of Renaissance England, as well as many authors of the time, the perpetually shifting cultural circumstances made something as simple as defining a word a complex and arduous process, and defining Renaissance concepts of the individual and the self is no easier for scholars today. As Peter Burke notes, scholars of both history and literature

> ...need to free [themselves] from the Western, Burckhardtian assumption that self-consciousness arose in a particular place, such as Italy, at a particular time, perhaps the fourteenth century. It is better to think in terms of a variety of categories of the person or conceptions of the self... in different categories, categories and conceptions which underlie a variety of styles of self-presentation or self-fashioning. (28)

Burke's assessment of the current critical field is a response to arguments that posit Renaissance Italy as the birthplace of the modern individual. For Burke, this assumption that the Renaissance was the headwaters of individualism grossly limits analyses of what he perceives to be a multifaceted and highly complicated cultural shift that constitutes the Renaissance; a cultural movement that is at once unique, captivating, and thoroughly contradictory transfers, at times through literature, to definitions of the self and the individual. It is necessary, as Roger Smith notes, to "ask what notion of the individual and

of the self there was in this age... rather than seek the origins or the invention of individuality or the self" (50).

For new historicists, the Renaissance self refers to a malleable self that developed between an older, medieval conceptualization of the term as primarily (although not exclusively) communally integrated, and an enlightenment self that is comprised of a contained, unified inner self. In between these two positions is a persistent questioning of the role of a single being within a social network, a question that is often answered with riddles, paradoxes and uncertainties. In Renaissance England the relationship between one and the community was shifting, but this change was not marked by a smooth, gradually increasing acknowledgement of a self-contained, autonomous individual being, but rather as a process of increasing self-awareness and an interrogation of the implications of the relationship between the self and the other. Renaissance culture encapsulated a proliferation of literary styles that included diaries, autobiographies, and memoirs, as well as other endeavours such as self-portraits and the medical development of autopsies (which literally means 'to see for oneself'), all of which contributed to the interrogation of the relationship between the individual and the world. These literary and artistic forms were once thought to support Burckhardt's definition of an autonomous individuality, but have more recently been used as evidence not only of self-reflection, but of self-reflection in relation to one's culture. For example, Burke notes that self-portraits were often hung on the walls of family homes, yet were placed amidst other self-portraitures in a room that was likely to be visited by guests. Thus, the use of self-portraiture does indicate an increased interest in the self, but primarily in relation to larger social networks.

The Early Modern self "began to liberate itself from the chains of custom, conformity and the Church, taking a fearless leap forward into self-discovery and self-fulfilment" (Porter 3). This leap was by no means the equivalent of the self-emancipation that would be celebrated in the Enlightenment, but was relevant enough to mark a notable change from medieval concepts of the self. Religious, literary, and political treatises all shifted the focus inward. Yet, as much as these new cultural movements shifted the focus of self-definition toward the interior, increased value was also placed on outward appearance. Conduct books governed appearances in a vast array of circumstances, including patronage, courtly behaviour, dancing, the solicitation of lovers, clothing, table manners, and generic greetings. Paradoxically, the increased emphasis on the exterior self instigated a greater curiosity about the interior self. Appearance was so strongly regulated that a reprieve was necessary, and sanctuary developed in the forms of privacy, inwardness and solitude. The internal self became a refuge from imposed social identities, and a means of coping with customary social life. This new discourse of interiority, however, was by no means a homogenized experience, and the diverse populace for which Shakespeare's plays were staged reflected the multitudinous personalities that were explored in Renaissance life and literature. As inwardness and privacy became increasingly relevant to daily life, the effects of such a philosophy were thereby interrogated and explored in literature and theatre.

Because the definition of the Renaissance individual has undergone a radical change in literary criticism, the concept of a socially constructed individual that results from political, cultural and social upheaval therefore has the potential to change the readings of virtually any Renaissance text, including Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Richard III*. In the tragedy *Macbeth*, the titular character is initially his king's finest soldier, but struggles to

distinguish between desire, madness, and prophecy, and the bloody and gruesome trail of murders that Macbeth leaves behind him ultimately ends with his own demise. In *Richard III*, the famous malcontent attempts to determine his place in society as he manipulates and murders his way to the throne. Rhetorically savvy and calculating, Richard struggles to define himself against a larger social order. *Macbeth* has often been cited as a play that cautions against ambition, whereas *Richard III* has similarly been evaluated as a cautionary tale against individualist pursuits. Both plays cite evidence of overarching providential discourse that subsequently positions each play as a cautionary tale against treason and rebellion. Yet each play has also experienced critical attention that heralds the emphasis on the individual and self-determination that each character tries to establish. In seeking to avoid the binary arguments that encompass these two types of readings of either play, many new historicists and cultural materialists have argued that the apparent contradiction is instead a product of cultural power dynamics, and the individual then becomes a socially constructed "site of struggle" (Sinfield, "Power" 259). For cultural materialist Jonathan Dollimore and new historicist Stephen Greenblatt, the definition of humanism as the projection of a unified, contained self onto social context is invalid because an 'essential self' *a priori* to social context does not exist. In his book *Radical Tragedy*, Jonathan Dollimore discusses the characterization of Renaissance individualism as a "phenomenon based on the emergence in that period of secular essentialism, itself coterminous with the demise of metaphysical essentialism" (174). He qualifies the use of the term 'individualism' by asserting that

> ...it seems more useful to talk not of the individualism of the period but its self-consciousness, especially its sense of the self as flexible, problematic, elusive, dislocated – and, of course, contradictory; simultaneously arrogant and masochistic, victim and agent, object and effect of power... [the

> individual is] no longer the agent of God or the supreme representative of man teleologically and externally located in the divine scheme, but an agent whose identity is dictated by the necessities of political intervention and the pressures of the contingent historical moment. (Dollimore 179)

Dollimore's notably cultural materialist approach emphasizes the placement of an individual within – and as a product of – a socio-political context, and this constructivist identity model in turn foregrounds the visible, external identity of characters. The individual is "problematic" (Dollimore 179) and "contradictory" (Dollimore 179) because, in the Renaissance, the individual is personal *and* public, an internal *and* external being that is "a manipulable, artful process" (Greenblatt 2). The Renaissance self is socially contingent even as the role of the individual within society is questioned. This disparate self is both an object and subject of power relations, and identities constructed within these power dynamics are also products of their socio-political contexts. These constructed selves that are embedded within power relations are inherently subversive within Jacobean tragedy, challenging the limits of both the individual and the authoritarian ideologies that produce and govern that individual. Burckhardt's assertion that the Renaissance individual may have *felt* free and independent of social constraints is challenged by an analysis of two of William Shakespeare's most notorious individuals (Macbeth and Richard III) indicates that the Renaissance subject is perceived as never fully extracted from social, political, and historical pressures. Moreover, those same characters invoke a discourse of interiority that is exploited by characters in Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre as the limits of the self and governing ideologies are contested. Although both Greenblatt and Dollimore are explicit in their position that the human is *de*-centered as a subject, the socio-political subjectivity that they propose still interrogates the role of a single person in society and the cultural implications of being an individual.

In line with Alan Sinfield's criticique of Renaissance literature, in which he advocates the idea that many of the works published in the period were highly political in nature, many scholars of Renaissance Literature are now noting the highly politicized nature of Shakespeare's works. The politicization of literature is a particularly interesting critical development for the way that it intersects with what is commonly understood to be Shakespeare's 'universalism,' or his alleged ability to appeal to timeless, core human values. Shakespeare's universal appeal is often perceived as the underlying reason for his adaptability and popularity across time and culture. This universalism is seen by humanist scholars as evidence that justifies essentialist readings of Shakespeare's plays because of the bard's seemingly perpetual interrogation of human potential. It is equally plausible, however, that the politicization and subversive tendencies that are embedded in Shakespeare's texts are also part of the reason for Shakespeare's broad appeal. Indeed, many of his plays often superficially adhere to a dominant orthodoxy of social order, but contain enough ambiguity to *simultaneously* be read as potentially subversive. The multifaceted readings that are permitted by Shakespeare's texts allow the plays to appeal to a variety of audience members. The ability to appeal to a diverse audience was particularly significant in Renaissance England, as the theatre crowds were seldom, if ever, aristocratically homogonous: "In a society where even aristocrats had to confirm their social identity by playing at being aristocratic, the theatre became a school for social advancement and the actor became the very type of self-fashioning" (Helgerson 174). It is conceivable that Shakespeare's universal appeal is a result of the potentially dominant *and* subversive readings that his plays offer. The ability to speak to the interests of a diverse audience

population is surely one the bard's most fascinating attributes, and accounts for the subversive potential of many of Shakespeare's plays.

Renaissance identity formation is inseparable from power dynamics. Hugh Grady suggests that "...the single most important theme in all of Shakespeare [is] the logic of power, a motif absolutely central to the tragedies and histories" (Grady, "Renewing" 280), and that many of Shakespeare's plays "are obsessed with issues of identity, the self, and subjectivity, but... situate these dynamics within a world of fully modern Machiavellian power dynamics" (Grady, "Renewing" 282). The power dynamics that imbued monarchic England utilized strategies of legitimization to order society hierarchically. Michel Foucault's discourse of power becomes applicable for the way that subjects are posited within ideological systems of power, as subjects rather than objects of a fluid power dynamic. For Foucault, power is negotiated rather than fixed: "power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society" (93). Hugh Grady notes that Foucault's idea concerning discursive formations "...concentrates on the close connections of ideas with the institutions and social structures which both embody and animate them" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 28).

Institutional power structures play a key role in the formation of Richard and Macbeth's identities, as each character strives to place himself on the top stratum of the hierarchy. As Chapter I will discuss, both Richard and Macbeth revel in their ambition even as their identities and their selves are formed by the hegemonic power structures that they attempt to challenge. Richard, as one of "Shakespeare's foxes," is a "[personification] of power" (Grady, "Renewing" 281), and both he and Macbeth appropriate and then subvert

preconceived behavioural codes as a means of fashioning their own identities. The power that both Richard and Macbeth seek to negotiate decentres them as subjects within authoritarian regimes. Each character seeks to distance or remove himself from the dominant orthodoxy, and in doing so explores notions of counter-cultural identity and the limits of authority.

As much as the Renaissance self is a product of the historical moment, there is also a strong fascination with the relationship between the interior and the exterior. In terms of theatrical production, this distinction is critical because it allows subjects to negotiate a type of agency, albeit usually a subaltern one. The social and political pressures to appear a certain way, such as those outlined by in behavioural treatises by Baldassare Castiglione and John Peacham, were so detailed and exact that the image of the ideal courtier becomes both an ideal means of maintaining the dominant order and its own method of subversion. The result is a cultural vicissitude, and Renaissance culture was gradually but increasingly aware of the value of the private even though the importance of the public remained undeniable; the myth that the two were entirely separate is deconstructed. For Richard and Macbeth, the discrepancy between inward and outward, private and public, allows each character to manipulate social circumstances to his advantage and eventually usurp the throne. Relying heavily on Greenblatt's model of self-fashioning, Chapter II discusses the relationship between malleable identities, epistemology, and absolute monarchy in *Richard III* and *Macbeth.*

As part of this larger critical dialogue that acknowledges the increasing focus on the culturally embedded subject in Renaissance studies, Claire McManus notes that "the creation of identity [...] is bound up with the circulation of power through society and its

negotiation by those who have it [...] and by those upon whom it is imposed" (212-13). The idea of a negotiated power relationship, as McManus has suggested, is fundamentally juxtaposed with the Renaissance conceptions of power as constituted by Divine Right of Kings and monarchic rule. Whereas Renaissance power dynamics were propagated as impermeably hierarchical, and thereby justifying monarchy, both *Richard III* and *Macbeth* suggest just how unstable that conceptualization of power and social order was by implying that power is actually a set of fluid relations between people on both sides of a hegemonic power dynamic. The idea that the king was a monarch and "not a subject" (Kastan 149) is challenged, if not subverted (which will be addressed in Chapter III). Power relationships are negotiated and constantly in flux, and the fashionable Renaissance self is well equipped to form identities at the behest of changing social norms. Chapter III discusses how in *Macbeth* and *Richard III* the dominant order that was so frequently propagated in the Renaissance was challenged, and the individual became a "site of struggle" (Sinfield, "Power" 259). The Renaissance self, constructed from social, political, and cultural pressures, can only ever be as homogonous as the context from which it is formed, and thus Dollimore's framework of "limitless men" and transgression is used to show how power dynamics operate in each play, and how transgressive desire is an essential tool for legitimizing and undermining authority.

CHAPTER I:

THE DECENTERED SUBJECT in *Richard III* and *Macbeth*

> "You can't walk alone. Many have given the illusion, but none have really walked alone. Man is not made that way. Each man is bedded in his people, their history, their culture, and their values."
>
> ~Peter Abrahams~

> "Nothing is more intimate to our selves than this mysterious I who is the underlying subject of our acts and the term beyond which one cannot go... "I" and "Me", and that is all. But what a mystery!"
>
> ~Elias Schwartz~

Leaving behind secular humanist scholarship of the Renaissance, while maintaining an interest in the foregrounding of human potential, evinces some recurring themes in Renaissance literature directly bearing on the topic of selfhood. In several Renaissance plays, characters often attempt to distinguish between the private and public, or interiority and exteriority. While liberal humanists interpret the interior as the locus of an authentic, true self, a materialist perceives the self as a product of socio-political relations. In addition to the cultural production of the self, there is also a plethora of literary works that address a sense of inwardness. Pervading Early Modern literature is a fixation with the private sphere, interiority, and rhetoric of inwardness, also product of cultural discourse. The notion of a private self in both *Richard III* and *Macbeth* serves to keep each titular character firmly

within a socio-political nexus rather than exempting him from it. The private self perpetuates not an authentic, interior identity, but instead an identity that is derived from social conventions and is thus wholly external. As Jonathan Dollimore notes, "Jacobean tragedy inscribes social process in – or rather as – subjective identity" (*Radical* 19). Despite their varying attempts at extraditing themselves from social allegiances, both Richard III and Macbeth cannot shake their subjective identities that keep them stationed within social networks.

While one's initial representations of a privatization of thoughts and feelings via a discourse of inwardness serve to remove or distance a character from a political agenda, these representations in fact reinforces that subjects are perpetually grounded in culture and never fully removed or extracted from the cultural circumstances that bring forth the agenda to begin with. Hugh Grady outlines this paradox: "The solution to the sad necessities of the world, in short, is privacy... Montaigne produced the public-private split endemic to the societies of modernity – a split that is ideological, to the extent that it justifies the cruel necessities of power; utopian and critical in that it posits and attempts to live out an ideal which the all-too-real world will not fully allow" (*Shakespeare* 114). The private/public distinction serves to reconstitute individualism within a social network, showing that the concept of a 'private self' is essentially an illusion that is infused by cultural ideologies and power dynamics.

The very cultural circumstance of Renaissance England fostered a need for a sense of privacy or interiority. Obsessed with social order and its maintenance, Renaissance England attempted to sustain a hierarchical ordering of society by strictly discouraging rebellion in all its forms. In "An Homily Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion," the necessity of

"obedience to God their King" prevents subjects from turning into Lucifer's earthly equivalent (1). Cranmer asserts that Lucifer rebelled against God, and therefore depicts rebellion as "both the first and the greatest, and the very foot of all other sinnes, and the first and principall cause, both of all worldly and bodily miseries, sorrowes, diseases, sickenesses, and deathes, and which is infinitely worse then all these, as is said, the very cause of death and damnation eternall also" (2). The work reiterates the value of hierarchy and obedience to a hierarchy ordained by God as a means of suppressing cultural anxieties about rebellion and disobedience. The frequent reiteration of the "Homilies" in church suggests that the repeated didacticisms were employed as a response to cultural anxieties of social disorder. To make attempts at social control even more effective, the violation of hierarchical order was figured as equivalent to an offence against God himself, because God dictates behaviour and social place. Reinforcing the postulate of Divine Right of Kings, which asserts that kings are appointed by God to rule their subjects, the Homilies served as an attempt to maintain order against potential subversion and assuage fears of social disintegration.

As strictures governing behaviour and decorum increased during the Renaissance, religious officials increasingly scrutinized the distinction between the private and the public. Treason was considered not only as a physical act of betrayal against the monarch, but an intellectual and emotional one as well. Kings and queens had to concern themselves not only with the very probable physical threats of assassination, but also the potential for subversive thoughts that had not yet been enacted. Indeed, the epistemology of treason creates a great social anxiety "...about who and what might betray half-secret allegiances" (Maus 18). Here, the problem lies in identifying and determining treasonous thought which

creates further epistemological crises. For example, Sir Thomas More, a devout Catholic, was adamant about persecuting heretics and he opposed the increasing religious fragmentation that started with Martin Luther. Determining the faithfulness of the alleged heretics is problematized by the separation of interior and exterior. With the brutality of punishments increasing in proportion to the fear of rebellion, any thoughts that ran contrary to dominant order had to remain hidden from those in a position of authority. Secret thoughts and hidden desires were at once the sanctuary of the people and the bane of the monarchy, for in the privacy of one's mind the "...motives best hidden from public view could be discreetly avowed" (Ariès 62). This is but a brief example of the social implications of a discourse of inwardness. Just as the self is culturally contingent, so are notions of privacy. The social and political circumstances regulating obedience procure the need for a private sphere, and thoughts that require the refuge of privacy are often those that challenge the dominant order. In this way, the private is both created by and perpetuated by a strict public discourse. Thus, the necessity of an interior space presupposes an act of rebellion.[1]

Although cultural production of interiority will be discussed in greater detail later on, for now it is necessary to establish both Richard III and Macbeth as dislocated or decentred subjects entrenched in ideologies of power. Their public ambitions (insofar as the monarchic goal of each character is essentially a public one) necessitate a use of a private space, which therefore fragments their identities. Both Richard III and Macbeth's identities collapse into socially orchestrated ones even as an allegedly private and interior space is employed. As Timothy Reiss notes, "Montaigne's private person could never be a firm, stable unit – let alone actively impose itself" (465). Neither character is ever fully alone

onstage, as evidenced by the use of asides and soliloquies which are always witnessed by an audience; indeed, plays were written *for* diverse audiences.

Dramatic form grants latitude for incorporating the use of privacy. Theatrical productions rely not only on the use of pronouns, but also on soliloquies and asides, which, incidentally, is often where the use of "I" is most prevalent, and that solicit audience complicity. Dramatic production allows for the effective interrogation of the private space as a cultural product, often depicted as internal thoughts or feelings that are experienced by the characters in solitude. Although soliloquies and asides are often incorporated into plays as a means of expressing the interior 'essence' of a character, the fact that these structures are presented within a play designed for performance creates a paradox. The use of private space and a discourse of interiority can only be authentic if the character alone is privy to them. The *exposure* of private thoughts to the audience is necessary in order to explicate the role of inwardness as a cultural product, but that exposure simultaneously undermines the notion of privacy and solitude. Soliloquies are, as P.H. Parry notes, "internal monologues that audiences are by convention privileged to overhear" (12). By virtue of performance, interiority and the private sphere are then depicted as visible. Similarly, as I will demonstrate later in this chapter, the subjective "I" used by both Richard of Gloucester and Macbeth is always utilized and constructed in relation to the collective "we." Here, the self is always articulated in relation to a broader social context, again indicating that a character cannot exist outside of culture.

