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Rhetoric and the Social Production of Knowledge
in Criticism of <u>Henry V</u>

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A Thesis

in

The Department

of

English Literature

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ABSTRACT

RHETORIC AND THE SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

IN CRITICISM OF <u>HENRY V</u>

Alyson Grant

In this thesis, <u>Henry V</u> and its critical context are used as a context for examining critics attached to the critical issues that underpin the tension in literary studies between more traditional approaches to texts and contemporary developments within criticism. Moreover, critics are organized through an understanding of the social production of knowledge so as to consider connections between their different critical discourses on <u>Henry V</u> and the possible production of knowledge through their critical interaction. This thesis is not meant to suggest, however, huge epistemic claims. Rather, the term knowledge means here more simply a possible way of approaching and appreciating critical diversity; namely, the criticism surrounding <u>Henry V</u> is understood communally as a kind of critical conversation on the diversity within literary studies produced through a network of inter-relating critical texts.

Acknowledgements

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Preface:

This thesis grows mainly out of my confusion as a graduate student in English Literature. It seems that the Modernist critical paradigms that I struggled with in my undergraduate courses became obsolete, or devalued, when I became a graduate student, and I had to learn the profession's more recent critical paradigms in order to write successful papers. The result is that instead of a shift in me that mirrors the shift in the profession, I am left with what William Empson might call an ill-connected mind, simultaneously hearing the voices that represent the many different critical paradigms. Out of necessity, then, I use the organizing metaphor of a critical conversation for this thesis in an attempt to listen to the various voices, both individually and as they speak to each other. Moreover, I use this metaphor to claim that the tension among the voices, reflecting a larger critical tension, is epistemically productive, for knowledge, I believe, is continually negotiated through social interaction.

By social interaction, I mean, specifically, the kind of interaction that occurs among critics through reading and writing, or consuming and producing discourse. I am saying, therefore, that knowledge may be developed and negotiated through a series of inter-related texts that work together to comprise a discussion. Rhetoric is central to the idea of a critical discussion in this thesis, for it frames my understanding of negotiated knowledge. However, in addition to the traditional view of rhetoric as a tool for transmitting ideas and persuading others to believe in them, rhetoric is seen more recently as "part of a dialectical process of developing new

knowledge by persuasion" (Brent 6), which is the sense of rhetoric that I wish to employ. Rhetoric is thus both communicative and epistemic, and penetrates the conversation at all points.

What this understanding of rhetoric means more specifically is that we should be able to describe how the process of taking in another's ideas through reading relates to the process of devising our own ideas in writing, leading to a discussion of the relationships among texts which are themselves responding to a central text. Or, in this thesis, this understanding of rhetoric leads to a discussion of the relationships among several critical texts that are responding to Shakespeare's Henry V.

Doug Brent, primarily a reading-and-writing theorist, provides the tools for such a discussion in Reading as Rhetorical Invention. He offers what he calls the "rhetoric of reading" which is comprised of two parts. Generally, the first part uses the tools of reader response to see how readers build meaning from a text, and the second part uses the tools of traditional rhetoric to see how readers evaluate a text's propositions. Brent then combines these two parts and applies them to a series of writers who are responding to a central text, but in doing so, are also responding to each other. Brent's method thus places critics in conversation with one another, and allows us to see how knowledge is negotiated among them.

In the belief that Brent's method would be a helpful guide through my confusion, my thesis is organized along these same lines. Therefore, in Part One, I will outline an account of how readers construct readings and how their values and assumptions figure in these readings. In Part Two, I will outline an account of how

readers evaluate the text's propositions from their particular interpretive situations. And, in Part Three, I will combine the previous two parts to act as a critical technique and apply it to several of _Henry V_'s critics in an attempt to develop the conversational model of rhetorical interchange. I hope that through this model we will see that texts form networks of interconnections, resulting in what Kenneth Burke calls the "unending conversation" (_The Philosophy of Literary Form_ Burke 110).