William Shakespeare's historical play *Richard III* opens with the title character, Richard of Gloucester, entering the stage alone. This stage direction is symbolic of Richard's desire to isolate himself; he seeks to dissociate himself from social context.

Richard initially uses the collective term "our" (1.1.1) to detail the recent successes of the house of York; at line thirteen he begins to use the word "I" (1.1.13) instead in an attempt to single himself out. Richard views himself as "rudely stamped" (1.1.16) and "cheated of feature by dissembling nature / Deformed, unfinished, sent before [his] time" (1.1.19-20). Similarly, Elias Schwartz is concise, yet extreme, in his belief that because "men are corporeal, each man is an individual, embodying human nature in this particular flesh" (40). For Schwartz, individuality is physically constituted, whereas being a person is dependent on the "infinitely receding depths of the self" (40). Richard's fixation with his visibly physical differences, then, serves as a type of self-ostracization. If Richard looks different, he must be different. Richard also attempts to socially isolate himself through his inability to "prove a lover" (1.1.28). Love, as Katherine Eisaman Maus depicts it, is "a relationship [that] ... makes men similar to one another and makes them seek one another out" (48). Richard uses love and amorous conventions to show his malicious intentions rather than as an indicator of social integration: "I am determinèd to prove a villain" (1.1.30). Within the first thirty lines of the opening act, Richard attempts to isolate himself from various forms of social control: family, spouse, and subject. Indeed, at the end of *Henry VI Part III*, Richard of Gloucester famously asserts: "I had no father... / I have no brother/ .../ I am myself alone" (5.7.80-84). Richard is very clear in his attempts to extract himself from social allegiances; he denies any familial connection to both father and brother, and in his treasonous pursuit of the crown negates any form of social control over him as a subject. Indeed, "Richard's difference from other men creates and is constituted by an absolute barrier between self and others" (Maus 48). In his attempts to establish himself as isolated

and autonomous, Richard neglects the fact that he is defining himself in relation to social normativity:

> The natural form and order of marriage and birth, then, represent for Richard what he is denied, what he desires, and what he must violate. His actions make a mockery of the power and sanctity of these rites, but no sooner has he emptied them of all cultural force, turned them inside out, than he tries to crawl back inside them himself. (Carroll 166)

Richard strives to remove himself from political constrictions that sustain a monarchical form of social order, yet subsequently attempts to resituate himself within the very hierarchy that he feels displaced him from his own self to begin with. Thus, Richard's attempts at self-ostracization disintegrate back into the social. Maus insists that

> Richard's attempts to define a 'self' without reference to external allegiances of any kind turn into tautologies and contradictions.... The more he struggles to constitute an inwardness by excluding alternative, 'relational' modes of identity, the more he finds himself unwillingly entangled in a relational mode. (53)

Maus's assessment of Richard's inability to self-articulate depicts Richard as a decentred subject bound by external forces and power ideologies. W. B. Worthen elaborates on this account by defining the "theatrical utterance" as an instance of speech in which "the motives of the agent [...] are either insincere or are not directly embodied in subsequent conduct; literary utterance, to be fair, can also be hollow in this sense if 'introduced in a poem, or spoken in a soliloquy'" (4). Richard's soliloquies, which are moments of literary utterance when read or theatrical utterance when they are performed, present him as a deceitful character. Richard's attempts at social isolation are expressed in asides and soliloquies; he then masks his desires when he is in public. The soliloquies and asides expose Richard's duplicitous nature, indicating that interiority must be performed as distinct from exteriority in order to appear at all.

Richard's social alienation not only exploits the inconsistencies of hierarchical order, but also the extent to which a subject is embedded within power ideologies. Richard's attempts to dissociate himself from hierarchical regimes do not extract him from them, but rather resituates himself within them. In his article "Desacralization and Succession in *Richard III*," William C. Carroll states that "[belief] in the power of the ordering form of succession is unchallenged by Richard, [and] indeed his movement toward the crown depends on it" (167). According to Carroll, Richard honours the line of succession that precedes him, acknowledging the right that Clarence and Edward's son have to the crown (167). Richard "accepts his place in this hierarchy even as he works to undermine hierarchy in general" (Carroll 167). Carroll is correct in his assertion that Richard values that which he seeks to destabilize; Richard wants a different place in a pre-existing hierarchical order. Carroll notes that "'lineal glory' [...] is both the principle which denies [him] the crown and so must be annihilated, and the principle which will define [him] and so is constantly desired" (Carroll 168). Rather than moving immediately to the head of state, Richard instead must dispose those legitimately next in line for the crown. Here, Richard's attempts at self-determination through self-imposed ostracization are still a function of ideology. Richard's own thought process and personal agendas are both a product of and shaped by his position in society and the culture that maintains a hierarchical taxonomy of citizens. By honouring the line of succession rather than challenging it, he does not remove himself from the politic regime so much as he expedites the existing process. Richard acknowledges the process of succession even as he seeks to change his place within the power ideology. Socially isolating himself does not expose the *a priori* individual so much as expose the individual as perpetually ingrained in social order.

Similarly, the use of asides in *Macbeth* is also significant in the dismantling of the illusion that a character onstage is ever alone or exempt from a socio-political context. *Macbeth* begins by showing the intermingling of Macbeth's life with those of the three witches as the witches very mysteriously mention that they are seeking Macbeth. The opening scene establishes an ambiguous connection between Macbeth and larger cosmic circumstances. A brief look at act one, scene two seems necessary for the way in which it establishes Macbeth after he is mentioned by the witches but before he meets them. Macbeth does not appear in this scene at all, and he is again introduced to the audience by name only. Here, the captain tells of "brave Macbeth – well he deserves that name" (1.2.16) who "Disdain[ed] Fortune" (1.2.17) when "he unseamed [the enemy] from the nave to th' chops, / And fixed his head upon our battlements" (1.2.22-23). Macbeth is described first by the captain and then Duncan as a war hero who helps Scotland defend itself against a Norwegian invasion. Macbeth is presented to the audience in the first scene by way of his association with the witches (however vague that association may be), and also via his association with his captain and allegiance to his king and country. Indeed, "noble Macbeth hath won" (1.2.68) much for his kinsmen, and is very much integrated into the community; Macbeth is portrayed as deeply embedded in social relations.

In the following scene, after the witches' prophecy and Ross's announcement that Macbeth is now the Thane of Cawdor, Macbeth states: "The Thane of Cawdor lives; why do you dress me in borrowed robes?" (1.3.108-109). Macbeth rejects the imposition of what he perceives to be a stolen or "borrowed" (1.3.108) identity; the announcement violates Macbeth's understanding of his position within the world, which he perceives as fixed. The moment after he realizes that the Thane of Cawdor is dead, Macbeth begins to speak in

asides and attempts to answer Banquo's earlier inquiry about why Macbeth would "start, and seem to fear / Things that do sound so fair" (1.3.51-52). It is during these asides that Macbeth reveals his tenuous hope in the veracity of the witches' prophecy; now that he is "Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor: / The greatest is behind" (1.3.117-18). The newly appointed Thane of Cawdor reveals his subsequent obsession with "murder" (1.3.140) in order to complete the tripartite prophecy and become king as well. The thought of murdering Duncan "[s]hakes so his single state of man, that function / Is smothered in surmise, and nothing is / But what is not" (1.3.141-43). At this time, Macbeth "is not" (1.3.43) king, and thus he fixates on making that particular illusion a reality. In order to make that transition, Macbeth's thoughts and words must be brought into action.

Macbeth's ambitions are disclosed to the audience via the use of asides, just as the intentions and private thoughts of characters in *Richard III* were revealed. Macbeth soon asks: "Let not light see my black and deep desires, / The eye wink at the hand – yet let that be / Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see" (1.4.52-54). Macbeth's "deep desires" (1.4.52) are located within him, concealed, ideally, from the "light" (1.4.52). In asking "the eye [to] wink at the hand" (1.4.53) Macbeth seeks to manipulate social vision in order to conceal his traitorous deeds, yet also wants to make the eye afraid of what the hand can do. In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault articulates that visibility, concealment, and surveillance are significant components of a larger relationship between power and knowledge. Those who are watched are positioned within a power dynamic secured by those who possess knowledge and control the gaze through surveillance. He notes that eyes "must see without being seen; using techniques of subjection and methods of exploitation, an obscure art of light and the visible was secretly preparing a new knowledge of man"

(Foucault *Discipline* 171). If light and visibility are representative of power dynamics, then Macbeth's attempt to "let not light see [his] black and deep desires" suggests that he is trying to hide or remove himself from the power dynamic and those who are authorized to exploit that power dynamic. Here, Macbeth's attempts at removing himself from power ideologies are equivalent to Richard's attempts at self-imposed ostracization. Macbeth transgresses further by wanting the eye to fear what it sees, which symbolically inverts the power dynamic. *What* is seen becomes just as important as *who* does the seeing. The ambiguity of who is behind the "eye wink" (1.4.53) undermines the ability to definitively state who is in power, and hints at both Foucault's negotiated power dynamic and a notion of dislocated selfhood. What the eye fears is, in a sense, what it cannot clearly see, blurring the distinction between subject and object. Again, as with *Richard III*, the aside undermines Macbeth's attempt to manipulate the hierarchical power structure. In his desire to conceal his thoughts from Banquo and other characters, he emphasizes the power of spectatorship that the audience possesses[2]. "The fact that the Machiavel's machinations are *witnessed*," says Maus, "guarantees both our [the audience's] delight and his undoing" (54), allowing Machiavels "both audience and scope for action" (Maus 54). The metadramatic effect of witnessing the inner thoughts of stage Machiavels, like Richard, places the audience in a privileged position, reinforcing Machiavellian strategies as part of both a dramatic and metadramatic social nexus.

In *Richard III*, the opening soliloquy creates a sense of complicity between the audience and Richard. The audience alone is privy to the thoughts he seeks to conceal from other characters within the play. Michael E. Mooney comments: "...it is important to stress that Richard remains in direct contact with the spectators throughout act one, frequently

addressing them by means of the soliloquy and the aside…[sealing] the bond forged between him and the spectators in his opening soliloquy" (152). In terms of Richard's attempts at self-segregation, the use of the opening soliloquy and asides is important because instead of functioning as an insight into Richard's private thoughts, the opening lines instead posit *all* lines, even those spoken 'alone' on stage, as subject to witness. What Burckhardt might hail as an act that represents essentialist humanism functioning in Jacobean drama is instead a subtle acknowledgement of the audience as witness by virtue of seeing and hearing Richard's personal acts and thoughts. The "bond forged between him and the spectators" (Mooney 152) not only aligns the audience with Richard, but also resituates Richard's inwardness within a social or communal setting. Richard and Macbeth are both paradoxically appealing to the audience. Elias Schwartz notes that "to feel pity and fear for the protagonist, the spectator must sympathize with, or identify himself with, the protagonist" (45). Although the Thane of Cawdor is seldom viewed as pitiable, audiences still tend to "sympathize with Macbeth" (Schwartz 46). The audience is in a suspended position of both being involved in and segregated from the action of the play; the play exists and is performed presupposing the presence of the audience, but that audience is not fully involved in the action of the play. Furthermore, both *Macbeth* and *Richard III* incorporate on-stage audiences in several scenes, indicating the play's awareness of its own theatricality. Examples include the servants who are on stage as Macbeth prepares for the banquet (which will be explored in greater detail shortly), or the various 'others' that are onstage with Richard in act 3 scene 1; these characters are specifically mentioned as being on stage, and are therefore visible to the audience, yet do not partake in the main plot. The audience is "a darkened throng of individualized subjects disciplined by/into the illusion of community…

to epitomize dramatic theatre itself" (Worthen 7). This dramatic theatricality can be attributed to the "authorized omniscience" that the audience is affiliated with by virtue of physical positioning during a play and textual construction. The audience's position is metatheatrical, which creates a sense of distance between the events of them and the events of the play. The omniscience that is awarded to the audience is, in a sense, permitted by text, in so far as Shakespeare has predetermined what will or will not be shown to the audience. So, a paradox is created: the audience is directed to believe in their own omniscience through theatrical practices (asides, soliloquies, etc.) that thereby deconstruct omniscience and privacy as dramatic illusions. The metatheatrical omniscient fantasy is both created and destroyed by theatricality itself.

In *Macbeth*, the use of soliloquies is both extensive, with seven in total throughout the play, and significant because they are used to emphasize the self as a site of cultural struggle and signification. Whereas Richard of Gloucester is presented as wanting to extract himself from society from the very beginning of *Richard III* (the play opens with a soliloquy), Macbeth does not speak alone until act one, scene seven. Even then, he is not described as being onstage alone, but rather with varying types of servants spread across the stage. No mention is made of the servants overhearing Macbeth's rant, nor are they ever mentioned again in the scene. The servants are at once present and absent as the unseen symbols of culture, power, and hierarchy of the monarch. Neither Macbeth nor Lady Macbeth acknowledges the presence of the servants in the scene, and yet the servants are there. Macbeth acts as if he is alone even when servants would be plainly in the view of the audience, suggesting once more that Macbeth's private thoughts are always visible in some way. Yet, Macbeth does not address or acknowledge the presence of the servants. His

solitary behaviour is contradicted by the visible social scene that he functions within. It is no coincidence, then, that this is when Macbeth discusses his societal position as Duncan's "host" (1.7.14), "kinsman, and his subject" (1.7.13), which binds Macbeth in a "double trust" (1.7.12). Macbeth continues, elucidating how an act of treason against Duncan, whose "virtues / Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued against / The deep damnation of his taking-off" (1.7.18-20), is akin to an act against God (invoking once more the Divine Right of Kings). Even as Macbeth plots the murder of the man that he is affiliated with as a (pseudo) family member, subject, and friend, Macbeth's strategies are still formed within the context of the dominant regime. The ways in which Macbeth's allegiance is deployed influence both his decision to kill Duncan and usurp the throne, and the method that he devises to do so. In an unusual fashion, Macbeth's acknowledgement that Duncan must be killed in order for the 'next in line' to take his place is analogous to Richard's homage to the legitimacy of succession. Macbeth still recognizes and respects the place that Duncan holds within society. The more Macbeth accedes to the power Duncan wields, the less confident Macbeth becomes in his treasonous plans.

The significance of the servants in *Macbeth* shows that seemingly 'minor' characters often offer audiences and readers a different perspective on the dramatic events. The secondary characters in question are commonly distanced from the corruption within the play, and therefore the views that they offer tend to be associated with a sense of veracity. In *Richard III,* the Scrivener appears in act three, scene six, and makes some interesting observations about Richard:

> Why, who's so gross
> That cannot see this palpable device?
> Yet who's so bold but says he sees it not?
> Bad is the world, and all will come to naught,

When such bad dealing must be seen in thought. (3.6.10-14)

The scrivener is on stage alone, which, as with Richard, functions as a form of dramatic irony for audience members in so far as the audience is aware of Richard's corruption, and it now knows that the scrivener can enter the corrupt political world within the play (albeit as a type of *platea* figure) and recognize that same corruption, even if it is only "seen in thought" (3.6.14). He asks two questions as if the answers are obvious, yet these very questions touch on the paradox of the issue: the relationship between a thought and its visual manifestations is malleable, which in turn cultivates an epistemological crisis. Although knowledge is visibly constructed, the emphasis that is placed on appearance is subverted by a discourse of interiority. If, as the scrivener implies, to see is to know, then dealing with that which cannot be seen, such as thoughts, seems to suggest that intent is unknowable to other characters within the play. Yet, this epistemological crisis is further underscored by the fact that the scrivener and the audience members themselves are in fact privy to Richard's thoughts. The scrivener sees them as "palpable" (3.6.11), and the audience has the benefit of witnessing asides and soliloquies.

The Scrivener is posited as a source of untainted or objective 'truth' and as such he is exempt from the corruption of Richard's political agenda. Thus, when the Scrivener postulates that "all will come to naught, / When such bad dealing must be seen in thought" (3.6.13-14), his statements serve as somewhat of a prophecy as well as an insight into the obscured nature of the corruption. The Scrivener elucidates the epistemological disquiet that Hastings mentions in act two, scene three. In reference to Catesby's report that the "state" (3.2.35) believes Richard should "wear the garland" (3.2.38), Hastings comments: "I'll have this crown of mine cut from my shoulders / Ere I will see the crown so foul misplaced. / But

canst thou guess that he doth aim at it?" (3.2.41-3). Hastings can only "guess" (3.2.43) Richard's "aim" (3.2.43), yet is correct in his assertion that crowning Richard king would be a crown "foul misplaced" (3.2.42).

Similarly, the Old Man in *Macbeth* is removed from Macbeth's corrupt political doings. The Old Man describes the action within the play as "hours dreadful and things strange" (2.4.3), and "unnatural, / Even like the deed that's done" (2.4.10). He continues, noting the disruption of nature in recent times. For example: "A falcon tow'ring in her pride of place / Was by a mousing owl hawked at, and killed" (2.4.12-13). The audience's previous knowledge of Macbeth's intentions, both through the use of asides and his conversations with Lady Macbeth, is now disclosed via the peripheral character of the Old Man. In this regard, the Old Man operates as the Scrivener does. As an 'external' character, the opinion of the Old Man is distanced from corruption, and validates within the play what the audience already suspects. The other character in the scene, Ross, comments that the Old Man "seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act, / Threatens his bloody stage" (2.4.5-6). Ross compliments the Old Man's assertion that nature is amiss by detailing the "thing most strange" (2.4.14) that happened with Duncan's horses: "Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race, / Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, / Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would / Make war with mankind" (2.4.15-18). In the stable, the horses, iconographic for passion, break from their former obedient nature and leave their stalls. Their disobedience is a confrontation with mankind, and reflects the larger act of disobedience being committed by Macbeth, whose own passions have recently been brought to action. Macbeth's thoughts are externalized when he kills Duncan, but the audience knew well before then that Macbeth was having treasonous thoughts. While Macbeth believes

that he is contemplating treason in private (or, occasionally, with Lady Macbeth), his thoughts are always viewed by the audience, and inevitably made public. Just as the subject is always already social, so are Macbeth's thoughts.

Additionally, in act one, scene three of *Richard III*, Queen Margaret enters "at a distance" (1.3.110), and speaks disparagingly about Richard in asides until she "can no longer hold [herself] patient" (1.3.157). Margaret's use of asides functions in much the same way that Richard's soliloquies do. Margaret calls Richard a "devil" (1.3.118), "murd'rous villain" (1.3.134) and "cacodemon" (1.3.144) explaining how Richard "slewest [her] husband Henry in the Tower, / And Edward, [her] poor son, and Tewkesbury" (1.3.119-20). Richard had previously disclosed to the audience via soliloquies that he was, in fact, corrupt. Margaret's assertions support Richard's boasts about his villainy. Margaret's entering "at a distance" (1.3.110) aligns her subjectively with the audience, and when she speaks openly to the other characters on stage, she, unlike Richard, reiterates the same sentiments she expresses in the asides. The effect is twofold. Firstly, this shows the audience that Margaret is authentic where Richard is duplicitous, a theme which will be explored further in the following chapter. Secondly, it not only confirms Richard's status as "subtle, false, and treacherous" (1.1.37), but the interspersing of Margaret's asides also allows the audience to see exactly how Richard fashions his own identity. Every one of Margaret's asides in act one, scene three is preceded by one of Richard's self-fashioning statements. While Richard speaks to the Queen, Margaret uses asides to comment on Richard's statements:

> RICHARD (to the Queen):
> What, threat you me with telling of the King?
> Tell him and spare not. Look what I have said
> I will avouch in presence of the King.

I dare adventure to be sent to th'Tower.

MARGARET [aside]:

Out, devil, I remember them too well.
Thou slewest my husband Henry in the Tower,
And Edward, my poor son, at Tewkesbury.

RICHARD (to the Queen):

Ere you were Queen, yea, or your husband King,
I was a pack-horse in his great affairs,
A weeder-out of his proud adversaries,
A liberal rewarder of his friends.
To royalize his blood, I spilt my own.

MARGARET [aside]:

Yea, and much better blood than his or thine.

The play visually appears to be a dialogue between the two, but instead it is a dialogue between Margaret and the audience on one hand, and Richard and the Queen on the other. Richard's duplicity is exposed to the audience through Margaret, another minor character similar to the Scrivener, although Margaret has more lines. Additionally, while Richard treats his treasonous plans as secret and hidden, the audience is aware that Margaret has access to Richard's past actions, which she believes are congruent with his current inner thoughts. Once again, Richard's inwardness is anchored within a broader social context. His thoughts are visible to both the audience and Margaret; both can *see* Richard's interiority in his external actions. That is, Richard's interior is visible for all to see via his actions.

Inwardness is addressed again in act three, when Buckingham asks: "Who knows the Lord Protector's mind herein? / Who is most inward with the noble Duke?" (3.4.7-8). The use of questions here instead of statements addresses the audience as much as any particular character. This scene occurs in act three, just as Richard is quickly accruing power and influence, which in turn spurs the urgency of Buckingham's questions. Buckingham also implies that Richard's "mind herein" (3.4.7) is an integral facet of

Richard's identity, giving a glimpse into Buckingham's intuitive nature and speaking to a larger discourse of inwardness by implying that those who know Richard are "inward" (3.4.8) with him. The bishop replies: "Why you, my lord. / Methinks that you should soonest know his mind" (3.4.9-10). The bishop implies not only that Richard's thoughts *are* who Richard is, but that those thoughts are also knowable.

This scene plays to the larger crisis of epistemology that accompanies discussions of interiority (which will be explored in further detail in the following chapter). For now, it is important to note that both Buckingham and the Bishop believe that knowing Richard is dependent on having access to his heart, mind, and/or soul. Characters fear what the audience already knows: that Richard's intentions lie within and are potentially unknowable to those around him. Maus describes the epistemological equivocation of the play as "the theoretical separability of the inside from the outside [that] means that the equivalence can never be made with any certainty" (51). Additionally, Maus notes that the "possibility of some secret motive, some unexposed residue can never be wholly discounted, even when the gesture of self-revelation seems most generous and complete" (7). The ability to know who Richard is is tenuous at best. Buckingham declares that "We know each other's faces; / But for our hearts, he knows no more of mine / Than I of yours, / Nor I no more of this than you of mine" (3.4.11-14), indicting the fear that a person's thoughts might be unknowable. Hastings attempts to assuage the concern by stating: "I think there's never a man in Christendom / Can lesser hide his love or hate than he; / For by his face straight shall you know his heart" (3.4.56-58). Although this predictability is superficially comforting, the statement is subtly undermined by the use of dramatic irony. The audience has known since act one that Richard deliberately obscures the relationship between his "heart" (3.4.58) and

his "face" (3.4.58). Richard is rather adept at hiding "his love or hate" (3.4.57) from the other characters, and does so to manoeuvre his treasonous thoughts amongst a power dynamic that does not tolerate them. This purpose, so masterfully obscured in his Machiavellian manipulation of those around him, is both the source of social unease in this scene and an important defining characteristic of Richard's identity. At this stage in the play, Richard's Machiavellian identity is only known to the audience.

Through audience complicity, Richard's individual "I" disintegrates as it becomes a collective "we." At the end of act one, scene one, Richard is once again alone on stage following Hastings' exit. In the eighteen lines that Richard speaks in solitude, he uses the word "I" ten times. The use of the personal pronoun indicates Richard's attempts at extracting himself from social obligations. In this soliloquy, Richard discloses his "deep" (1.1.148) and "secret close intent" (1.1.157) to the audience. Richard's intentions, also referred to as will, desire, or ambition, can only hold dramatic potential if somebody, in this case, the audience, knows they exist. For citizens of Renaissance England, individual conscience was a way of keeping the soul perpetually visible via God's omniscient gaze; rebellious or treasonous thoughts were never unnoticed because God could see the soul. For dramatists of the same culture, soliloquies and asides functioned in a similar way because of the audience's all-seeing gaze, which reinstates the individual within a power ideology. If Richard was truly alone on stage, or performing sans audience, his soliloquy would be void of meaning, and self-references and the use of "I" would fail to create dramatic tension within the play. Having said that, the use of "I" in *Richard III* still elucidates Richard's *desire* to be removed from social structures that attempt to regulate his behaviour.

In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare also makes an interesting use of pronouns. The titular character speaks the word 'I' three times prior to using asides: once when he states "So fair and foul a day I have not seen" (1.3.38) and twice as he declares "I know I am Thane of Glamis" (1.3.71). Macbeth gradually shifts from using 'I' to 'we' when discussing the prophecies with Lady Macbeth, such as when he states that "We will discuss this further" (1.5.70). Lady Macbeth is still part of the private sphere where Macbeth keeps his thoughts, but by constantly describing the usurpation of the throne in terms of the collective 'we,' Macbeth indicates that his ambitions are not merely personal desires, but are also part of a larger discourse. For example, it is not just Macbeth but "we" (3.1.20) who desire Banquo's presence at the "solemn supper" (3.1.14). Macbeth's desires are not only social in nature, but the collective becomes increasingly relevant as he broaches kingship. Chapter II addresses the relationship between interior and exterior in greater detail, but for now it is pertinent to note that Macbeth becomes even further entrenched in ideological structures the closer he gets to being king. At first, the correlation between proximity to the crown and ideological susceptibility seems paradoxical, especially if a humanist interpretation of Macbeth's personal goals, as disclosed to the audience through the use of asides and soliloquies, is considered. According to that model, attaining the crown is an individual accomplishment reflected through the use of "I." However, Macbeth instead usurps the crown and immediately reverts to the hierarchical system that he usurped. Macbeth worries about the repercussions of usurping the king, essentially because he has now undermined the sanctity of the absolute monarchy that he seeks to uphold. D. H Craig comments on the use of pronouns in this context: "*Macbeth* is much more like the Roman plays on these measures [the use of pronouns], with dialogue reflecting a preoccupation with group action

in war and political conspiracy" (180). Furthermore, he also questions the status of his soul: "I could not say 'Amen' / When they did say 'God bless us'" (2.2.27-28). Macbeth's self-inclusion in "us" (2.2.28) removes him from the private sphere and the collective conscious serves as a type of social control. Treasonous behaviour never goes unnoticed because it is "known to none but God that discerns the heart" (Bacon 115). Hence, Macbeth's concerns over the status of his soul, as expressed through concerns over his inability to pray, are not so much a way of extraditing him from society as reinstating him within it.

In act two, Macbeth spends much of scene two with Lady Macbeth, with one exception. But, beginning at line fifty-six, Macbeth speaks seven lines as if alone onstage (the aforementioned servants are present). Here, he further expounds his guilt over murdering Duncan and depicts the effects of his actions on his mentality:

> ...Whence is that knocking?
> How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
> What hands are here? Ha, they pluck out mine eyes.
> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No – this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red. (2.2.56-62)

Macbeth asks three questions rather than making statements about his right to the throne, suggesting his uncertainty about the situation. This response seems out of place for a character who has accomplished something. Duncan's murder ought to have signalled the moment when Macbeth's self-assertion was validated; instead, Macbeth's identity is split into fragments mere moments after the murder, just as Richard of Gloucester's is. For Karin Coddon, the insanity that results from a fragmented identity is a product of the false-illusion of inwardness: "...madness dis-integrates [sic] the identity so precariously fashioned by notions of inward control and self-vigilance, notions whose contradictions become

increasingly critical toward the end of Elizabeth's rule. Madness renders the subject not more but less himself..." (69). Macbeth's scattered and fractured verse contains more questions than statements and is indicative of his inability to maintain a sanctified inner space. Macbeth's self-doubt leads to a tenuous identity, always relational and constructed within ideology.

In terms of performance, staging plays a large role in the construction of Richard's subjectivity. Specifically, the use of the *locus* (central area of the stage, near the back) and the *platea* (periphery of the stage that is physically near the audience) can impact the interpretation of soliloquies and asides: "...the *platea* postures still stand out clearly, and clearly as the place where characters can define themselves apart from the confines of their worlds and speak, if not act, most convincingly, as an 'I'" (Bartels 227). In "Breaking the Illusion of Being: Shakespeare and the Performance of Self," Emily Bartels discusses the performance of self on the early modern stage. She argues that although a character's agency might seem most powerful in the *locus*, as the place where "the illusion of character" developed, it is in fact the *platea* figures who "see better, into and beyond the illusions of the *locus*, and who take power and presence from what they see" (Bartels 225). By aligning the audience with the *platea* figures, argues Bartels, both types of spectatorship are equated by virtue of a common point of view and subjective visions "shared intimately, if not exclusively with us [the audience]" (225). Through the *platea* figures (Richard, Margaret, the Scrivener), the audience "must situate [themselves] through – and so recognize the power of – their [the *platea* figures'] consciousness, subjectivity and being" (Bartels 225). She continues: "For *platea* characters carry the weight of being and perform as subjective, rather than submerged or subjected, selves – not because of what they (or we) see within

themselves, but because of what they (and, through them, we) see in others, in the state and status quo, and what they do, and can do, with what they see" (Bartels 226). Platea characters expose what was previously conceived to be a private, personal interiority, suggesting a difference between an essentialist humanist reading of the play and a materialist one, and the subsequent effects on selfhood:

> It seems no coincidence that the bounds between *locus* and *platea* begin to blur at the moment when early modern society was trying to call a (modern) self into being – to define the subject in terms of subjectivity rather than subjugation – and that the *locus* became the primary site of action on the stage. For finally, the emergence of a modern subject required a step into an illusion we later would give up – the illusion that the "realities" we live in are in our control, if not of our own making. (Bartels 229)

This passage bears a striking resemblance to Stephen Greenblatt's defence of cultural poetics, where he states that part of the reason people oppose readings or theories that suggest a socially and culturally embedded self at all times is because "to abandon self-fashioning is to abandon the craving for freedom, and to let go of one's stubborn hold upon selfhood, even selfhood conceived as a fiction, is to die" (257). Bartels and Greenblatt share a common belief in the fear that motivates resistance to the decentered subject. Yet, Bartels notes that the *platea* figure's self accrues a type of power by aligning the view of the audience with its own. However, what the audience sees *through* the dislocated *platea* figure is offset by the exposure of the *platea* figure itself. The audience does not witness the inner-workings of an autonomous individual. Instead, through the use of the *platea* and asides, the audience becomes aligned with those attempting to segregate or remove themselves from the community or social nexus that occurs in the *locus*. To both align the audience with the dislocated subject, either through the use of the *platea* figure, asides, or soliloquies, and alter the perspective of the audience blurs the distinction between the social

circumstance represented in the play, the social reality of the audience, and the character who is trying to extract himself from the former to critique the latter. The dislocated subject is either a part of the social reality within the play, or reconstituted within the social context external to the play. Appealing to the audience's perspective and realigning characters with the audience's perspective extracts the character from the political world of the play and incorporates elements of metatheatricality. It does not, however, isolate them completely. Instead, the character's private sphere is shown to be a theatrical construct deployed through the use of *platea* figures. Incorporating the audience through metatheatricality makes the private sphere of the characters part of the theatrical production. While Richard of Gloucester serves as an exemplary representative of this theoretical framework, many of the secondary characters also function as *platea* figures and use asides.

Like Richard, Macbeth wants to be king, although anxieties about hierarchy and succession function differently in *Macbeth*. From brief third-person descriptions provided to the audience about Macbeth in the opening act, he appears to be a loyal and noble citizen; he is married, fights loyally for his king, and has an almost familial relationship with Duncan. Sir Francis Bacon wrote in *Of Marriage and Single Life* that "[c]ertainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity" (1533). Within this context, Macbeth exhibits a near perfect depiction of the loyal subject (although Macduff is even more highly regulated because of his children). Macbeth and Richard share a common desire to destabilize that which they want to gain: monarchic rule. The very means of attaining the crown for themselves deconstructs the value systems of hierarchy and Divine Right of Kings because exposing kingship as vulnerable puts the new monarch in a tenuous position. Both Richard and Macbeth know that that the monarchy can be usurped because both have

accomplished exactly that. Significantly, the usurpation of the crown underscores both childless rulers' insistence on securing the throne for themselves and guarding against successors. Richard has to systematically remove all of those who are hierarchically positioned between himself and the crown. Macbeth, only needed to kill Duncan to get the throne; in order to maintain the throne, he must kill everybody could potentially usurp him. As Coddon notes, the "break between subject and society is equivocal rather than absolute, and... in Shakespeare retains resolutely social resonances" (73). The highly social nature of kingship negates the possibility of either character fully extracting himself from social context. Furthermore, each character does not truly seek to remove himself from social context so much as manipulate the existing social hierarchy to his advantage.

The performed identities and alleged private selves of Richard III and Macbeth collapse into one. Judith Butler's discussion of performativity as "...the lived, behavioural ethics and practices of a conventionalized regime of performance" (Worthen 17) suggests that performance is identity formation, corroborating Greenblatt's notion of self-fashioning. The style of acting during the initial productions of *Macbeth* circa 1606, as best as can be reconstructed given the limited accounts of acting at the time, was a style of acting in which "...the actor did not so much 'perform' a role as appear to transform himself into the character he was playing, 'as if the personator were the thing personated'" (Wilders 5). Thus, even the style of acting during the Renaissance seems to validate the role of performativity in developing identities. Jonathan Dollimore notes of Richard's inability to self-project that "at that point when power is slipping from [him], an attempt to reassert autonomy collapses into paradoxical self-division" (*Radical* 177). Dollimore even describes Richard's identity as "a chameleon one" (*Radical* 177), transitory rather than whole. At the

moment when identity should be asserted as unified, whole, and essential (according to a humanist reading), Richard's identity is instead fragmented, and dissolves into performativity. Bartels notes that a performative identity

> points not merely to the vacancy of self-assertion in a world where the wheel will always come full circle, and come full circle fast. It also points to the paradox of presence – to the simultaneous license and limitation – that comes with speaking within bounds. *Platea* figures *do* have the leverage to be and to act outside the staged status quo; but they also must fit a dramatic mold. (Bartels 228)

For Bartels, the inability of characters to project a unified self is a function of "... how identity happens to play: through the positions shaped and circumscribed by the people's voice" (Bartels 229). Richard and Macbeth lack an essentialist humanist 'core' or 'essence,' and the identity of both characters rests on their ability to manipulate their social roles. According to Worthen, "[d]ramatic performance is not determined by the text of the play: it strikes a much more interactive, *performative* relation between writing and the spaces, places, and behaviours that give it meaning, *force*, as theatrical action" (12). The identities that Richard and Macbeth suppose for themselves are composed of prescribed behavioural guidelines. In order to conceal their thoughts, both Richard III and Macbeth rely on their ability to perform social expectations to move within society. Innocence, kinship, obedience, and friendship are all governed by social treatises, and these behaviours are thereby enacted by both Richard and Macbeth.

The intersection between theatricality, Renaissance culture, and identities is evinced through the use of *platea* figures, asides and soliloquies. The regulation of behaviour correlates to the imposition of identity: "In a society where even aristocrats had to confirm their social identity by playing at being aristocratic, the theater became a school for social advancement and the actor became the very type of self-fashioning mankind" (Helgerson

174). In the opening acts of both *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, the titular characters express a desire to be isolated from society, but they never truly are. The private thoughts of the characters are always visible, either to other characters in the play, or to the audience. Even when Richard and Macbeth seek to conceal their private thoughts or desires, there is always some form of cosmic resonance observable by other characters, such as the Old Man, Ross, and Margaret. The hierarchical social structure that governs the identities of both Richard of Gloucester and Macbeth evinces "a form of power which makes individuals subjects" (Foucault, "Subject" 781).

CHAPTER II:

THE CULTURAL PRODUCTION of INWARDNESS in *Richard III* and *Macbeth*.

Seem: "to give the impression of being"

~Merriam Webster Dictionary~

The Renaissance self is a culturally contingent subject embedded in power ideologies. As such, the manner in which inwardness and interiority are viewed must be revisited. Stephen Greenblatt, Jonathan Dollimore, Michel Foucault and many other critics have altered the perception of Early Modern selfhood, yet a rhetoric of inwardness still remains. The distinction between an interior and an exterior persists in many Elizabethan and Jacobean texts, and the resonances of this discourse impact the way that characters function within a play. Richard of Gloucester and Macbeth both perceive themselves as individuals, as contained units that store private thoughts and feelings deep within themselves masked by outward social façades. Despite the perpetual influence of history, society, and culture on the formation of identity, Renaissance dramatists were still fascinated with the cultivation of the private sphere. The private sphere is an effect of various social pressures that attempt to regulate the appearance and conduct of citizens. The inwardness that is interrogated in both *Richard III* and *Macbeth* is a cultural product that accounts for a failure of interpellation within prescribed social normativity. The ensuing analysis of these two plays explores a notion of the Renaissance self as a "sedimented effect of a reiterative or ritual practice" (Butler 10).