Finally, I would like to add three kinds of clarification or acknowledgment of limits: first, I am not trying to cover all of the criticism on _Henry V_ or to offer my own reading, for my primary interest is in how critical differences can be looked at as being productive. I therefore focus on a limited number of critics whom I believe allow the nuances and differences that characterize the tension in literary studies that I wish to describe emerge. I should note here that some of the critics I include in the conversation focus on the earlier plays in the _Henriad_ and may thus seem irrelevant in a discussion of _Henry V_. Most of the criticism on _Henry V_, however, considers the text in the context of the _Henriad_, so I am doing nothing out of the ordinary in the history of criticism on the play. Indeed, the critics I include that do engage the earlier plays more often than not do so with the intent of coming to some kind of conclusion on Hal as Henry V. Second, because I am interested in representative critical positions, I sometimes make use of mediators to explain normative positions rather than discuss the minute details of original critical texts. And, third, I sometimes include certain critics under headings which may be artificial. I can do this, however, because I am not writing a systematically analytic history of modern criticism, any

more than I am trying to cover _Henry V_ criticism in any comprehensive way. In this

context, in which I am focusing on the kinds of conversational or argumentative

engagements critics have with one another, critics are put provisionally into roles that

may not entirely describe or represent their critical enterprises. I believe, however,

that such an over-simplification in categorizing critics is necessary in order to allow

my overall intention of putting different critical positions into an epistemic

conversation.

General Introduction:

At first glance, Henry V has all the qualities of the public-hero king, but a second glance raises troubling questions about him as a private man. As hero king, Henry V builds Britain by uniting his Welsh, Scottish and Irish people in a seemingly justified war against France. But Henry IV's dying words to his son, "to busy giddy minds With Foreign quarrels" (IV.v.214-215), is a sentiment echoed in Henry V, always threatening to obscure Henry's patriotic motives. The result is a text that has been interpreted variously as a nationalist manifesto with Henry as the English paragon, a nation/state manifesto with him as the Machiavellian heavy, or a text of sustained irony in which Henry as the "mirror of all Christian kings" cannot be said with a straight face.

Such an understanding of the criticism on Henry V is by now common, but not yet a commonplace. As I will argue in this paper, for example, traditional and contemporary criticism on Henry V point not only to what C.L. Barber and Richard Wheeler describe in their discussion of Henry V as "questions that are perennially in dispute" (Barber 232), but to what Linda Hutcheon refers to in Formalism and the Freudian Aesthetic as a tension in criticism between defining literary studies as humanistic or defining it as the pursuit of signs. Hutcheon is specifically interested in the tension between the objectivism of formalism and the subjectivism of structuralism, but she articulates the problem between the two as a generally shared dichotomy that governs literary criticism today.

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In particular, Hutcheon says that humanists feel threatened by contemporary developments within criticism; that is, humanists feel threatened by the development and increasing presence of literary theory within literary criticism. I would argue, however, that all parties involved in the critical tension may feel a threat of some sort, for, as Hutcheon herself says, the problems in criticism issue from underlying and unresolved conflicts in methodology between critical perspectives. In other words, at the root of the tension and at issue for everyone are differences in critical, and perhaps even personal, values.

These differences arose specifically out of the advent of theory and the ensuing shift from non-linguistic, historical and aesthetic considerations, or humanist approaches to literature in which there is an appreciation of meaning and value, to questions about the very production of meaning and value. Paul de Man describes the situation since the birth of theory well, saying,

> the object of discussion is no longer the meaning or the
> value [of the literary text] but the modalities of production
> and of reception of meaning and of value prior to their
> establishment" (de Man 359).

Hutcheon is probably right to say that humanists feel threatened by this situation, but I think it is fair to say that the proponents of theory may also feel threatened. For the values underlying the humanist position are those against which theorists at least in part define their own enterprise. Despite the question of who feels more or less threatened, however, Hutcheon says more generally (and I think usefully) that methodological differences are clearly inherent in the literary critical enterprise today as it has developed over this century; moreover, she says that these differences have

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resulted in "the paradoxical modern desire for criticism to be both description and

interpretation" (Hutcheon 162). The paradox is worth considering closely, though, for

it offers a look into (and perhaps perspective on) "the diverse critical tensions of our

age" (Hutcheon preface).