Perpetuating the idea of a distinction between inward and outward initially seems to support the essentialist humanist model of individualism. Within this model, the individual agent is free to think and feel within a space all of one's own, independent of larger social, political and cultural contexts. This also appears to be particularly prevalent in Renaissance culture, insofar as absolute monarchy, Divine Right of Kings, and social hierarchies were oppressive and constraining on the individual. Inwardness then seems like a logical outcome of such an oppressive regime as it affords a person both a place to and a means for thoughts and feelings that oppose the dominant order. Yet, Michel Foucault cautions readers that "[t]he man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself" (*Discipline* 30). The de-centered or dislocated individual, which Richard III and Macbeth have been shown to be, utilizes a discourse of interiority for different purposes than those who subscribe to a humanist agenda, and to different ends. The private space that is upheld within an essentialist humanist model as the locus of inward truth, interiority, and 'true' selves is itself a cultural product, and the increasing focus on interiority coincides with methods of regulating the individual. As Foucault so aptly phrases it, "[d]iscipline 'makes' individuals" (*Discipline* 170). The individual is not acted upon, but rather is a cumulative product of power relations. Individual agency is paradoxically derived from "the possibilities opened up in and by that constrained appropriation of the regulatory law, by the materialization of that law, the compulsory appropriation and identification with those normative demands" (Butler 12). The Renaissance self is a product of a culture that regulated appearances to such an extent that a rhetoric of inwardness developed as a result. The laws and regulations that existed to maintain order created the need for privacy and inwardness.

Renaissance England "lived progressive loss of that all-surrounding external order, echoed in growing tensions in the sense of personal identity. That loss was felt first in those very spheres where it had been most closely experienced, social, political, theological and moral" (Reiss 464). Exploration of the New World, scientific developments, the rise of the nation state, and the Protestant Revolution all contributed to a sense of a disintegrating order. The results of unhinging social strictures had significant repercussions that were frequently interrogated in theatrical productions. Notably, there was an increased attempt by monarchs and their representatives to maintain the status quo. As social control was increasingly vitiated, the need or desire to control the individual was exacerbated in inverse proportions. In *A History of Private Life*, Philippe Ariès describes the cultural shift in Renaissance approaches to the individual in so far as "[w]hat mattered was no longer what an individual was but what he appeared to be, or, rather, what he could successfully pass himself off as being" (3). Appearance was crucial to constructing individual identity, and "living became a matter of externalizing one's inner life and private values" (Ariès 6). Significantly, Aries touches on a distinction between appearing as a person who conforms to social expectations and "living" an "inner life" (6). The social expectations that were ideally represented in appearances were often only part of an individual, who often felt pressured to maintain a distinction between interiority and exteriority.

The increased emphasis on private life that developed in Early Modern England coincides with both the production of individualism and the state's increased interest in regulating obedience and maintaining conformity. Ariès informs readers that the word 'public' denotes not only "a place where people who do not know each other can meet and enjoy each other's company" (9), but also signifies "the state" (9) and "service of the state"

(9). Public was composed of both relations between people and the authority of the state. Private life was not fully extracted from the public sphere. The term 'private' signals both the "authorized defence of the civil liberty of each individual insofar as that individual's behaviour was not governed by law" and private authority as the "legitimate scope of the authority of the superior over individual members of a group" (Castan 43). Private life would not fully reach its apex until the eighteenth century, notes Ariès, and the time between the medieval concept of private life, as inseparably confounded with the public, and the epoch of the individual in the eighteenth century, characterizes the ambiguous status of the individual in Renaissance England (10). The Renaissance individual is a self in transition. The self is neither wholly communal, as it was assumed to be in medieval times, nor has it reached its eighteenth century pinnacle. The result is a fragmented identity based solely on appearance. The individualism expressed in many Renaissance texts takes the form of malleable exteriors, and the exteriors sanction the individual amidst increased social pressures. Increasingly specific and prolific prescriptions for social behaviour and appearance solidify the state as a "necessary precondition for defining a private sphere as distinct from a clearly identifiable public one" (Chartier 15), although the two spheres are also paradoxically inseparable in the Renaissance. For example, the Renaissance experienced an influx of literary forms, including autobiographies and diaries that were believed to hold the private, innermost thoughts of an individual. Yet, what initially appears to be a private literary practice often resulted in publication; even autiobiographies were written in private but with an audience in mind. Thus, the new-found interest in private life was often explored through the publication and publicization of privacy itself.

The public nature of identity formation in Renaissance England was inherently linked to monarchic power ideologies. Foucault comments that "[a]t the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom... a relationship which is at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle" ("Subject" 790). The demonstration of power and authority is dependent on challenges to that authority, frequently depicted as acts of individualism. Here, a discourse of interiority does not create resistance so much as uphold a hierarchical regime of unequally distributed power. Authorities, says Foucault, maintain power by exercising it: "...power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus.... In any case, to live in society is to live in such a way that action upon other action is possible – and in fact ongoing" ("Subject" 791). The prescription of social roles, as decreed by Renaissance hierarchical structures, begs for opposition to create the struggle necessary for maintaining power relations. However, "[i]n the new condition of the European Renaissance, these roles suddenly seemed escapable, malleable, or simply to be alternatives which one might defer successfully... in some undecidable combination of choice and necessity" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 26-7). The augmented social pressure to look, appear, and behave in certain ways not only creates a need for a disjuncture between inward and outward, but it also emphasizes the malleability of identity. The ability to play, act, or seem a certain type of person is dependent on culturally acceptable and recognizable codes of behaviour that permit the recognition of patterns as they correlate to individuated identities. Emily Bartels notes that, in the theatre, the physical proximity between the audience and the actors indicates that

> ...figures stand, metadramatically, as representatives of the people, their class identities notwithstanding. And as such, they face an important limitation: they do have a unique, self-affirming agency (onstage), but only insofar as

> they play by the rules (offstage), into roles prescribed by popular custom and expectation. (Bartels 227)

This passage once again reiterates the concept of fashionable identities. Identities can be – and here, are – manipulated through a discourse of culturally recognizable behaviours and traits. The malleable exteriors that Richard III and Macbeth so covertly manipulate are in many ways only possible because of the strict expectations of social conduct. Hence, their identities, and their selves, are socially constituted.

Early Modern literature addresses the publication of personal thoughts and feelings and interrogates the relationship between the private and the public. Notably distanced from medieval community values, the Renaissance man was often a prominent court fixture. Such a figure could rely on various publications to determine exactly how a member of the court should *look*, suggesting that Renaissance identities were not only socially inscribed but also visible. Elizabethan Sumptuary Laws placed "restrictions on behaviour, social and geographical movement and political hierarchy... enforced through statutes on appropriate clothing" (Aughterson 163). Although "less frequently invoked" after 1570 (Aughterson 163), these laws were popular and outlined the fabric, colors, and styles of "apparel" ("Sumptuary" 164) that men and women should wear according their hierarchical placement. Sumptuary laws were designed to regulate visible class identities under penalty of "her highness's indignation and punishment" ("Sumptuary" 164). Behaviour was also influenced by works such as Henry Peacham's "The Art of Living in London," published in 1622, which details appropriate behaviour for the more socially mobile middling class. In "The Complete Gentleman," Peacham's advice includes saving money to afford dinners at taverns, keeping the tailor paid so that the latest fashions may be worn, gaming, idleness, and the company one might keep (246-247). The advice given is anchored in social

appearances, as the majority of Peacham's suggestions involve the effects of appearance, behaviour, and habits on social life.

As with other treatises on social decorum, Baldassare Castiglione's *The Courtier* played a significant role in assigning value to appearances. Sir Thomas Hoby's English translation of *The Courtier* reached the populace in 1561, and had a strong influence on court life. Castiglione outlines the benefits of "recklessness" (162), or *sprezzatura*, in court life: "Therefore that may be said to be a very art that appeareth not to be art, neither ought a man to put more diligence in anything than in covering it: for in case it be open, it loseth credit clean and maketh a man little set by" (162). The art of concealing art, which Castiglione attributes to the possession of grace, is imperative to maintaining one's reputation and position in court life and is the mark of a true courtier. The act of appearing should seem natural. *Sprezzatura* is another way of distinguishing interiority from exteriority within a single person, and the exposure of the interior at the expense of the exterior, "if it had been openly known, would have put a doubt in people's mind for fear lest he beguiled them" (Castiglione 162). The use of courtly masks, then, not only permits graceful social transaction but also fuels a discourse of suspicion. Shakespeare's appropriation of Castiglione's work allows the playwright to interrogate the cultural value of artificiality and performance. Shakespeare "reveals the art that conceals the art, treading a fine line between concealment and revelation" (Parry 5). The exposure of "apparent theatricality" (Butler 12) reconstitutes the unsubstantiated interior back within a social nexus. The interiority only matters in relation to social implications, and privacy becomes a theatrical construct.

The very concept of a private space as the locus of individuality and essential identity is a social construct that serves a subsequent social purpose. Power creates the desire and prompts the need for sentiments of individuality, which allows power to be more readily exposed and maintained: "...power produces the subjects it controls, [and] power is not only imposed externally, but works as the regulatory and normative means by which subjects are formed" (Butler 22). In many of Shakespeare's works, including *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, individuality is often discussed in terms of the relationship between one's interior and exterior. "'Interiority', whether considered as a psychological or a somatic phenomenon, is based on a distinction between 'inside' and 'outside'. Such a distinction is crucial to modern, Western accounts of individuality" (Sawday 38), but is also persistently questioned in Renaissance literature. However, in the Renaissance the private and public are neither wholly conflated nor wholly distinct, suggesting that individuals cannot be fully situated in an interior space. This inseparability places significant emphasis on the external, public self. Jacques Revel notes that "This image [of the courtier] alone matters, and all signs of the inner man, of tension and effort, must be repressed. The function of 'honest dissimulation' is to indicate through gesture, bearing, and attitude that social life takes precedence over the inner life. Seeming becomes a way of being" (192). The Renaissance self was so strongly influenced by the relevance of the exterior that the interior was frequently undervalued, and identity formation was resituated within the realm of the visible exterior. The interior then becomes the locus of thoughts, secrets and even beliefs that run contrary to the dominant order.

Shakespeare addresses the tension between interior and exterior in both *Macbeth* and *Richard III*. Widely heralded for his rhetorical abilities, Richard of Gloucester banters with

Lady Anne over his proposition for her hand in act one, scene two of *Richard III*. In the midst of a debate, Lady Anne comments, "I would I knew thy heart" (1.2.178), to which Richard replies that his heart is "figured in [his] tongue" (1.2.179). Lady Anne's response, that she fears "both are false" (1.2.180), is particularly interesting for the way that it speaks to the tenuously figured discourse of epistemology and selfhood that is evident in both *Richard III* and another of Shakespeare's plays, *Macbeth*. Richard's false heart and tongue not only obscure his intentions, but also throw Lady Anne and other characters into an epistemological crisis and mistrust of external indicators and appearance. Richard's Machiavellian manipulation of an external façade, employed here through the use of rhetoric, confounds Lady Anne's ability to know Richard. For if, as Lady Anne surmises, Richard's tongue and heart are false, then the visibility of truth and one's subsequent ability to see it remains obscure to all the other characters within the play. For Lady Anne, Richard's rhetorical strategies create a skepticism that impedes her ability to know who Richard is as he maliciously usurps the throne. Yet, Lady Anne is not completely unsuspecting of Richard's duplicitous nature; her suspicions are correct, but cannot be proven.

Lady Anne's suspicious approach to Richard is contrasted with Buckingham's inability to understand all of Richard's deceitfulness. Buckingham underestimates Richard's multiplicity and layered exteriority, and attempts to situate Richard for the succession of the throne:

> As well we know your tenderness of heart
> And gentle, kind, effeminate remorse,
> Which we have noted in you to your kin
> And equally, indeed, to all estates – (3.7.192-195)

Buckingham, believing that he knows and understands the true Richard, attempts to exploit the idea that other characters value and believe in specific appearances, symbols of a quality king. Buckingham's actions are based on Richard's behaviour and outward appearance. Here, again, the epistemological crisis that develops out of a discourse of interiority can be seen. Despite Buckingham's claims that they all know Richard's "tenderness of heart" (3.7.192), both the audience and Buckingham are aware of and witness to Richard's inner thoughts. It is the audience's awareness that allows Lady Anne to be seen as perceptive rather than shrewish, and Buckingham to be seen as naïve rather than loyal and trusting. Yet, for both Lady Anne and Buckingham, the fact that Richard's interiority is never entirely determinable in exterior manifestations of behaviour, speech, and language places far greater emphasis on appearances, while simultaneously devaluing them. Both Lady Anne and Buckingham believe that they know the 'real' Richard through their own analysis of his behaviour, appearance and speech; indeed, assessing external characteristics is the only way that they can make judgements about Richard. As Lady Anne and Buckingham increasingly rely on exteriority, Richard exploits their dependency on it. Similarly, in *Macbeth*, it becomes increasingly important for Macbeth to appear as a composed, rational king. Even as Macbeth's grip on reality is continually loosened, the importance of appearing sane is not lost. He must appear lucid so that his subjects will interpret his behaviour in a favourable way. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth know that appearing as model monarchs will earn the trust of their subjects and solidify their newly appointed positions, even under the turbulence of Duncan's murder. In doing so, they, like Richard, acknowledge the increasing relevance of appearances while simultaneously devaluing them.

Language plays a significant role in the manipulation of appearances. In *Richard III*, for example, the Executioners seem aware of the falsity of language, noted when they state the early caveat that "Talkers are no good doers, be assured" (1.3.351). How other characters *perceive* Richard's behaviour is of greater importance than a character's ability to know Richard's interior. A character's appearance is always visible, but the interior may be hidden. Both Buckingham and Richard are aware of the value of appearance and perceptions; however, Buckingham seeks Richard's favour, which distorts his ability to see Richard's manipulation of language. Blair Worden notes that "[f]lattery disarms candour and perverts speech, [as] does suspicion" (35). Worden's view would account for why Lady Anne is aware that Richard's heart is not "figured in [his] tongue" (1.2.179), yet is unable to prove otherwise. Her suspicion also fuels a rift between signifier and signified. The only "proof" of Richard's Machiavellianism, and the truth of Anne's assumptions, resides in the asides and soliloquies that he speaks to the audience. Thus, rhetoric can at once be evidence of an intellectual character and a cause for doubt.

In *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth uses rhetoric to help persuade her husband to usurp the throne. While Macbeth appears to be contemplating Duncan's murder, Lady Macbeth advises: "screw your courage to the sticking place" (1.7.61) and "be the same in thy own act and valour / As thou art in desire" (1.7.40-41). Lady Macbeth dominates the conversation in this scene, both in terms of lines spoken and in rhetorical capacity to encourage her husband's ambition. Lady Macbeth's ability to persuade her husband is confined within the boundaries of domestic intimacy, a point that is accentuated when Lady Macbeth fails to control Macbeth's ramblings during the banquet scene. Although Macbeth cautions his wife that, "...both with eye and tongue – / ...we must... / ...make our faces / Vizards to our

hearts, disguising what they are" (3.2.34-37), he is unable to follow his own advice during the banquet scene. Macbeth, like Richard, loses his ability to control language and civil gestures after he becomes king, signalling the diminished power of a kingship that is "fragmented" (Worden 29) by usurpation (a topic that will be explored in greater detail shortly). Macbeth's psychotic rants involve a "referent [that] is literally invisible to all others on stage" (Hopkins 260), and show how *sprezzatura* relies on language and behaviour to construct a false exterior.

Language therefore plays a pivotal role in the manipulation of identity. As Tony Davies notes, "...the very notion of a 'private self,' so fundamental to romantic [sic] and later conceptions of identity, is alien to early humanist thinking. The human being is fashioned and defined in language, and belongs inseparably, in its public and private aspects alike, to the medium of discourse" (Davies 79). Language is integral to social life, and plays a key role in constructing identity:

> Corrupted reason or, rather, unbridled 'natural' reason [was] visible in false use of language [that] led to the state's ruin... Since only right use of words establishes mutual understanding, Montaigne wrote, whoever misuses them, with broken promises, for example, betrays human society. Speech is the one tool through which wills and thought communicate. It interprets our soul. When it fails, we have no more hold on each other, no more mutual knowledge.... (Reiss 462)

Significantly, Reiss equates "unbridled 'natural' reason" with a "false use of language" that leads to the "state's ruin" (462). Nonconformity to the dominant order translates as being unreasonable and subsequently disrupts the social bond between two subjects and "betrays human society" (Reiss 462). Not only is primacy given to the community, especially those at the top of the hierarchical stratum, but the community itself is, according to Reiss, strengthened by transparent language. Hence, when Richard and Macbeth seek to obscure

treasonous thoughts by using language to manipulate external appearances, they are challenging social normativity. In *Richard III*, Richard insists on the transparency of his thoughts by telling Buckingham, Catesby, and others: "Shall I be plain? I wish the bastards dead, / And I would have it suddenly performed. / What sayst thou? Speak suddenly, be brief" (4.2.17-18). Richard plainly speaks his treasonous thoughts, as if his previous use of *sprezzatura* and Machiavellian malleability have worked so well, insofar as his social disguise has allowed him to manipulate a normative civil identity to his advantage. Here, Richard does speak plainly, but the malleable nature of language in general supplants the ability to distinguish between those who "play the orator" (3.5.93) and those who speak plainly. Plain language and false language are indistinguishable from one another to all other characters except those who speak the lines. This analysis can be directly linked to the external manipulation of identity and the epistemological crisis that constitutes the inability to distinguish between a socially compliant subject and one who merely appears as such.

Chapter I suggested that the subject is inseparable from culture. Written and oral language was an integral part of Renaissance culture, and therefore the relationship between the subject and language is worth examining. For Reiss, a "good linguistic order guarantees a reasonable subject, and the subject is therefore inseparable from its sociohistorical circumstance" (Reiss 462). Both Richard and Macbeth exemplify the interconnectivity between language, subjectivity, and politics. Richard's ability to rhetorically manipulate both his identity and his position within society equates the power of language with social hierarchy. Macbeth's inability to effectively communicate is analogous to Richard's eventual inability to use rhetoric. The use of language in each play is interesting for the way that it elucidates the cultural production of identity and the private space.