I would argue that, taken together, the text of Henry V and the particular

nature of the criticism it has inspired offer an ideal subject for exploring these and

related issues. Specifically, in this thesis Henry V and its critical context will help

organize the readers attached to the critical issues that underpin the current tension in

literary studies. Moreover, I will attempt to organize the critics through an

understanding of the social production of knowledge so as to consider connections

between the critics' different critical discourses on Henry V and the possible

production of knowledge through their critical interaction. I do not mean to suggest,

however, that I will make huge epistemic claims. Rather, the term knowledge here

means more simply that I will offer a possible way of approaching and appreciating

critical diversity; namely, we will be in a position to understand the critical relativism

surrounding Henry V communally as a kind of critical conversation on the diversity

within literary studies that is produced through a network of inter-relating critical texts.

I am basing my claim for the possibility of a knowledge-producing

conversation among critics on the assumption that consuming and producing discourse,

or reading and writing, are connected. Furthermore, I am assuming that there are

relationships between discourse and knowledge, and that knowledge is created through

interaction with others. I am therefore placing knowledge and its production in a specifically contingent realm, for I am saying that it is negotiated and, in turn, negotiable. Such an understanding of knowledge aligns me with an early proponent of socially constructed knowledge, Thomas Kuhn. I am specifically interested in Kuhn's conflation of epistemology with rhetoric, for although Kuhn does not explicitly use the word rhetoric in The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, he is widely recognized as constructing a rhetorically based social epistemology.[1] Kuhn thus helped to develop the traditional understanding of rhetoric as a persuasive or communicative device into a "communal medium in which thought grows" (Brent 6). I will use rhetoric similarly to frame our understanding of how knowledge is produced. Moreover, I will also expand the traditional conception of rhetoric as solely a communicative device so as to include rhetoric's epistemic capacities. Rhetoric will therefore be central to our understanding of knowledge here, for, as Doug Brent notes, rhetoric interpenetrates every aspect of a conversation among different knowers and allows us to see how knowledge is negotiated and produced (Brent xi).

Implicit in my understanding of rhetoric, and connecting it to the larger project of examining the tension in literary studies, is a distinction between essentialist and pragmatist epistemologies. Stanley Fish notes this distinction in his essay on rhetoric and invokes Richard Rorty as the "brisk chronicler of our epistemological condition." In differentiating between two ways of characterizing truth, Rorty says, "It is the

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[1]Stanley Fish describes Kuhn's relationship to rhetoric, and I will use Fish later to support a more detailed discussion of Kuhn.

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difference between regarding truth, goodness, and beauty as eternal objects which we try to locate and reveal, and regarding them as artifacts whose fundamental design we often have to alter" ("Rhetoric" Fish, 221). Clearly, to posit truth as a form of negotiable knowledge positions me with the latter pragmatist notion of truth. What is interesting to note more generally is that the tension in literary studies that underpins my project can be loosely characterized in these same terms. For the tension among different critical perspectives is really a tension among competing epistemologies. If we return to Kuhn, the pragmatist and rhetorical means for putting these different epistemologies into conversation with one another will become more clear.

Kuhn's concept of the paradigm, a set of assumptions and beliefs which organizes and directs research ("Rhetoric" Fish 211), and of conflicts among different paradigms, help explain the relativism of critical response to Henry V; more specifically, Kuhn's paradigm informs the epistemic implications of framing these responses as a conversation. For the different critics I include in the conversation can be said to belong to different paradigms; that is, they all operate within a different set of assumptions and beliefs. Although Kuhn is specifically interested in scientific procedure, his insights have affected the humanities as well. Stanley Fish argues that Kuhn's is possibly the most frequently cited work in the humanities and social sciences in the last twenty-five years, and describes the general impact of Kuhn's view as follows:

> Whatever reports a particular language (natural or artificial)
>   offers us will be the report on the world as it is seen from
> within some particular situation; there is no other aperspectival
> way to see and no language other than a situation dependent

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language - an interested, rhetorical language - in which to
report (Fish "Rhetoric" 212).

In other words, Kuhn subjectivizes knowledge and argues that it exists finally as a

consensus among many individual knowers, "a consensus that is negotiated through the

medium of discourse in an unending conversation" (Brent xi), the conversation being

propelled by persuasion. Kuhn thus rhetoricizes interpretive activity, making

knowledge something that is negotiated among many different knowers, or interpreters.

In terms of my project, Kuhn positions us for an understanding of reading as a

rhetorical, situation-dependent and negotiating process that therefore participates in

epistemic invention in a critical context.

I have slipped invention into the discussion, but in a slightly new capacity.