In act one, scene three, Richard of Gloucester addresses the issue of outward appearance and inner conviction. He appeals to a fear of diminished reputation in saying: "By holy Paul, they love his grace but lightly / That fills his ears with such dissentious rumours" (1.3.45-46), indicating that identity is also constructed orally as well as visually. Both language and appearance allow Richard to fashion his social identity:

> Now they believe me, and withal whet me
> To be revenged on Rivers, Vaughan, Grey.
> But then I sigh, and with a piece of scripture
> Tell them that God bids us do good for evil.
> And thus I clothe my naked villainy
> With old odd ends stol'n out of holy writ,
> And seem a saint when most I play the devil. (1.3.332-338)

Richard is proud of his use of *sprezzatura*, his ability to "clothe [his] naked villainy" (1.3.336). The use of holy scripture appeals to a socially prevalent value system, and this appeal allows Richard to exploit what is expected of him in order to maintain social mobility. The external social pressures that do not condone Richard's desire to be king, and therefore create a need for private thoughts, are part of the same system that allows Richard to manipulate social expectations. As such, "social constraints thus became subject to personal and private manipulation... [and] rules of behaviour became increasingly effective as they were internalized by individuals" (Revel 168). As with *Macbeth*, in *Richard III* the manipulation of behavioural rules is enacted through behaviour and language. Richard and Buckingham try to convince the Mayor of Hastings' guilt through hearsay:

> Because, my lord, we would have had you heard
> The traitor speak and timorously confess
> The manner and the purpose of his treason,
> That you might well have signified the same
> Unto the citizens, who haply may
> Misconster us in him, and wail his death. (3.5.55-60)

Throughout this whole scene, Richard's rise in power and his rise in hierarchical standing are accentuated by his manipulation of language. Here, he verbally paints Hastings as a "false traitor" (3.5.48), convincing the Mayor of Richard's own virtue while manoeuvring through "the carping censures of the world" (3.5.67). This indicates a primacy of external over internal insofar as changing oneself is accomplished by "[putting] on some other shape" (4.4.262).

Additionally, the Queen discusses Richard's impending relationship with her daughter, which the Queen opposes. The Queen refutes Richard's interest in wooing the Princess, and the matriarch reiterates that Richard will never approach her daughter "Unless thou couldst put on some other shape / And not be Richard that hath done all this (4.4.262-263). Here, the Queen equates an alteration in physical form with an alteration of person, suggesting that changing "shape" (5.5.262) is the same as altering identity. In a world that places so much emphasis on the malleability of identity, both language and action obscure the relationship between truth and vision, and truth and sound. This simultaneously creates an epistemological crisis for authorities and a very subaltern type of manoeuvrability[3] for subjects, where agency is found "in the multiple but seemingly marginal ways in which those who do not appear to wield cultural power 'make do' with what their culture offers them" (McManus 213). The believability of Richard's façade is conditionally dependent on keeping his motives obscured from public view, an accomplishment that he often achieves through rhetorical strategy. The very social and political conditions that created the circumstances for private space as the locus of thoughts and feelings through increased social pressure are the same governing body that Richard must then censor his personal desires from.

Macbeth is not characterized by his rhetorical capabilities so much as his gradually increasing inability to communicate and subscribe to codes of public decorum. Macbeth struggles with his decision to usurp the throne more than Richard does, and the effect is demonstrated through Macbeth's inability to master language. Lisa Hopkins notes that Macbeth's failure as a king has been critically depicted as "insufficiently charismatic and theatrical" (254), suggesting that Macbeth's inability to perform a preordained conformist identity impedes his ability to maintain kingship. For Hopkins, both Macbeth and his wife are initially "so apparently innocuous that those about them are notably slow to realize the full horror of their behaviour" (257), a façade that is dismantled as the play progresses and culminates in the banquet scene. The early acts of the play indicate Macbeth's desire to control language because of the powerful relationship between language and identity. Hugh Grady observes that subjectivity "participates in a... socially constructed realm of meaning and communication, which rather than being static and reified is in principle open to negotiation, modification, and reconstitution through dialogue" (*Shakespeare* 24). Rhetorical strategies and linguistic manipulation are therefore inherently social, and fit in well with the social elements of Machiavellianism. Lady Macbeth's impetuousness is transferred to Macbeth through the urgency of her claims: "Thy letters have transported me beyond / This ignorant present, and I feel now / The future in the instant" (1.5.55-57). She encourages her husband to adopt a Machiavellian philosophy to usurp the crown while simultaneously exposing the current readability of his expressions:

> Your face, my Thane, is a book where men
> May read strange matters; to beguile the time,
> Look like the time, bear welcome in your eye,
> Your hand, your tongue – look like th'innocent flower,
> But be the serpent under't. (1.5.61-64).

Lady Macbeth pushes her spouse to manipulate his appearance to hide his ambition, which are disclosed either directly to the audience, or to Lady Macbeth herself, just as she encourages him to be resolved of the "contradictions which [will] cripple and finally destroy him" (Dollimore, *Radical* 112). Her status as Macbeth's wife places her within the domestic realm, an "atmosphere of mutual trust... [where] motives best hidden from public view could be discreetly avowed" (Castan 62). Lady Macbeth urges her husband to alter his behaviour, action, and language, and entices him to "bear welcome in [his] eye / [his] hand, [and his] tongue" (1.5.63-64). To successfully usurp the crown, Macbeth must "look" (1.5.64) innocent in public and keep his treasonous thoughts private. Earlier in the play, Duncan, regretting his decision to trust the former Cawdor, observes that "There's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face" (1.4.11-12). Duncan's statement suggests a yearning for an inversion of *sprezzatura*. Whereas *sprezzatura* outlines an art that conceals artistry and deliberately blurs the line between interior and exterior, unknowable and knowable, Duncan seeks an art that can detect inward thoughts through external form. This speaks to the larger cultural concern of how a person is known, for despite Duncan's desire to see the face express the mind, courtly behavioural codes dictate just the opposite. In public, the face should obscure the internal, and identity should be performed, in order to maintain civility and the standards of behaviour codes. Public self-fashioning always holds the inherent potential for subversion. As Macbeth states, "Away, and mock the time with fairest show, / False face must hide what the false heart doth know" (1.7.82-83). A "false face" (1.7.83) is necessary to cover thoughts and feelings that run contrary to socially acceptable codes of conduct, a guise which in turn is required of not only duplicitous or Machiavellian characters with subversive intentions but also of obedient subjects.

The double-edged nature of the private space is now apparent. In order to act upon their intentions, wills, or desires, Richard and Macbeth must safeguard their thoughts and feelings under the guise of prescribed social behaviour and political order, and they accomplish this with the goal of accruing political power and eventually kingship itself. But the paradox that is inherent in both Macbeth's and Richard's plans is that their 'private' goals have primarily public manifestations. The very system that Richard seeks to segregate himself from at the beginning of the play is the same system that he wishes to figuratively head by the end. The system of absolute monarchy that initially displaced Richard is the very regime that he wishes to rule. Although this goal is still highly subversive, it nonetheless results in failure because both the zenith and downfall of the Machiavel is the dependency on metadramatic exposure of his manipulation (Maus 54). What delights viewers is being able to see the interiority of deception and "[publicizing] in literature that which had to be concealed in society" (Chartier 165). This contradicts the very essence of deception: "[t]he fact that the Machiavel's machinations are *witnessed* guarantees both our delight and his undoing" (Maus 54). Hence, the metadramatic exposure of the Machiavel entertains the audience while the dramatic exposure within the play ensures the Machiavel's collapse. The tenuous nature of appearances within *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, then, lies in a negation of the interior, as the interior must never be shown in order to succeed within the play, yet this is the key principle that drives the metadramatic force of theatrical production.

Interrogating the role of an inward/outward dichotomy within *Richard III* and *Macbeth* seems incomplete without addressing the effects of Machiavellianism in either play, especially considering that Richard of Gloucester is often heralded as a quintessential Machiavellian figure. Machiavelliansim, like identity formation and notions of selfhood, is

imbued with elements of political, social, and cultural discourse that construes "[t]he power of the Machiavel – Gyges, Richard, Lorenzo, Volpone – [as] an eminently social power, the ability to orchestrate what other people can and cannot perceive" (Maus 97). Hugh Grady feels that it is important to "trace how Shakespeare's 'Machiavellian' treatment of power leads him into new concepts of subjectivity and identity which are "Montaignean' in much the same way that the analysis of power is 'Machiavellian'" (*Shakespeare* 49). Machiavelli had a profound and significant impact on Renaissance culture as "what Foucault called a 'founder of discursivity' – someone who was not an author in the ordinary sense, an organizer of circulating discourses, but one who forges a new form of discourse which enters into a culture or cultures generally" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 30). The ideologies of power that prescribe identity, as outlined by Foucault, orchestrate the ways in which either Richard or Macbeth appears Machiavellian. Power ideologies correlate directly to the attempts within each play at maintaining segregation between an inward self and an outward appearance. Indeed, as Grady comments, there is "internalization by princes of discourses of power... But part of the process of internalization central to these plays is the resistance to an identity as a political prince" (*Shakespeare* 26). Given that kings, as figures for political princes, show a private sphere that collapses totally into the public realm, it makes sense that both Richard and Macbeth would struggle to resist an identity that denies them a coveted interiority, even if they both initially desire kingship.

Machiavellianism is a term that has a plethora of applications, primarily dependent on the context in which it is referred to. For example, an assessment of Niccolò Machiavelli's writings about state governance and political philosophy will naturally focus on his assertions about principalities. However, his contributions to English Renaissance

theatre have different resonances, and tend to emphasize his claims about the people who embody kingship and rule principalities. For Machiavelli, a certain element of theatricality is necessary in order to be both an effective and a successful political leader. In particular, Machiavelli outlines the role of the virtuous prince, noting that it is "not necessary for a prince to possess all... qualities, but it is very necessary for him to appear to possess them" (Machiavelli, *Prince 61).* Deception through the manipulation of appearance is, for Machiavelli, a necessary trait of effective leaders: "But it is necessary to know," says Machiavelli, "how to colour over this nature effectively, and to be a great pretender and dissembler" (*Prince* 61). This position presupposes a distinction between an interior self and an external appearance. The aims of such delineation, however, are inherently social; princes need to appear virtuous to maintain their position as head of state. Indeed, it is the "ungrateful, fickle, simulators and deceivers" who are "greedy for gain" that necessitate a monarchic façade (Machiavelli, *Prince* 58). Machiavelli's prince acknowledges and manipulates his citizens because "to those seeing and hearing him, he should appear to be all mercy, all faithfulness, all integrity, all humanity, and all religion" (*Prince* 62), yet know "how to use the ways of the fox... [to] come out best" (*Prince* 61).

The necessity of such a façade has social implications. As mentioned above, Machiavelli presupposes a similarly deceitful nature in the citizens of the state, so the deceptiveness of the prince becomes a pre-emptive guarding against deceit from lower ranking citizens. Appearing virtuous will also help to safeguard the prince from being hated, which Machiavelli strongly cautions. For Machiavelli, political success – which is contingent, to a certain extent, on the acquiescence of the public – is dependent on sustaining appearances. Hugh Grady comments on this moral dilemma:

> The sixteenth-century stage image of Machiavelli as a proponent of political deception and power for power's sake persists today, and for most readers the term 'Machiavellian' still carries negative connotations associated with this conception of him. Against this reductive (but not simply dismissible) image, humanist readers in contemporary England and elsewhere, along with the scholarship of our own day, pose another, more complex Machiavelli: a figure who founded modern political discourse as such, and therefore one better seen as a definer of moral dilemmas than as an advocate of unabashed political evil. (*Shakespeare* 42)

One of the "moral dilemmas" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 42) that Machiavelli articulates is the reason for inculcating and maintaining distinction between inward and outward facets of the self. For him, this was a necessary component of functioning as a prince in a highly politicized, social atmosphere; it was easiest and most efficient to attain and manipulate power through the use of personal façade. Grady argues that Shakespeare's plays "display a multivalent complex influence of and reaction to Machiavellian themes – and that they go beyond the logic of *The Prince* to explore the cultural crisis of meaning which its logic creates" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 44). In *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, Shakespeare relies on cultural tensions of epistemology and behavioural codes to test the limits of the self. Significantly, Katherine Eisaman Maus notes that the logic of the Machiavel, as the manipulation of the external to mask the internal, fuels an epistemological crisis: "...when the true interior is conceptually separated from the visible exterior, problems of evaluating the truth of any claim about that interior immediately arise" (50). Thus, Machiavelli's proposition that princes may appear contrary to their interior leads to an Early Modern crisis of knowledge. If what is seen is not truthful, but fashioned, then the relationship between knowledge, visibility, and truth becomes obscure: "the theoretical separability of the inside from the outside means that the equivalence can never be made with any certainty" (Maus 51). Judith Butler asserts that the veracity of a performance, or "realness" depends on "the

extent that it *cannot* be read" (129), which is similar to the ambiguous relationship between interior and exterior that prevents any certain determinations that result from assessing external behaviour and language. The belief that the interior is 'true' because it is not visible (and therefore cannot be read) is contradicted by the use of soliloquies, for example, which suggest the performance of privacy and the interior, which in turn undermines the sanctity and veracity of the interior; the result is that one cannot be absolutely certain about the truth of the interior. This ambiguity is necessary both to the performance of early modern selfhood and to the subversion of social decorum.

It should be noted that Machiavelli's advocacy of preserving one's 'true' identity with a sense of interiority does not necessarily imply a belief in a humanist conceptualization of selfhood that supports the veracity of an inward, 'true' self. The thoughts and feelings that Machiavelli recommends remain suppressed or hidden are only those that incur hatred amongst a prince's populace. According to Grady, "with [today's] appreciation of Shakespeare's use of a Machiavellian analysis in a number of tragedies and histories, it seems much more plausible to suppose some kind of link between a Machiavellian theatre and the faction within Elizabethan politics with a reputation for the appreciation and use of Machiavelli's political philosophy" (*Shakespeare* 31). The oppositional nature of Shakespeare's Machiavellianism, as evinced in both *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, suggest the subversive, radical, and potentially treasonous capacity of a discourse of interiority:

> ... at issue particularly is that 'Machiavellian' version of the self which impacted on Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists as can be seen their creation of stage-villains like ... Shakespeare's Richard III. This Machiavellian model of the self consists of an inner will-to-power and an outer deceptive façade drawing on the conventional pieties of received

> tradition to mask its anti-traditional intentions and actions. (Grady, *Shakespeare* 11)

Grady's mention of an "inner will-to-power" (*Shakespeare* 11) is grounded in ideology. Thoughts that are subversive, counter-dominant, or transgressive must be hidden, and when characters like Richard III and Macbeth use a discourse of interiority to accrue power, the very nature of inwardness becomes grounded in social expectations. This is why the "outer deceptive façade" relies on "received tradition" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 11). Richard and Macbeth do not merely play, but play *to* specified conventions. In *Richard III*, Richard's rhetorical capabilities allow him to declare that he "cannot flatter and speak fair, / Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive, and cog, / Duck with French nods and apish courtesy" (1.3.47-49) and thus "must be held a rancorous enemy" (1.3.50). The audience knows that Richard is manipulating external factors to assume a façade of innocence, and the very language that Richard uses speaks to his awareness of the necessity of appearance.

With *Macbeth*, Machiavellian politics of appearance are inverted. The audience is aware that Macbeth should be maintaining a social façade to mask the evidence of his crime, but the newly appointed king cannot do so; this speaks to the cultural significance of both Machiavellianism and appearances. Consider, for example, the banquet scene. As the new king, Macbeth and his wife host a banquet for his most reliable soldiers. Lady Macbeth calls it a "great feast" (3.1.12), and Macbeth concurs that "Tonight we hold a solemn supper, sir [Banquo] / And I'll request your presence" (3.2.14-15). Lady Macbeth tells Macbeth to "Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight" (3.2.31). A banquet of such nature is ritualistic, a sign of social civility, and Lady Macbeth sees it as an opportunity to show everyone that nothing is out of place and to perpetuate the belief that Macbeth is not connected to Duncan's murder. Hopkins once again outlines both Macbeth and Lady

Macbeth's failure to conform to social civility as a product of Macbeth's inability to attend to his public image (258). Macbeth insists that "The table's full" (3.4.46) as Lennox encourages Macbeth to sit at the table: "Here is a place reserved, sir" (3.4.46). Ross suggests that "his highness is not well" (3.4.52) to excuse Macbeth's erratic behaviour, and Lady Macbeth tries to assuage the social awkwardness by claiming that "my lord is often thus" (3.4.53). For Hopkins, the fact that Macbeth's "noble friends do lack" (3.4.85) him is evidence of both Lady Macbeth and her spouse's "customary domesticity and of its rapid disintegration" (259). The couple's inability to follow the social rituals of the banquet and the issued demand for attendance at the banquet is, according to Hopkins, staged primarily for the audience's benefit. Once Macbeth becomes king, he is unable to sustain either a public image or congruent interiority; the two realms collapse into inarticulate expressions that are "never apparent to the onlookers. Macbeth's language... is infuriatingly riddled with deictic phrases intelligible only to the off-stage audience, not the on-stage one" (Hopkins 259) which "undermines [language's] ability to show" (Hopkins 260). Macbeth's perceived actions, as a violation of social conduct, ultimately define him, and he is marked by other characters in the play as a civil rupture and failure of spectacle rather than a guilt-ridden man[4]. Within the play, language is established as a product of power and is subject to manipulation. Here, Macbeth's inability to control language for his own purposes indicates his loss of power and inability to maintain a Machiavellian dichotomy between interior and exterior.

Thus, Machiavellianism in the plays is also informed by the audience's presence: "Shakespeare learned to write for, and to live with, dangerous audiences: his plays are alive with, and are alive because they are alive with, permanent awareness of an audience's

potential disruptiveness" (Parry 6). The performance of duplicity, Machiavellianism, privacy, and secrecy is contingent on audience awareness. Grady argues that "...plays are constructed to generate successive frissons of horror in an audience privileged to be aware of each Machiavel's hypocritical exterior and diabolic interiority" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 46). The level of horror that, according to Grady, is inculcated through each "Machiavel's hypocritical exterior and diabolic interiority" is neither as homogonous nor as prevalent as Grady purports. There is something almost celebratory about the brief but intense successes of both Richard and Macbeth. Perhaps the horror that Grady perceives is not so much a condemnation of Machiavellianism as the exposure of how very effective Machiavellianism can be and, subsequently, how tenuous the dominant social order really is. If Machiavellianism is appropriated for social advancement, then any response to the use of it (horror or otherwise) is as much a critique of social conditions as it is of Machiavellianism itself, the 'horror' of epistemological doubt that is produced as a result of political framework notwithstanding. Richard and Macbeth are 'horrifying' to the extent that social, political, and cultural circumstances can be exploited via Machiavellian appropriation. Richard identifies the susceptibility of the dominant order when he advises the young Prince of worldly deceits:

> Sweet Prince, the untainted virtue of your years
> Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit;
> Nor more can you distinguish of a man
> Than of his outward show, which God He knows
> Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart.
> Those uncles which you want were dangerous.
> Your grace attended to their sugared words,
> But looked not on the poison of their hearts.
> God keep you from them, and from such false friends. (3.1.7-15)

In this passage, Richard is counselling the young prince against the "world's deceit" (3.1.8), which is comprised of people who manipulate "outward show" (3.1.10) with "sugared words" (3.1.12) to hide the "poison of their hearts" (3.1.13). This passage is particularly interesting for the way that it distinguishes between the inner "heart" and outward "show," further indicating not only a desire to separate the two, but that one can only "distinguish of a man" (3.1.9) by judging external behaviour. By comparison, the desires or yearning of the "heart" (3.1.11) are that "which [only] God He knows" (3.1.10). Richard also implies that the reason the young prince is unable to identify the "world's deceit" (3.1.8) is because of the prince's "untainted virtue" (3.1.7), possibly using virtue in the sense of innocence, naivety, and lack of experience with the corruption of the world, something that is here attributed to youth. Incidentally, the irony of Richard's statement is that he *can* recognize corruptness and shows an in-depth understanding of how a theatrical court works, describing a Machiavellianism "pointedly aware of the use of deception, force, and violence in politics" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 47). Here, Richard's ability to identify the "world's deceit" (3.1.8), "poison[ed] ... hearts" (3.1.13), and "sugared words" (3.1.12) is an indicator of his own corruption, as well as the necessity of supposed identities. The corruption in the play is affiliated with the political sphere of deceitful adults, making the ability to play or act a necessity (although not necessarily an inevitability, as indicated by Richmond who is not a duplicitous adult). Richard asks Buckingham:

> Come, cousin, canst thou quake and change thy colour?
> Murder thy breath in middle of a word,
> And then begin again, and stop again,
> As thou wert distraught and mad with terror? (3.5.1-4)

Richard's taunting suggests that the ability to self-fashion is a mark of success, an accomplishment befitting someone of courtly stature. Buckingham, suited in "rotten

armour, marvellous ill-favoured" (3.5 passim), claims that he can indeed suppose an exterior that hides his interior, and affiliates Machiavellian performance with theatrical tragedies:

> Tut, fear not me.
> I can counterfeit the deep tragedian:
> Speak, and look back, and pry on every side,
> Tremble and start at wagging of a straw,
> Intending deep suspicion. Ghastly looks
> Are at my service, like enforced smiles;
> And to both are ready in their offices
> To grace my stratagems. (3.5.5-12)

The ability to "counterfeit" (3.5.6) is directly linked to the "investigation of image and public exposure" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 31-32), a defining criterion of the Machiavel. With "smiles" (3.5.10) and "looks" (3.5.9) at his disposal, Buckingham appears to be aware of the necessity of role-playing within a social milieu, yet he is unable to identify Richard's deception. Furthermore, Buckingham does not suppose an exterior to protect himself from Richard because he believes that Richard is being honest with him. Richard's desire to repress his inward thoughts is still socially directed: "The secret mischiefs that I set abroach / I lay unto the grievous charge of others" (1.3.325-6). Stanley, who "never was nor never will be false" (4.4.411), is contrasted with Buckingham as Stanley is able to identify Richard's duplicitousness, and risks his son George Stanley's life by defying Richard's orders and aligning himself with "Courageous Richmond" (5.7.3). The very necessity for and interest in interiority is a function of social gain and power ideologies. Perhaps one of the most interesting moments in the play that solidifies the concept of self-fashioning as political and social in nature is when Buckingham advises Richard on how to alter both himself and his surroundings to convince the Mayor of Richard's virtue. Buckingham instructs Richard as follows:

> The Mayor is here at hand. Intend some fear.

> Be not you spoke with but by mighty suit;
> And look you get a prayer book in your hand,
> And stand betwixt two churchmen, good my lord,
> For on that ground I'll build a holy descant.
> Be not easily won to our request.
> Play the maid's part: say 'no', but take it. (3.7.40-46)

Buckingham's advice is entirely focused on altering perceptions, indicating the prevalence of seeming over being within a social context. Similarly, when Hastings states, "Marry, that with no man here he is offended; / For if he were, he would have shown it in his looks" (3.4.61-62), it indicates that Hastings is unaware of Richard's ability to manipulate his external appearance. Hastings assumes that people express what they feel and think, which is surprising given the plethora of social strictures that govern behaviour. Hastings is offered as a naïve character who is unaware of the social applicability of *sprezzatura*, whereas Buckingham is aware of it but can neither apply it nor identify it in the world around him. Hastings is naïve, Buckingham is negligent, and Richard is adept in using *sprezzatura* (although his ability to do so begins to erode around act 3), yet all three characters are unable to survive. Even though the use of *sprezzatura* is recommended by writers like Castiglione, within *Richard III* the inability to use it effectively (if at all) has devastating consequences. Even when Richard is at his best rhetorically, the metadramatic exposure of Richard's interiority undermines the overall effect of *sprezzatura*, and Richard is also unable to maintain a façade throughout the play. At the least, *Richard III* shows how *sprezzatura* is unable to maintain that social decorum that Castiglione believed it would instigate.

If the distinction between interior and exterior is conflated, then the ability to know somebody is problematized to the point where truth becomes indeterminable. This epistemological crisis explains the anxiety and fear of disguises in both texts. In *Macbeth*,

consider, for example, the imminent fear as the woods of Burnam approach Dunsinan. The fear of attack is second to a fear of the unknown. Malcolm states: "your leafy screens throw down, / And show like those you are" (5.6.1-2). The "leafy screens" (5.6.1) allow the attackers to blend in with their surroundings in the same way that social façade allows people to hide thoughts and blend into society. When "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" (1.1.11), or, at the very least, when fair is externally indistinguishable from foul, it becomes difficult to distinguish traitors from loyal patrons. Similarly, during the final face-off (pun intended) between Macbeth and Macduff, the latter tells Macbeth, "...tyrant, show thy face" (5.7.15). Macbeth is offstage at this moment, but the inclusion of the word "tyrant" (5.7.15) suggests that Macduff wants to be able to see Macbeth's villainy in his face, a request for the transparent art that Duncan yearned for at the start of the play. In *Macbeth*, a fear of 'unknowability' also presents itself when Ross states:

> But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
> And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumour
> From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
> But float upon a wild and violent sea
> Each way and move. (4.2.18-22)

To "know not what [one] fears" makes pre-emptive measures to protect the throne nearly impossible, an infirmity of social graces of which both Macbeth and Richard are well aware. The fact that Ross suggests that subjects "float upon a wild and violent sea" (*Macbeth* 4.2.21) indicates that the relationship between subjectivity and authority is turbulent, as though the cultural forces that produce the subject are also always determining the movement of the subject.

Supposing appearances through an identifying process initially permits accordance to social norms, but also allows "all things foul [...to] wear the brows of grace" (*Macbeth*

4.3.23), challenging both hierarchy and social conventions. The plays simultaneously reinforce behavioural codes through repetition and reification, but the very repetition that characters enact also creates a gap that allows for subversive potential. The ability to subvert the dominant social order relies on an understanding of normativity, especially within the audience. The theatrical use of interiority allows the exposure of the subversive potential of appropriating appearances.

CHAPTER III

SUBVERSIVE TRANSGRESSION AND 'LIMITLESS' MEN

> "...transgressive desire is inseparable from forbidden knowledge and together they kick-start history and become the driving forces of tragedy."
>
> *~Jonathan Dollimore~*

Early modern England was preoccupied with defining, ascribing, and maintaining social order. Order was believed to be of critical importance because "Without order there is no living in public society, because of the want thereof is the mother of confusion, whereupon division of necessity followeth, and out of division, inevitable destruction" (Hooker 103). Richard Hooker implies that hierarchy maintains the order of society when he states that "if things or persons be ordered, this doth imply that they are distinguished by degrees. For order is a gradual disposition..." (Hooker 103). A discussion of Renaissance concepts of hierarchy is complicated, but for now it shall suffice to elaborate on some key components of social order in the Renaissance, such as Divine Right of Kings, monarchy and 'class' hierarchy, and their relationship with Elizabethan concepts of power and social order. According to John N. Figgis, one of the struggles of the early Renaissance "raged [around] the vexed question of the royal prerogative" (28), which was composed of four key concepts. Firstly, "monarchy is a divinely ordained institution" (Figgis 19), a tenet that seeks to quell rebellion by positioning all counter-dominant acts as a simultaneous violation of both king and God. Secondly, "hereditary right is indefeasible (regulated by the law of primogeniture)" (Figgis 19). The third component states that "kings are accountable to God

alone" (Figgis 19); a king is not accountable to his subjects, and may rule at will. Finally, "non-resistance and passive obedience are enjoined by God" (Figgis 19). Under this depiction of the royal prerogative, rebellion becomes a heretical act because God ordains blind obedience and submission. The Divine Right of Kings was a fixture of Early Modern social life, and a belief system that was upheld by King James I. First published in 1599, James's treatise "The True Law of Free Monarchies" invokes the principles of the Royal Prerogative. Stuart states that the king, "Knowing himself to be ordained for them [his subjects] and they not for him; and therefore countable to that great God, who placed him as his lieutenant over them, upon the peril of his soul to procure that weal of both souls and bodies as far as in him lieth, of all them that are committed to his charge" (118). Part of this ideological framework is the idea that the monarch held a divinely appointed position as head of state and ruler of the state's subjects; however, the subjects could make no claim about who ruled them. Those who lived in a monarchic state were advised to follow the "...goodly order of God [...and] do our bounden duties, giving hearty thanks to God and praying for the preservation of this godly order" (Exhortation 93). Duty and obedience were believed to maintain the civil order of the state.

Civil order was an ideal that authorities sought to uphold. To elucidate, "An Homily Against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion" articulates that "obedience is the principal virtue of all virtues, and indeed the very root of all virtues, and the cause of all felicity" (94). A fundamental aspect of social obedience was that it reinforced hierarchical structures that legitimize the monarch and attempt to quell any opposition to the head of state: "On the basis of scripture, the homily asserts the unlawfulness of inferiors and subjects 'in any case' to resist superior powers" (Strier 171). "An Exhortation Concerning Good Order and

Obedience" also reinforces the superior position of the king and the divine consequences of questioning the monarch's authority:

> [...]let us all mark diligently that it is not lawful for inferiors and subjects in any case to resist or stand against the superior powers. ...Our saviour Christ himself and his apostles received many and diverse injuries of the unfaithful and wicked men in authority: yet we never read that they or any of them caused any sedition or rebellion against authority. ...But we must, in such cases patiently suffer all wrongs and injuries, referring to the judgement of our cause only to God. ("Exhortation" 94-95)

For a monarchic state, then, it was necessary to establish kings as second only to God, subsequently making kings unaccountable to their subjects and free to rule with minimal consequence. Obedience to kingship (body politic) as a means of governance took primacy over obedience to the particular king (body natural). Thus, even terrible rulers were to be obeyed because of their position as king. Regardless of the nature of the individual behind the crown, obedience to kingship was requisite, and "The existing order... is the legitimate one. To depart from it is to transgress God's law" (Dollimore 87). The pressure to conform to the dominant order was as significant as the repercussions for violating that order; transgressions against the king and state were purported as evil.

Yet, as Chapter II has already established, the prescribed modality of existence did not always match up with reality. For example, King James I attests in "The True Law of Free Monarchies" that

> ...the proper office of a King towards his subjects agrees very well with the office of the head towards the body, and all members thereof. For from the head, being the seat of judgement, proceedeth the care and foresight of guiding and preventing all evil that may come to the body, or any apart thereof. The head cares for the body; so doth the King for his people. (121)

If the organic social body, whereupon the king is head of state and his subjects the remaining limbs, is truly natural, the perpetual need to reiterate the importance of the Royal

Prerogative and the consequences for violating that order becomes problematic. The king's power, it seems, is at least marginally contingent upon the acquiescence of the subjects; that is to say that the maintenance of the dominant order is contingent upon the practices of the social body. Despite the fact that most works – and certainly the officially legitimized ones -- reaffirmed the divine sanction of the king, the repeated efforts to reinforce this ordering as veritable suggest a fear of subversion. Although the purpose of the king was to "maintain concord" (Stuart 118), it seems that "There was [also] overall agreement on the role of the moral person in the social order, in no small part because such a person was thought to be inseparable from that order" (Reiss 49). Subjects were encouraged to subscribe to absolute monarchy so that the dominant order could be maintained and the power of the king could be shown.[5] Thus, the many treatises that attempted to maintain the dominant order in Early Modern England can also provide insight into cultural anxieties about the legitimacy and viability of order and rebellion.

In a summary of Renaissance ideas of order, Lena Cowen Orlin states that "monarchic rule, hierarchical relationships, and patriarchal doctrine" were emphasized and promulgated, although the "prescribed standards for political order and obedience did not always match up with social realities" (139). Within this context, power can be described as a will or force that is exerted to maintain authorized thoughts of social order. This working definition of power correlates directly to Michel Foucault's definition of the term, in which "[t]he exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome" ("Subject" 789), as well as producing the subjects that power seeks to regulate. Similarly, in his book *Resistant Structures: Particularity, Radicalism, and Renaissance Texts*, Richard Strier outlines the complex nexus of relationships that

surrounded doctrines of obedience during early modern England: "The question of whether there were limits to the obedience that inferiors owed their social and political superiors was one of the great issues for both Renaissance and Reformation political thinking. It was a highly vexed issue, not one on which a stable consensus or even, in many cases, stable individual positions existed" (167). A rupture between prescribed social roles and a lived reality becomes apparent. The regulation and necessity of obedience that is depicted by monarchs is not necessarily representative of the views or experiences of Renaissance subjects. Supported by explanations of 'natural' hierarchical structures and obedience to those of higher rank, "order was founded in an unequal distribution of power" (Orlin 143). This structuring of Renaissance society, as Orlin has already asserted, was challenged in several significant ways that subtly exposed the tenuous nature of monarchic power relationships and hierarchical structures. Indeed, ". . . Tudor and Stuart efforts to consolidate the nationalist state not only initiated the centralization of power, but began to fashion subjects with a simultaneously more direct and more conflictual relation to the crown" (Traub, Kaplan and Callaghan 3). Displaced subjects struggled against the strictures and identities that were imposed upon them while religious practitioners like Martin Luther sought to de-sanctify the anointed position of kingship and place religion back in the hands of the people. Despite all of the attempts to regulate transgressive and rebellious behaviours against an allegedly natural and legitimate monarchy, the ideological contradictions were both apparent to and experienced by a vast majority of citizens. The attempts to moderate behaviour and appearance, and the subsequent opportunity to subvert those behaviour codes, are strongly connected to the maintenance of social order and absolute monarchy, and the role of limits and transgressions in Renaissance society.

Just as Castiglione and Peacham dictated codes of social appearance and behaviour, loyalty to the crown was also believed to present itself in specific behaviours and gestures. Roger Chartier notes that "Social rules and roles were learned and internalized, and deviation from the norm was punished. Every individual decision was subject to strict social controls..." (401). The consequences of social deviation were significant, considering that "...convicted heretics [...suffered] the penalty of burning at the stake, and treason was likewise punishable by death" (Bendix 293). These punishments increased the pressure for social conformity, or at the very least increased the pressure to *appear* loyal. Queen Elizabeth, for instance, later possessed a "paranoid anxiety that good outward behaviour is merely the cloak and pretext for subversive conspiracies... [exacerbating the willingness to] exploit the hiddenness [sic] of the interior realm by resorting to various forms of equivocation" (Maus 83). This is contrasted with assertions by Elizabeth in her younger years, who had previously felt, "for the purposes of social order... [that] apparent consensus and 'real' consensus [were] the same thing" (Maus 83). In the later years of her reign, Elizabeth was increasingly focused on obtaining loyalty not only through appearance, but also from "the loving hearts" (Maus 97) of her subjects. In "An Exhortation Concerning Good Order and Obedience," secret rebellion and interior treason are countered with a threat of publicly exposing private thoughts:

> And let no man think that he can escape unpunished that committeth treason, conspiracy or rebellion against his sovereign Lady, the Queen, though he commit the same never so secretly, either in thought, word or deed; never so privily in his privy chamber by himself, or openly communicating and consulting with other. For treason will not be hid: treason will out at length... (95)

Elizabeth's conceptualization of loyalty changed from external manifestations of loyalty to internal loyalty, and her changing attitude parallels the cultural shift that was increasingly

aware of inwardness and its socio-political implications. Her position indicates that "where such voluntary obedience prevails, a proper social order will ensue" (Bendix 309). The social strictures that required precise behaviours, manners, and appearances procured the means for their own subversion as interiority became increasingly relevant. Subversion "cannot be guaranteed a priori, independent of articulation, context and reception.... Not only does the idea have to be conveyed, it has also actually to be used to refuse authority *or* be seen by authority as capable and likely of being so used" (Dollimore and Sinfield 13). Dollimore's emphasis on visible challenges to authority parallels Richard and Macbeth's decentering as subjects; they must be perceived in order to be relevant. Just as the subject or any agency that a subject assumes cannot occur prior to social context, neither can the subversion of authority; both are always already social. It is important that challenges to authority are perceived, at a minimum, as threatening in order to be even potentially subversive. Expression, or external articulation, is an important component of defining characteristics of individuals and subversive acts, because the relevance of the articulation is contingent on cultural expression. Both plays indicate an increasing awareness of the interior space, but the primary focus is on the outward display of that which resides internally and how those expressions correlate to political anxieties; this will be addressed in greater detail later in this chapter with specific textual analysis.

Given the fluctuating state of authority that plagued Renaissance England, the rise of theatre that coincides with such events is also worthy of discussion. Despite endorsing acts of resistance, it was still a tremendous risk to directly defy the monarch, an act that frequently resulted in extreme forms of punishment. Theatre provided playwrights with a negotiable (albeit sometimes only minimally), liminal space between reality and fiction that

could account for representations and interpretations of Renaissance culture. According to David Kastan, "what underlies... anxieties about playing is the awareness that representation offers an inherent challenge to the fundamental categories of a culture that would organize itself hierarchically and present that organization as inevitable and permanent" (154). The child-like and non-threatening nature of 'play' allowed for rebuttals and refutations to be socially introduced with a diminished chance for social or political consequence if a play was not well received. This 'treacherous entertainment' was potentially transgressive, which in turn leads into much larger discussions of theatre discourses. For now, it is important to understand merely that the subversive potential of theatre made it an ideal venue to posit challenges to authority with a diminished consequential risk. Any effects of theatrical representations were placed solely in the laps of the audience, which lends further support to monarchical challenge: "The theatre, then, it could be said, enacts, not necessarily on stage, but in its fundamental transaction with the audience, the exact shift in the conception of authority that brings a king to trial and ultimately locates sovereignty in the common will of its subjects" (Kastan 164). Thus, the relationship between a play and its audience has direct correlations to socio-political elements of monarchic rule, divine right, and sovereignty, and hints at the idea that power is negotiated.