Normally, invention in a rhetorical context is understood as the means through which a

rhetor uses knowledge of both the audience and the occasion to devise the most

persuasive argument possible. Invention is thus typically forward-looking, located

exclusively in terms of production at the beginning of the rhetorical process.

Invention, however, can be understood as relevant to the reception end as well. A

passage from Robert Scholes' Protocols of Reading may help explain what I mean by

epistemic invention and its involvement with rhetoric:

> Under the heading of rhetoric, we shall consider reading
> as a textual economy, in which pleasure and power are
> exchanged between producers and consumers of texts,
> always remembering that writers must consume in order
> to produce and that readers must produce in order to
> consume (Scholes 90).

Scholes introduces the role of the rhetor as producer of a text but expands this

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traditional role by explaining rhetoric as a social and recursive act; this expansion then

allows invention to expand from a solely forward-looking, or producing, process to

one that also involves looking backward through consuming, or reading. Scholes'

understanding of rhetoric and invention therefore returns us to my earlier claim that

reading and writing are connected and function together to produce knowledge.

Moreover, Scholes helps emphasize the centrality of rhetoric to an understanding of

exactly how knowledge is produced through epistemic invention and the critical

conversation.

Rhetorical critics such as Wayne Booth and Kenneth Burke have explored these

epistemic implications within rhetoric in detail. In particular, they understand rhetoric

as not only the conveying but also the making of knowledge; as in Kuhn, then,

rhetoric becomes the means for communal movement toward, and production of,

knowledge. In Reading as Rhetorical Invention, Doug Brent, primarily a reading-and-

writing theorist, seizes on Booth's and Burke's epistemological frameworks for rhetoric

and puts forward a rhetorical model of reading as an important way of participating in,

and contributing to, the knowledge-producing conversation. Brent offers ways of

focusing on the participants in any given critical conversation, their differing

interpretations of a text, and their reading contexts as all influencing the reading

process: "In short, then," says Brent, "the rhetorical analysis of texts can be refocused

from a description of persuasive methods to description of the ways in which beliefs

are constructed and negotiated in discourse" (Brent xv).

To paraphrase, Brent is saying that given the above understanding of the

rhetorical production of knowledge, we should be able to describe how the process of devising ideas in order to persuade others relates to the process of consuming another's ideas through reading: along with asking how one persuades we must also ask how one (a reader) is persuaded (Brent xii). Brent thus expands rhetoric from its traditional focus exclusively on composition to include also a theory of the reception of reading; and as a consequence he furnishes us with a way to place criticism within the context of the social production of knowledge. I.A. Richards articulated the relationship between rhetoric and reading similarly when he defined rhetoric as "the study of misunderstanding and its remedies" (Richards 3). Richards signalled the reader's importance in all language acts and initiated the exploration into the cognitive and social aspects of reading and possible relations between reading and writing. Although Brent is not writing specifically about Henry V, I think his model will help us look at the criticism surrounding Henry V in exactly these terms. Moreover, Brent's particular rhetorical framework may be helpful more generally as a way of understanding how critical differences, understood in Hutcheon's sense of a tension, are actually productive.

In practice, Brent's method leads to a discussion of the relationships among different critics who are all responding to a central text, Henry V; thus, a discussion of Henry V and its criticism fit nicely into Brent's method, for we will be able to see the ways in which critics seem to interpret the same written source in different ways, "thereby suggesting how particular configurations of personal beliefs, goals, and prior knowledge influence the reading process" (Brent xv): to state what is implied here, we

will use reader-response theory to look at how readers construct readings. More specifically, with reader-response's interest in where a reader reads from, we will start to clarify the personal and theoretical issues that underlie critical differences among readers.

In order to move from an understanding of critical assumptions and differences, and begin to move toward an understanding of how knowledge is built among critics, Brent looks at how readers are "affected" by a text's propositions. As a consequence, his reader-centred analysis uses the classical rhetorical modes of the logical, ethical and emotional to examine a reader's capacity to "apply rules of evidence, her tendency to be influenced by her emotions, and her pull in the direction of ideas that are presented by those whose character she values" (Brent 54). Brent seems to slip into a traditional application of rhetoric here, ignoring his earlier discussion of rhetoric's social and epistemic nature. He shifts the emphasis that classical rhetoric puts on the rhetor (or orator), however, and continues to emphasize the reader. Brent thus continues to develop our understanding of how readers are involved in the conversation by examining how they assess the propositions in a text.