It comes as no surprise, then, to find that playwrights like William Shakespeare exploited tensions that existed between the absolute rule of the monarch and the will of his (or her) subjects. Shakespeare toyed with social tensions in all of his plays, but the legitimacy and sanctity of monarchic rule in the face of ambition and subversive manoeuvring is particularly scrutinized in both *Richard III* and *Macbeth.* Significantly,

there is also value in "calling attention... to one aspect of history: to power relations and to the ideology in which power relations are encoded" (Skura 61). In 1593 Richard Hooker noted that "This order of things and persons in public societies is the work of polity, and the proper instrument thereof in every degree is power; power being that ability which we have of ourselves or receive from others, for performance of any action" (Hooker 103). Shakespeare was entrenched in the society that he explored, critiqued and condemned at times; indeed, he "produced, as well as reproduced, the larger cultural discourse. [...] Shakespeare, [...] more than almost any other, both absorbed and shaped the various conflicting discourses of the period" (Skura 72). Exploring these various cultural tensions often culminated in assertions about absolute monarchy and subjectivity. Far from propagating allegedly dominant, authorized paradigms of social existence, the bard often exposed the very anxieties that social hierarchy was supposed to appease but in fact was based upon:

> ...Shakespeare not only agreed with "Jack" Donne that 'rightly obey[ing]' power could sometimes mean not complying with its demands, maintaining one's own integrity in the face of it, but [that it] could also mean actively resisting and attempting to thwart it. Shakespeare... pushed the paradox of right obedience as sometimes consisting of disobedience as far as it would go. (Strier 166)

Significantly, both *Richard III* and *Macbeth* display characters' overt and subtle attempts at undermining authority, and these attempts are contingent on the ability to manipulate a belief in the distinction between interior and exterior, between desire and conformity, thereby exemplifying Strier's notion of right obedience. Similarly, the epistemological crisis that is outlined in Chapter II results from the same distinction, and the manipulation of internal and external therefore exposes a cultural anxiety about the ability to know a person through prescribed outward behaviour and gesture. The disobedient, rebellious acts of both

Richard III and Macbeth represent Jonathan Dollimore's belief that "To explore any period's conception of chaos [lack of order] is to discover not the primordial state of things, but fears and anxieties very specific to that period" (Dollimore 93). Richard and Macbeth's usurpations of the throne during a regime that promoted absolute monarchy indicate that the transgressive desires of seemingly 'limitless' men existed in Renaissance England, and held subversive potential. The monarchic transgressions they enact simultaneously challenge the authority and boundaries of monarchic rule and the legitimacy of hierarchical social order. By invoking Foucault's description of negotiated power relations, kingship in *Richard III* and *Macbeth* is exposed as permeable rather than absolute, and a hole is created in the discourse of social obedience.

Both *Richard III* and *Macbeth* have strong critical histories as plays that validate providence and perpetuate the dominant order in the face of ambitious individual will. *Macbeth* is often described as a play that describes "a process leading from the temporary disruption of cosmic order to its restoration" (O'Rourke 1) as it displays "the conflict between divine omniscience and human free will" (O'Rourke 3). There is much evidence for providential readings of the Scottish play. Macbeth murders Duncan even though Duncan felt very affectionate toward him: "we love him highly / And shall continue our graces towards him" (1.6.30-31). Macbeth becomes a violator of social order as he disregards his friendly, familial, and hierarchical connections with Duncan in favour of his own desires. Macbeth becomes obsessed with safeguarding his illegitimate kingship, and murders friends (Banquo), women (Lady MacDuff), and children (MacDuff's children) in an attempt to do so. Macbeth dies by MacDuff's sword, the latter bringing "Th'usurper's cursèd head" (5.7.85) back onto the stage at the end of the play to reinforce the cautionary

tale against unwarranted ambition and re-establish the providential order of the text. No longer a beloved subject, Macbeth is described as a "hell-hound" (5.7.33), "abhorrèd tyrant" (5.7.10), and "butcher" (5.7.99) by the end of the play, and Lady Macbeth as "fiend-like" (5.7.99). The usurper is removed, and order is restored. One of the biggest critical hurdles for opponents of providential readings of the Scottish play is the inability to account for all that Macbeth does accomplish over the course of the play; he goes on mass killing sprees and overtly disrupts social order, leaving a trail of horror behind him. As one of Shakespeare's most violent and bloody plays, it remains a challenge to justify providential readings. As such, *Macbeth* is not without supporters of individualist readings of the play, either. These critics boast that *Macbeth* celebrates the potential accomplishments of what a man is capable of with the proper motivation. There is something celebratory in *Macbeth*, something to be admired about a character who faces so much opposition but perseveres nonetheless. Little is known about Duncan as a ruler beyond his high regard for Macbeth, which could possibly justify Macbeth's treasonous actions, and at the very least Macbeth is presented as a potentially successful leader based on his accomplishments at the start of the play. Lady Macbeth encourages her husband to be all he can be, but the world is simply not prepared to sacrifice hierarchy for individual merit. Both providential and individual readings *do* exist in Macbeth, although not without flaw.

Richard III also has a very strong critical history as a play that validates providence, especially within the context of the Tudor myth. Critics argue that "Shakespeare meant him [Richard] to be dramatized objectively as coming under the scourge of divine justice" (Kelley 291), picturing the "Lancastrian line as divinely vindicated and restored in the person of Henry VII, and the Yorkist usurpation and tyranny providentially punished"

(Kelley 81). Indeed, when the ghosts of Richard's victims appear before Richard in Act V, they urge Richard to "despair and die" (5.4.105), invoking a sense of divine justice for Richard's murders. Additionally, Richmond battles Richard not just as a man, but "in God's name" (5.2.22), sent to remedy a world out of joint and a throne usurped. Richard, who is very clear about his intention to disrupt from the onset of the play, is penalized by the inviolable force of providence as he succumbs to Margaret and Anne's curses, forcibly reinstated into the dominant order that is sustained by providentialism. He is portrayed as "subtle, false, and treacherous" (1.1.37) from the beginning of the play (whereas, by comparison, Macbeth increasingly shifts toward this status), but it is obvious to everyone by the end of Act V that he is so. He is responsible for the deaths of Henry VI, Edward IV, Young Edward, Rivers, Grey, Vaughn, Hastings, Clarence, Lady Anne, and Buckingham, but Richard's biggest crime is seeking "to determine himself as an autonomous being" (Jowett 37), setting his own path against the threads of history. But of course, Richard is part of a much larger order that he cannot ignore, even as he rebels against it, because the "course of justice wheel[s] about" (4.4.99) and punishes Richard for his actions. Similar to *Macbeth*, it is plausible to read *Richard III* as a tale that cautions against the selfishness of individualism, once more reinforcing the necessity of providence and hierarchy for maintaining social order. Yet, in another parallel with *Macbeth*, *Richard III* also has a strong history of individualist readings of the play (including, but not limited to, William Hazlitt's 1814 review that compared the individualist elements of both plays). Richard is quick-witted and astute, a master rhetorician who spins language and manipulates situations to his advantage. He is not by birthright destined for greatness, but instead represents "those who have the wit to claim the place [throne]" (3.1.50). At times it is difficult to dislike

Richard, as he represents a type of latent potential to be anything – even king! – regardless of physical appearance or social restrictions. It is especially easy to sympathize with Richard's self-determination retrospectively, as this trait is often deemed desirable in modern times. As such, many advocates of individualism see in Richard, as at times they see in Macbeth, a prototype for the modern man who is free and self-determining, limited (or unlimited) only by his own desires. The difficulty with these readings is, of course, Richard's death and the reinscription of hierarchy and monarchic rule at the end of the play.

The strong providential overtones of each play (although notably more prevalent in *Richard III*) have tenuous connections with the curses and prophecies that are offered. Prophecy in both *Richard III* and *Macbeth* does not definitively ratify providential or individualistic readings, but instead conveys an ambiguity about the stability of absolute monarchy and Divine Right of Kings. Although paganism and occultism were removed from church proceedings, they are nonetheless capable of functioning as overarching structures of divine retribution in both plays. In many ways, the ambiguous stance and near triviality of cursing and prophecy affords both Macbeth and Richard the opportunity to denounce their predestined paths in favour of self-interest.

The opening scene of *Macbeth* commences with thunder and lightening as the three witches arrange "to meet with Macbeth" (1.1.7) after "the battle's lost, and won" (1.1.4). The opening scene is a mere twelve lines in length and features only the three witches, yet immediately piques the audience's interest. By proclaiming that "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" (1.1.11), the witches indicate the ambiguity that plagues the rest of the play; Macbeth is singled out by the witches very early on and becomes affiliated with their ambiguity. The witches state that "fair is foul and foul is fair" (1.1.11), confounding the opposing terms in a

way that divorces the terms from their conventional meanings; they are now undistinguishable from each other. Furthermore, the mention of "fog" (1.1.12) is significant insofar as it neither completely obstructs nor permits clarity of vision. These final two lines create ambiguity, a precognitive symbol of the disorienting structural framework that develops throughout the play. The witches also invoke images of the three mythological Fates, which affiliates their words with prophecy and premonition of events to come. The witches proclaim that Macbeth will be "Thane of Glamis" (1.3.48), "Thane of Cawdor" (1.3.49) and then "King" (1.3.50), all of which causes Macbeth to "start" and "seem to fear" (1.3.51). Banquo asks a seemingly obvious question when he asks why Macbeth would respond that way to "things that do sound so fair?" (1.3.52), but since it has already been established that "fair is foul and foul is fair" (1.1.11), this seemingly innocent question actually impinges on an epistemological confusion. If fair really is foul, or if the terms are at least undistinguishable from one another, then it seems only natural that Macbeth would be wary of "things that do sound so fair" (1.3.52), and they might not be all that different from that which is foul. Significantly, Macbeth's first words in the play are "So fair and foul a day I have not seen" (1.3.38), noting the unusual mingling of the two concepts, and how out of place the combination is in Macbeth's world.

Banquo notes the ambiguous appearance of the witches: "You should be women, / And yet your beards forbid me to interpret / That you are so" 1.3.45-7). Banquo's inability to analyze the confusing appearance of the witches is problematic for him; he struggles to determine the value of the witches' remarks without first ascertaining what and who they are. When Banquo asks them, "Are ye fantastical, or that indeed / Which outwardly ye show?" (1.3.53-54), he questions not only the corporeal existence of the witches, but also

the integrity with which they operate. The legitimacy or authenticity of the witches is important to Banquo, and appears to be a determining factor in deciphering the veracity of their prophecies. The phonetic similarities between "indeed" (1.3.53) and 'in deed' allow for another interpretation of the lines that implies that Banquo wants to know if the witches *are* what they *seem*; he questions if the actions (deeds) of the sisters are congruent with their outward appearance. What is at stake is the relationship between the witches and the dominant order of Macbeth's world. If the witches are what they seem, if their words are transparent and no alternative motivations can be gleaned, then their prophecies can be read as perpetuating providential readings of the play, and the dominant order can be upheld; they would be little more than cosmic figures designed to perpetuate a preordained plan. If, on the other hand, they are deemed to be other than they appear and deceitful in nature, then the witches can potentially be read as indicators of chaos and subversion who hope to instigate a disruptive chain of events by prompting Macbeth's ambition. As earthly figures of chaos, the witches would want to perpetuate Macbeth's belief that he could be king, ratifying an individualist reading that celebrates Macbeth's ambitious desires. The amount of agency that is allotted to the witches – as the cause of Macbeth's ambition or a symptom of it – can influence whether the play is read as validating providential or individualist pursuits.

Macbeth briefly concludes that the witches' claims are unfounded, or "not within the prospect of belief" (1.3.74), and thus demands that the three sisters defend their "prophetic greeting" (1.3.78). The witches vanish "into the air...and what seemed corporal melted / As breath into the wind" (1.3.81-82). Macbeth, Banquo and the audience remain unaware of the motivation behind the witches' disclosure, unsure of the veracity of the prophetic claims. Banquo further describes the witches as earthly ("The earth hath bubbles... / And these are

of them" (1.3.79-80)), which seems to be enough of an admission to deter Macbeth from taking the prophecies seriously. Again, the ambiguous status of the witches emphasizes one of the key elements of Macbeth's world in which both the dominant order and a subversive order are permitted simultaneously. There is justification of the witches as divine beings, but there also exists evidence of them as earthly beings; they are at once predicting and constructing the future. The ambiguous status of the prophecy questions the efficacy of providence in the play, and necessitates the need for resistance in order to reify the authority of the state. This symbiotic relationship between limit and transgression is also apparent in *Richard III.*

In *Richard III*, Richard speaks of the prophecy that foretells of "'G' / Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be" (1.1.38-39), and the ambiguity of this prophecy is pivotal to placing Richard at the heart of the contradiction within the play and as a site of ideological struggle. Richard of Gloucester is a malcontent of royal blood who has "no delight to pass away the time" (1.1.25) and is caught between "a prophecy which says that 'G' / of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be" (1.1.39-40) and his determination "to prove a villain" (1.1.30) within a framework of absolute monarchy and Divine Right of Kings. Margaret is positioned as a "prophetess" (1.3.301) early on in the play, and earns her reputation by spewing curses at the "murd'rous villain" (1.3.134) Richard. She begs, "God that seest it, do not suffer it! / As it was won with blood, lost be it so" (1.3.271-72), setting up an ominous tension in the play over Richard's decision to "Spurn at his [God's] edict, and fulfill a man's" (1.4.179). Margaret is disheartened that her warnings are not heeded, and once again invokes God's will in helping to resolve the matter:

> O, but remember this another day
> When he shall split the very heart with sorrow,

> And say poor Margaret was a prophetess.
> Live each of you the subjects of his [Richard's] hate,
> And he to yours, and all of you to God's. (1.3.299-303)

Margaret laments the sorrow that she foresees as inevitable so long as people operate under Richard's guidance, but implies that all actions will fall under the blanket of God's omniscience. Margaret imminently connects Richard's motivation to a divine ordinance that is picked up later on in the play when Richmond returns. Richard's machinations are suddenly burdened by curses and providence, individualism confronted by divinity. In order to see his goals through to fruition, Richard must now overcome the conflict that is presented by the overarching providential theme. Additionally, the fact that the other characters "scorn me [Margaret] for my gentle counsel, / And soothe the devil that I warn thee from" (1.3.297-98) suggests vulnerability in Margaret's divine prophecy. Richard's duplicity and evil intentions may be obvious to Margaret, but not necessarily to others; because her judgement is not posited as absolute, the role of providence is somewhat loosened and in need of validation. With Macbeth, the witches' prophecy instigates his ambition; for Richard, the motivation to usurp was always present, but Margaret's prophecy infuses the play with the overtones of providence and divine right of kings. As with the witches in *Macbeth*, Margaret both predicts and shapes the future of the play, although the two prophecies contribute different elements to the overall structures of *Macbeth* and *Richard III*.

Providential readings of *Richard III* tend to imply that Renaissance culture was quite homogonous in its antipathy toward "the private appetites which undermine and devour hierarchical structures" (Carroll 82); this type of reading reinforces the dominant order of inviolable kingship and Divine Right of Kings. There are also strong providential overtones

in Richard's dream state, in which the ghosts of those he murdered traipse across the stage as a visual and verbal reminder of Richard's death count, instructing him to "despair and die" (5.4.105). To despair was a sin against God, a violation of a spiritual order that was appropriated for social organization (in which the King was the head of state that governs the body of the people), and heralds King James's belief that even poor kings should be obeyed. Tolerance, not defiance, was the key to maintaining the monarchy, and so the ghosts' reiteration of "despair and die" (5.4.105) encourages Richard to violate godly and stately limits. Significantly, it is the ghosts of those he murdered in order to usurp the crown that urge Richard to despair, connecting his demise with his treasonous actions. By invoking a sense of cosmic retribution, Shakespeare seems to be imposing a divine sanction on the matters of men; to usurp the crown and violate a king will invoke God's wrath. However, an odd dependency presents itself. For a regime that is supposed to discourage and prevent rebellion, each character does a remarkably adept and expedient job of violating the order. Maus confirms the subversive potential of *Richard III* when she writes: "There is despair [...] in *Richard III*, but there is also, strangely, a kind of triumph. If a beneficent providence does not exist, there is little hope for the redress of injustice in this world or the next; at the same time, divine punishment for self-assertion is less automatic and thus perhaps less fearsome" (Maus 71). Richard *must* resist in order for the ghosts' commands to truly represent divine authority; if Richard were to merely acquiesce and despair, the command would seem much less like divine retribution and much more like a cruel act against an obedient subject. The limit of authority is exposed by the social laws that Richard challenges.

It can be seen, then, that both *Macbeth* and *Richard III* are troubled by "disturbances" against both Burckhardian readings of individualism and "the virtues of absolutism" (Sinfield 104) as presented by James Stuart. These disturbances inhibit the tendency to dichotomize providence and individualism in the plays, but a notable tension remains between them that places the titular characters on "the axes of contradictions" (Dollimore *Radical* 112). The plays simultaneously permit readings that validate the dominant orthodoxy and readings that challenge it. The ambiguity neither explicitly adheres to providential order, nor does it ratify individual ambitious agendas. It does, however, create a need for authority to be legitimated and reasserted within the context of each play. If either Richard or Macbeth were to ascend the throne and remain there, providence would be rendered obsolete and individualism (and treason) would be endorsed. In *Richard III*, in order for Richmond to invoke providence and reclaim the throne in the name of God, Richard must be created as an unholy figure who disregards authority via individualism. Similarly, Macbeth must create a crisis of ambition in order for providence to reinstate order to the play. Individualism exists in the plays so that providence may be validated; inversely, individualism also exposes the vulnerabilities of authority in the texts, and resituates power as a negotiation rather than an obtainable object. The state of competing ideologies is a heterogeneous compilation born from the power dynamics of a monarchy, the social limits that both forbid and necessitate Richard's and Macbeth's resistance. The transgressions of both Richard and Macbeth make the characters themselves sites of ideological power struggles between the dominant order (providence) and resistances to it (individualism), grounding the text in a socio-political discourse of limit and transgression, containment and subversion. Macbeth and Richard operate within a hierarchical regime, and as each

character interrogates the existence and validity of the hierarchical society in which he resides, his transgressions become increasingly political: "[For the] malcontented protagonist of Jacobean tragedy... the limiting structure comes to be primarily a socio-political one" (Dollimore, *Radical* 119). For Richard and Macbeth, their limiting structure is hierarchy and providence, "...constituted [as] an ideological underpinning for ideas of absolute monarchy and divine right" (Dollimore 89). Similarly the worlds of both characters are imbued with ambiguity that manifests itself as a tension between an alternate view of the world (absolute monarchy and Divine Right of Kings) and a counter-current model of selfhood that accounts for individualism.

Historically speaking, Charles Taylor notes that Renaissance culture associated the royal prerogative with civil obedience: "...the special grant of divine power to kings could avoid the chaos of anarchy" (195). This befits a doctrine that coincides with a hierarchical social structure whose primary focus is the obedience of subjects to their monarch for the maintenance of order. Yet, Taylor notes that the concept of monarchic primacy as a means of maintaining order is an ideological premise that was not necessarily reflected in social practice. Renaissance society was fraught with ambiguity, possessing a "hierarchical arrangement" that is "the very element which to earlier ages was a source of cohesion, [but] is now seen as a cause of tension" (Taylor 195). The tension that Taylor sees as arising from hierarchy correlates to Dollimore and Sinfield's suggestion that the means of subversion are often produced by the regimes that seek to deter resistance and subversion: "...that which apparently threatens authority seems to be produced by it" (Dollimore and Sinfield 14). The state and subject, king and usurper, coexist in a mutually defining relationship:

> The question in debate was of rebellion and sovereignty. It was manifestly changing the very idea of the state. This is no new finding, but it matters that

> the change did not draw first on theoretical abstraction but on the experience of actual conditions, and applied immediately to concrete life. Doing so, it inevitably engaged the experience of who and what one was as a person *in* that life. (Reiss 447)

The ambiguities expressed in the plays directly relate to Renaissance life and the relationship between absolute authority and resistance. The contrast between providence and free will was well documented (with the influence of Luther and Calvin, for example), but new historicism tends to rebuke dichotomies in favour of a more complex nexus of relationships. The binary divisions between providence and free will, God's divine plan and agency, is something that Timothy Reiss declares as "a logical or theological [division], rather than historical, one. Real life held them intertwined..." (50). The inseparability of the two ideologies not only leads to contradiction for the characters, but leads to a greater discussion of limits and transgressions.

The epistemological anxiety that resulted from a distinction between interiority and exteriority is directly related to the limit and transgression of authority. For example, the Earl of Essex's purported loyalty to Queen Elizabeth I and his subsequent persecution for treason is the topic of much erudite scrutiny. In "A Declaration of the Practices and Treasons Attempted and Committed by Robert late Earl of Essex," Francis Bacon details the circumstances and accounts of the Earl of Essex's act of treason against Queen Elizabeth I. Bacon disclosed this work after the Earl's trial, declaring a violation of the affections and favours that the Queen bestowed upon the Essex. The fear and anxiety accrued not solely as a result of treason, but the fact that those who spent a great deal of time around Essex (including the Queen and Bacon himself) were unable to discern his secret motives until his attempted rebellion. Bacon writes:

> But he [Essex] on the other side making these her Majesty's favours nothing else but wings for his ambition, and looking upon them not as her benefits but as his advantages, supposing that to be his own metal which was but her mark and impression, was so given over by God [...], as he had long ago plotted it in his heart to become a dangerous supplanter of that seat whereof he ought to have been a principal supporter; in such sort as now every man of common sense may discern not only his last actual and open treasons, but also his former more secret practices and preparations towards those his treasons, and that without any gloss or interpreter but himself, and his own doings.
> ("Declaration" 115)

According to Bacon, the Earl of Essex not only violated his allegiance to the Queen with his ambition, but violated the Divine Right of Kings and the notion of absolute monarchy as well. The fact that Essex "had long ago plotted it *in his heart*" (Bacon, "Declaration 115 my emph.) to commit treason against the Queen elucidates the anxieties over and a distinction between "open treasons" and "secret practices and preparations towards those [...] treasons" (Bacon, "Declaration" 115). Bacon suggests that there is a disjuncture between treasonous thoughts and the expression of those thoughts, which yet again correlates to a distinction between interior and exterior. Essex used the ensuing epistemological crisis to attempt plot against Elizabeth. Violating the Divine Right of Kings would also be considered an act against God, the one being that has access to inward thoughts and feelings[6]. In addition to elucidating the anxieties and fears that surround internal treason, Bacon also emphasizes the external manifestations of those thoughts and their political implications:

> But as it were a vain thing to search the roots and first motions of treasons, which are known to none but God that discerns the heart, and the devil that gives the instigation; so it is more than to be presumed (being made apparent by the evidence of all the events following) that he carried [...] a heart corrupted in his allegiance and pregnant of those, or the like, treasons which afterward came to light. ("Declaration" 115-16)

While the concept of treasonous thoughts is a fearful one, and a practice clearly condemned in this quotation, Bacon also implies that corrupt hearts or treasonous thoughts will

ultimately be identifiable through external action, or when they come "to light" ("Declaration" 116). Significantly, Bacon's assertions promote a vision of a teleological relationship between the interior and the exterior in which inner thoughts are always visible externally, eventually if not immediately. Despite Bacon's suggestion that the internal will eventually be exposed, his statements are motivated by the very anxiety that they seek to suppress, rooted in the indeterminacy of the relationship between interior and exterior. The anxiety and fear of internal treason exists primarily because thoughts are *not* always resolutely determinable in external behaviour and actions, even though conduct codes were supposed to firmly establish a transparency. With the Earl of Essex, his rebellion was thwarted and ultimately no harm was done, yet the account of his trial still holds cultural significance for the manner in which it addresses private thoughts and the ability of others to know those thoughts, and for indicating a fear of the subversive potential of the manipulable exterior. Although Essex's plan was not successfully implemented, the transgressive nature of his thoughts alone still bears cultural weight, and can be readily applied to both *Macbeth* and *Richard III*.

In *Macbeth*, when Angus discusses Macbeth's troops, Shakespeare creates a situation that invokes Queen Elizabeth's desire to demand internal loyalty from her subjects:

> Now does he[Macbeth] feel
> His secret murders sticking on his hands,
> Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach:
> Those he commands move only in command,
> Nothing in love; now does he feel his title
> Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
> Upon a dwarfish thief. (5.2.16-22)

According to Angus, Macbeth's troops "move only in command / Nothing in love" (5.2.19-20). Angus' assessment of the relationship between Macbeth and his troops is significant

because it implies that Macbeth would like to trust in the actions of his own soldiers. Macbeth's faith in his subordinates is ironic considering that Macbeth himself exploited the behavioural code of obedience in order to usurp Duncan. This quotation speaks to a mistrust of appearance and a fear of interior treason because to "move only in command" (5.2.19) is to give an outward appearance of obedience while simultaneously acknowledging a loyalty that may not be present. Macbeth's soldiers respond out of duty rather than heartfelt loyalty, even though Macbeth still commands them as if they were loyal and obedient. Challenging Early Modern concepts of civil obedience, this scene indicates that obedience through ritualized courtly behaviours or civil obligations allows for the duplicitous subject who is aware of and is capable of manipulating interiority and exteriority. The previous quotation indicates that the allegedly obligatory obedience of subjects is just as malleable as kingship, whereupon Macbeth's "giant's robe" (5.2.21) is worn by a "dwarfish thief" (5.2.22) rather than a rightful king. This subtle anti-absolutist suggestion once again invokes Foucault's idea of a negotiable power relationship by destabilizing the idea that kings could possess a inviolable legitimacy and authority. Both subjects and kings are identified by behaviours, appearance and conduct that are prescribed, and are also thereby subject to manipulation. In a sense, Macbeth is heralding Elizabeth's anxiety about internal loyalty; just as Duncan could not foresee Macbeth's betrayal, neither can Macbeth foresee the theatrical behaviours of his soldiers. The same system that allowed Macbeth to usurp the throne provides a similar recourse for his own disposal.

The expectations of loyalty and obedience also allow Richard to usurp the throne in *Richard III*, and many comparisons may be drawn between Richard of Gloucester and the Earl of Essex. Richard, rhetorically savvy as he is, manages to gain the trust of people

before he betrays them, and most are unable to detect his "secret mischiefs" (1.3.325). The fact that "simple gulls" (1.3.328) like Buckingham and Hastings, cannot distinguish between Richard's external conviction of loyalty and his inner thoughts of treason means that Richard is able to convincingly portray himself as an obedient subject who respects hierarchical structures. Richard can "clothe [his] naked villainy" (1.3.336) by feigning loyalty and deftly constructing the image of an obedient subject. Richard's deceptiveness represents Queen Elizabeth's concern about internal loyalty, and the repercussions of having external loyalty only become glaringly obvious as Richard murders his way to the throne. Internal loyalty is also significant in Stanley's relationship with Richard. Stanley offers to rally his "tenants" (4.4.398) who are obligated to serve Stanley. Richard threatens to behead Stanley's son if Richard's orders are not followed, and the latter assumes that Stanley will obey with this added incentive, and so Richard allows him to leave after he tells Richard to "mistrust me not" (4.4.396). Stanley uses the time to help Richmond instead; his external obedience to Richard is trivial compared to his inner loyalty to Richmond, as the inner loyalty that Stanley shows Richmond creates a significant "vantage" (5.2.22) in the fight to dethrone Richard. Because Stanley (and earlier, Richard) appears loyal, he is able to create a subversive outlet. The expectation of obedience, presented in a specified way, allows for an undetectable disobedience.

The inability to determine inner loyalty has significant repercussions on the presentation of obedience in each play, leading to a subsequent analysis of limit and transgression. In both plays, the preconceived descriptions and expectations of obedience are appropriated by Macbeth and Richard, allowing treason to occur. The behaviours and attitudes that once represented loyal subjects are used instead to cover disloyalty, and it

becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish the obedient from the disobedient. In order for absolute monarchy to be legitimized, it must maintain order at the end of the play, and order is achieved in both plays by the deaths of the usurpers Macbeth and Richard respectively, replaced by Malcolm and Richmond in a fashion that honours the right of succession. Macbeth's and Richard's ambitions posit the characters as 'limitless men' who either know no limits or have a total disregard for them. It is only through their treasonous acts, as a disregard for authority, that the dominant order can be legitimized. Macbeth's disobedience and great ambition are what makes his death at the end both sad and satisfying; Macbeth was so transgressive against authority that the limit provided by providence seems almost welcome. Similarly, Richmond's ascension to the throne is a reprieve compared to the chaos that followed in Richard's wake. The power of providence, absolute monarchy, and Divine Right of Kings becomes evident through its engagement with resistance, and these doctrines of obedience are subtly exposed as vulnerable while the man behind the crown is once more displaced in favour of broader social discourse.

Significantly, the transgression of social limits correlates to Foucault's assertion that power must be exercised in order to be effective. The desires of both Macbeth and Richard do, to a certain extent, serve to reinscribe the dominant hegemony: "Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean the individual or collective groups who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments, may be realized" (Foucault, "Subject" 790). Macbeth's and Richard's decisions to resist the dominant regime through the use of inwardness and outwardness, and Shakespeare's invocation of the more Burckhardian idea of individualism, exposes Renaissance social normativity as producing

the means of its own subversion and suggests a symbiotic relationship between limit and transgression. This once again correlates to Foucault's discussion of power relationships:

> Consequently, there is no face-to-face confrontation of power and freedom, which are mutually exclusive (freedom disappears everywhere power is exercised), but a much more complicated interplay. In this game freedom may well appear as the condition for the exercise of power (at the same time its precondition, since freedom must exist for power to be exerted, and also its permanent support, since without the possibility of recalcitrance, power would be equivalent to a physical determination). (Foucault, "Subject" 790)

Individualism as resistance then becomes a condition (or, as Foucault notes, a precondition) of subversion and containment, transgression and limit. Just as the individual is a product of socio-political conditions, so too are the acts that may otherwise be interpreted as individualistic (in the modern sense) also embedded in culture. Inversely, a limit would not exist without transgressors to establish the parameters of said limit. It is no coincidence that Dollimore draws on Foucault in his analysis of the subversion/containment model:

> Such perhaps are the conditions for masochistic transgression: intimacy becomes the means of a defiance of power, the new-found importance of the subject the impetus of that defiance, the abjectness of the subject its self-sacrificial nature... We may even see here the origins of sub-cultural transgression: the identity conferred upon the deviant by the dominant culture enables resistance as well as oppression. (Dollimore, *Radical* 114)

By first acknowledging and then resisting their imposed identities as dutiful, obedient subjects, characters may expose the dominant order *and* the means of its subversion. To limit or to transgress is constituted by the coterminous relationship between the two ideas; one cannot function effectively without the other, creating the crisis of ambiguity that plagues Richard and Macbeth: "Power exists only when it is put into action" (Foucault, "Subject" 788). The chaos that disrupts hierarchical order is not so much a result of ambition or exertion of will as it is a product of social tensions between ambition and the prevailing dominant order.

CONCLUSION

In *Macbeth* and *Richard III*, the fact that each character acquires and then loses the title of 'king' does not solely endorse providentialism because usurpation, as Jonathan Dollimore notes, is "the very desire to disclose that process is itself oppositional and motivated by the knowledge that, formidable though it be, it is a process which is historically contingent and partial – never necessary or total" (Dollimore, *Political* 15). Dollimore's statement is particularly significant considering that the English Renaissance is largely heralded as a time of significant change in nearly every aspect of social life. With so much change occurring both frequently and quickly, exposing the contingency of monarchic authority would indeed be supremely subversive. In *Macbeth*, written shortly after *Richard III* and published posthumously, Shakespeare hints at an increasing anxiety surrounding the impregnability of social hierarchy with the play's precariously 'open' ending. Playing off of the tensions of Duncan's and then Macbeth's capabilities as rulers, Macbeth's death is not followed by the appointment of a new monarch. Instead, the position is left open, imbuing the play with a sense of uncertainty and further ambiguity. The bard's decision to leave the new monarch unstated parallels the anxiety of the audience with broader political concerns because the idea of kingship itself is affirmed as violable rather than absolute. Subjecting the body politic, that eternal idea of kingship that is seemingly both immutable and ineffable, to historical change undermines religious, political, and social doctrines of Early Modern England. As Charles Taylor notes, "The erosion of the sense of authority [in the Early Modern period is] something natural, something given in the order of things or the community" (Taylor 195). Providential and individualistic overtones in both plays display

both the power and vulnerability of the dominant order: "If tragedy shows social order being violated, it does so only to demonstrate how ultimately impregnable it is" (Eagleton x). The death of either titular character does not reaffirm a providential order, nor does it necessarily validate the humanist agenda; rather, the deaths of the lead characters expose the vulnerabilities of the dominant order and suggest a nuanced cultural experience resulting from tensions between two of the more traditional readings of each play, speaking instead to a larger discourse of power relations. The intense desire for absolute monarchy, in which the king is above law and subjects, promulgated explicit codes of obedience and behaviour from subjects under the guise of maintaining social order. The subversive appropriation of these expectations suggests a "vulnerability of the symbols of sovereignty" (Grady, *Shakespeare* 31-2). The political anxiety that is revealed via a destabilized monarchy and the subsequent social disorder "is attributed to [the state's] deviant population whose transgressions, far from undermining authority, enable its relegitimation" (Dollimore *Political* 14). In order to put power on display, a circumstance must occur that permits the dominant order can be reinforced: "a limit could not exist if it were [sic] absolutely uncrossable and, reciprocally, transgression would be pointless if it merely crossed a limit composed of illusions and shadows" (Foucault in Dollimore, 115). In essence, vulnerability of limits requires a transgression that challenges the dominant order in a manner that requires the reinforcement of the authoritarian regime. Yet, to do so also exposes the permeability of state law and the subsequent limits of power. A political transgression can at once explicate both the limit and extent of authority: "Transgression of these [political and hierarchical] boundaries would have called their very meaning into question and raised a host of other problems" (Castan 36).

The role of the individual in Renaissance theatre is a striking area of study. For monarchs in Renaissance England, society would ideally be populated by individuals who strove to comply with the largely propagated dominant order. Order, it was frequently argued by Francis Bacon and King James I, was a necessary staple for the maintenance of the state and absolute monarchy. As a means of ordering society, hierarchy was to be respected, and the authority of the monarch was to go unquestioned regardless of the quality of leadership. For a time, scholarship was frequently dominated by the Tillyardian framework that the reiteration and promulgation of the dominant order was representative of the belief system of a contained and homogenous society. However, the influx of new historicism, and later, cultural materialism, would challenge the more canonical methods of approaching Renaissance literature and broaden the scope of literary criticism to permit the possibility of interrogating counter discourse within a given play. Renaissance society, it turns out, was far from homogenous, and authority was challenged, questioned, and subverted, at times through theatrical productions. An analysis of both *Richard III* and *Macbeth* indicates that society was perhaps not structured purely according to ideas that were propagated by the dominant order. Richard's and Macbeth's ability to self-fashion provides a space in which subversive thoughts can be explored, limits and boundaries may be contested, and the dominant order can be challenged.

"Politics," notes W.B. Worthen, "like all the world, is a stage: the stage on which... the political possibilities of playacting" (24) are tested. Renaissance theatre was a site of political contestation in which the boundaries and limits of power and the self could be interrogated within a single play. The Renaissance individual was a cultural product, at once a culmination of an increasingly self-reflective and self-aware society, with indications

of the philosophical shift toward the self as an autonomous being, and self as the product and object of power relations. The Renaissance self is a "manipulable, artful process" (Greenblatt 2), positioning the individual as a site of socio-political tensions and a lens through which fragments of Renaissance culture may be viewed.

[1] The rise of Protestantism also accentuated an awareness of and need for privacy through an emphasis on personal, unmediated relationships with God. Additionally, the invention of the printing press and the translation of the Bible into the vernacular also contributed to a sense of inwardness. Although self-reflection is not exclusive to the Renaissance self, the socio-political influences of Renaissance England (such as the inculcation of print culture and the vernacular Bible mentioned above, as well as exploration) did influence the ways in which the self was viewed in relation to new concepts of 'otherness.'

[2] It has been suggested that terror is potentially the underlying theme of Macbeth. If the play is read as such, then an attempt to induce fear and terror in an audience could also be a way of making the eye fear what it sees.

[3] It is tempting to use the word 'freedom' here, but that term is problematized by Foucault, whose concepts of the term are used to support other elements of this chapter.

[4] This is true for the characters on stage during the banquet scene. Obviously, this statement excludes Lady Macbeth's perception of her husband as she was privy to and an accomplice in his private ambitions.

[5] It should be noted that the use of absolute monarchy here indicates that, although absolutism was in a sense a continuation of a pre-existing monarchic regime, it also indicates England's shift from a feudal society toward a more centralized system of government even as monarchs felt the pressure to address increasing capitalist interests. The novelty of James' ideological stance further highlights the chasm between the purported absolutist regime and the lived realities of such a system.

[6] Charles Taylor, Timothy Reiss, Katharine Eisaman Maus, Jonathan Dollimore, Phillipe Ariès, Stephen Greenblatt, and many other scholars note that Protestant fixation on a personal, unmediated relationship with God has direct bearing on a discourse of inwardness, privacy, and personal identity. It should be noted that the increased emphasis that Protestantism placed on a personal relationship with God is directly related to the notion of an interior and conscience witnessed by God, which also serves to maintain social order, and is one method of deterring rebellious thoughts rather than punishing rebellious actions.

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