In order to establish the relationship between critics and the text's propositions, I will note Henry's centrality in the criticism on Henry V, for I will consider Henry as the rhetor attempting to influence the judgement of his hearers, or, in our case, his critics. Not to be mistaken for a naive understanding of Bradley, I should clarify that my attention to Henry is meant to suggest that in this case responses to the character

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turn out to be coterminous with responses to the play. Kenneth Burke makes a

similar claim in "Antony in Behalf of the Play" where he imagines a speech by

Antony which emphasizes the reader-writer relationship as a communicative

relationship. Burke has Antony turning to the Elizabethan audience, rather than the

mob, in the third act, and

> instead of being a dramatic character within the play,
> he is here made to speak as a critical commentator upon
> the play, explaining its mechanisms and virtues. Thus we
> have a tale from Shakespeare, retold, not as a plot but
> from the standpoint of the rhetorician, who is concerned
> with a work's processes of appeal (Burke Philosophy of
> Literary Form, 330).

Burke's re-imagining of Antony denies essentialist concepts of characterization in

favour of a movement toward the rhetorical relationship between the text and the

critic. Antony thus becomes a "principle" rather than a character; or, he becomes a

proposition.

In my project, the evaluation of the text's propositions will therefore circulate

around a discussion of Henry-the "young amiable monster," as Hazlitt calls him-in that

Henry "looks rather differently in different parts" (Altman 1). However, my emphasis

will be specifically on Henry's effect *on* different critics; like Brent, I will continue to

keep critics in focus. Finally, my attention to critics might seem to suggest that I am

privileging the criticism on Henry V rather than Henry V the text in this paper--this is

not the case. For one thing, my emphasis stems from my interest in the different

critical assumptions that underlie the critical tension and the epistemic advantages

gained from looking at the criticism collectively. Moreover, Henry V is the reference

point for my discussion, so if not primary, the text is at least central.

To summarize then: the project I am pursuing here about Henry V and its critics may be understood in two different aspects. One emphasizes critics and their interpretive processes: how do they build meanings from a text? The other emphasizes the text's capacity to shape the meanings critics build from them. Considered together, these two different aspects or processes constitute what Brent calls "the rhetoric of reading." The important point to note is that they should be considered together. That is, the separation between the critic's interpretive activity and the text that generates and constrains the activity--this distinction is an artificial one. I adopt it for convenience and clarity, but I aim to bring them together eventually where they will be seen to function together as a critical technique.

Thus, my paper will be divided along the same lines: Part One will look at how critics construct individual readings, Part Two will use rhetoric to look at how critics not only construct a reading but are affected by that reading, and Part Three will apply the previous two parts to the critics I include in the conversation. Part Three will therefore take reading acts out of isolation and consider them as part of the process of rhetorical invention (although invention as explained above) and therefore "as they occur in a larger process of epistemic interchange" (Brent xiv). Finally, I do not intend my discussion of Henry V's criticism to be exhaustive. Rather, I intend to emphasize key texts that I think are representative of the tension, and that can help in the goal of understanding how knowledge is negotiated intertextually. Brent's theory of rhetorical reading will therefore allow us to see the criticism on Henry V as

comprising a "network of texts" (Brent 76) within an epistemic conversation.

To return to the tension that Hutcheon describes in literary criticism, and my claim that Henry V's criticism can act as an index to the issues beneath this tension, I think that the power of Brent's rhetorical reading is that it provides the means of seeing how critics evoke each other's positions, either implicitly or explicitly, and how such evocations constitute a dialogue among critics that "builds and rebuilds knowledge" (Brent 99). From this perspective, critical disagreement does not need to be understood as disconcerting or threatening. On the contrary, the tension underlying literary studies can be seen as useful, productive and suggestive of how readers create knowledge through discourse.

Part One: How Critics Construct Readings

i. Introduction

In Act One Scene Two of <u>Henry V</u>, the Archbishop of Canterbury undermines France's impediment to English rule, the Salic Law, in an attempt to persuade Henry to act on his claim to France. After sixty-three lines of the Archbishop's periodic sentences, detailing the reasons why the Salic Law does not hold, Henry asks in a simple line and a half, "May I with right and conscience make/ This claim?" (I.ii.96-97). The effect of Henry's short question after the Archbishop's long speech is potentially comic. But the question raises in turn the potentially serious critical issue of Henry's piety, further raising the question of <u>Henry V</u>'s different interpretive possibilities; and, as Robert C. Jones notes, "[r]eaders and audiences may answer these questions...but the play does not" (Jones 133). Whether or not one agrees with Jones' claim that the text refuses finally to take sides on the issue of Henry's motives (an issue steeped in current discussions about subjectivity), his comment puts us in a position to consider how critics have variously answered questions raised by the text; the Salic Law speech is a good place to start to get a sense of some of the answers.[2]

Andrew Gurr discusses the speech in the Introduction to his 1992 Cambridge edition of <u>Henry V</u> in terms of historical context. Specifically, he invokes a pamphlet written in 1579 on the English fear of being "swallowed" if Elizabeth should decide to marry a French prince, Duc d'Alençon, who had offered himself to the Queen. Gurr's

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[2]The law itself is a French law of inheritance, barring succession through the female line.

interpretation of the speech and its effect is therefore put into a social context, for he says that what may seem like a long and obscure speech was, to Elizabethan audiences, a topical issue in that there were rumours that the near forty year old Elizabeth was going to marry d'Alençon. As the pamphlet stated, the Salic Law could be invoked if the marriage went ahead, potentially denying Elizabeth's children with the French prince of their inheritance, and threatening England's dynastic security.

Unlike Gurr's historical interpretation, Gary Taylor puts the speech into a predominantly dramatic context in the Introduction to his 1982 Oxford edition of the text. He asks, regarding the speech, "How does one establish, dramatically, that a claim to France has legal authority?" (Taylor 37). Taylor goes so far as to claim that the boredom felt by an audience during the Salic Law speech is integral to the text's dramatic effect--it is "indeed dramatically necessary" (Taylor 37). If Act One opened in a state of exhilaration, for example, then an audience would truly get bored, says Taylor, because the action would be "monotonous and unbelievable" (Taylor 37). The Archbishop's dry and confusing speech is therefore a central part of the text's dramatic rhetoric. In fact, Taylor hinges later dramatic effect on the dramatic difficulties surrounding the speech. Taylor's insistence in his response to the text (or at least his response to the Salic Law speech) on the dramatic elements and their effects is therefore completely text-rather than context-centred. Similarly, Taylor suggests that Elizabethan audiences would not have found the speech so boring as we do: again a form of dramatic or theatrical historicization, different from Gurr's.

E.M.W. Tillyard offers yet another response. Though he does not directly

address the Archbishop's Salic Law speech, Tillyard focuses on the scene as the first in which Henry appears. Moreover, he focuses on parts in the scene that seem to put Henry unambiguously forth as an unquestionable hero from a long line of heroes: "in the first scene where Henry appears (I.2) and once or twice later Shakespeare does try to invest his hero with a glamour that shall by its sheer blinding power make us insensible to any inconsistencies" (Tillyard 38). It is important to note that the inconsistencies Tillyard refers to are not those found within Henry V, but are those found when we compare Henry V to his earlier incarnation as Hal in Henry IV, Parts One and Two. For Tillyard, I would argue, is not interested in emphasizing aspects of Henry V that do not present Henry as the Hero King; he is interested in seeing Henry as "the copy-book paragon of kingly virtue" (Tillyard 36). What is important for my purposes about Tillyard's attention to the scene with the Archbishop's speech, then, and the difficulties it presents, is not what he has to say about it but, rather, that he does not say anything about it: he does not say anything about it because it would run counter to placing "Henry in the grand context of English history" (Tillyard 39). Like Gurr, Tillyard is interested in historical context. But unlike Gurr, Tillyard constructs a specific period consciousness (the grand English context) which he then reads back onto the text (Lee Patterson, 251).

These critics introduce the general focus in the conversation, for I will basically include historicist approaches, old and new, as well as formalist approaches; that is, I

will look at text-and context-centred approaches.[3] Generally, formalists tend to

emphasize the text's structure and its ambiguous representations of the state and of

Henry. For some formalists the ambivalence is resolved through an ironic reading, yet

for others the unresolved ambiguity is itself the reading. If we move to more context-

oriented critics, we discover substantial disagreement within the shared framework: on

the one hand, the old historicists who tend to argue that the text "presents an ideal

portrait of state power" (McEachern 33); on the other, the new historicists, who tend

to see the text's display of the state (that is, Henry) as supporting and enabling the

state's coercive power. Finally, although I am focussing on new historicists right now,

I will include a variety of recent critics along with them. This component of the

conversation will therefore represent those critics who are influenced by recent theory,

which is a necessary expansion in order to get a full sense of the tension and its

implications; more importantly, including more recent criticism makes the conversation

much more interesting to listen to.

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[3]The distinction between text and context centred criticism is an over-simplification for the lines between the two often blur. However, I use this distinction to help organize the theoretical issues that will emerge in the process of the paper. More importantly, the meanings of new historicism are, of course, fiercely contested. I am using the term in a loose and general way that can include critics who might wish to define their activity as cultural materialism, cultural poetics, among other rubrics. Basically, I am referring to current critics who tend to emphasize the need for contextualization in their work, and who tend (recalling Hutcheon's distinction from which I began) to understand literary studies as the pursuit of signs.

ii. Where the Critic is Reading From: Reader-Response and the Rhetorical Situation.

Given the above sampling of critics, it seems true that Henry V's criticism

surrounds "issues that are perennially in dispute." It will therefore be useful to explore

the various responses in more detail by looking at one kind of recent literary theory

that attempts to explain diverse critical response; namely, reader-response. I will

follow Brent and focus on the reader-response theories of Stanley Fish and Wolfgang

Iser, and then combine their approaches with Lloyd Bitzer's concept of the rhetorical

situation, which looks at the governing questions that the critic brings to the reading

experience, refining reader-response's interrogation of the reading subject. The tools

of reader-response and an analysis of various critics' rhetorical situations will therefore

provide an understanding of how critics' contexts figure in various responses to texts.

Reader-response criticism is not a unified critical position, for it has many

proponents with different critical orientations and overall projects. However, reader-

response is a term "that has come to be associated with the work of critics who use

the words *reader, the reading process,* and *response* to mark out on area for

investigation" (Tompkins ix). The primary focus among the various reader-response

critics is on the activity of reading. One of the effects of this focus is to undermine

the traditional concept of the text as a work of discoverable and objective intention.

Rather, as the name reader-response implies, meaning becomes a function of

individual readers as they process the text, responding as they proceed:

By this shift of perspective a literary work is converted
into an activity that goes on in a reader's mind, and...narrator,
plot, characters, style and structure...are described as an
evolving temporal process, consisting primarily of diverse
kinds of expectations, and the violations, deferments,
satisfactions, and restructuring of expectations, in the flow
of a reader's experience (Abrams 232).

Though the emphasis is on the reader here, and meaning as an exclusive property of

the text is challenged, it is important to note that reader-response does not work with

an exclusive emphasis on the reader, for the text does play a significant role. As Jane

Tompkins says, reader-response is a way of "conceiving texts and readers that

reorganizes the distinctions between them. Reading and writing join hands, change

places, and, finally, become distinguishable only as two names for the same activity"

(Tompkins x).

This description of reader-response seems interchangeable with the explanation

of rhetoric in the introduction, and perhaps makes the connection between reading and

rhetoric more clear. But what I want to emphasize here is that reader-response's

paired activities of reading and writing, and the emphasis on the reader, imply that

meaning is, somehow, constructed. Wolfgang Iser, for example, influenced by

phenomenology, offers the notion of the "virtual work" wherein a reading is situated

somewhere between the reader and the text, removing meaning from both the

subjectivity of the reader and the objective reality of the text (The Act of Reading Iser

21). Iser attempts to invoke meaning as an abstract entity unconnected to either reader

or text, but this entity is constructed and agency, in the end, must go to the reader.

Indeed, Iser's reader is co-creator of the text and supplies the text's implied intentions.[4] Iser's readers are therefore both detectives and artists in that they perform the simultaneous actions of discovering and imaginatively filling in the unformulated part of a text.

In "Interpreting the Variorum," Stanley Fish offers his version of reader-response and constructed meaning. He puts forth a notion of interpretive strategies characterized as "the shape of reading, and because they are the shape of reading, they give texts their shape, making them rather than, as it is usually assumed, rising from them" (Fish 325). Connected to Fish's interpretive strategies is his more encompassing claim that there are also interpretive communities; that is, a reader makes interpretive decisions through interpretive strategies, but those strategies are themselves embedded in larger institutions, or communities. Fish's theory thus explains the constructed nature of meaning as a largely social phenomenon wherein interpreters group together in fellowship, knowing each other if only through the "nod of recognition" (Fish 329). The notion of interpretive communities therefore explains the influence of learned interpretive strategies, further explaining the influence of larger social structures on interpretation.

What Fish argues here is that there are constraints on the reading experience within reader-response that control interpretive possibilities. These constraints are primarily centred in or around the reader and not the text, but this is what we want for our purposes because the reader's centrality continues to help us get a sense of how

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[4]I will look more closely at Iser below.

and why critics arrive at their readings. What makes interpretation possible, then, is what is familiar to the critic. For Fish, this familiarity takes the form of a community that confers a set of interpretive rules. It is worth noting that Fish's theory also explains both differences and similarities among readers, for interpretive communities may or may not overlap for any two readers. But the main point for our purposes is that what makes interpretation possible, according to reader-response, and yields different readings is what the different readers bring to the reading experience. In other words, despite constraints, readers create a text's meaning rather than passively receiving meaning from the text.

Although we are unfolding an account of variation among readers, we do not yet have a full explanation of how readings can also vary from one reading to the next for a single reader. This point is particularly relevant to a discussion of Henry V due to Norman Rabkin's offer of a "rabbit/duck" paradigm for the text, "Rabbits, Ducks, and Henry V." Rabkin borrows from Gestalt psychology and proposes that a reader can see Henry as either Machiavellian or a hero (a rabbit or a duck), but not as both at once. I will look more closely at Rabkin when I consider actual readings of Henry V below, but he is useful here because he introduces the possibility that a reader can change interpretations from one reading to the next, something left unexplained so far.

I should clarify that Rabkin's rabbit/duck paradigm does not describe readers who are making up their minds as they read; readers do not, in Rabkin's view, move between rabbit and duck perceptions in the course of a single negotiation of the text. Rather, Rabkin's point is that a reader (or play-goer) is confined to the single vision,

or Gestalt, for the duration of the text (or play). I am therefore talking about a reading changed after one complete pass through the text. Fish's interpretive communities, although useful generally to describe the assumptions involved in a given critic's reading, are too slow-changing to explain a single reader's variations. Therefore, we must look elsewhere to account for such a principle of variability.

To find that explanation, Brent looks to Lloyd Bitzer's concept of the rhetorical situation, describing it as what exactly guides the reading process. More specifically, it is a set of questions relating to an imperfection in the current interpretive situation which is much more ephemeral than an interpretive community. Further, it is

> [a] combination of the audience, the external constraints
> that govern decision (such as beliefs, documents, facts,
> traditions, and the like), and the exigence, the imperfection
> in the current state of affairs that gives rise to the need for
> discourse in order to set it right (Brent 35).

This quotation anticipates where we will be going with Henry V's criticism, for Brent's explanation of the rhetorical situation suggests that readers are placed in a specifically epistemic context:

> The reader reads not just for the proximate goal of constructing
> meaning from a text, but for the ultimate goal of participating
> in a larger conversation in order to update and modify both his
> own knowledge and that of others (Brent 35).

But in terms of the present discussion, our focus is more specific. Drawing on classical rhetoric, Brent explains that the exigence of a reader's situation is actually a rhetorical exigence in that it depends on looking for the answer to a question, or a set of questions. Cicero and Quintillian, he says, both imagined rhetoric in just this way for they held that the starting point of any rhetorical transaction is not the rhetor's

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thesis, but rather a "question that must be addressed in order to reach a judgement" (Brent 36). To put it differently, the rhetorical situation guides what a reader wants to know in any given reading; moreover, the rhetorical situation changes much more easily than interpretive communities, so a reader can change interpretations from one reading to the next, depending on the occasion's set of questions.[5]

To summarize, I have posited a distinction between a reader's interpretive community on the one hand, and the rhetorical situation on the other. The former is usually firmly entrenched and is accented by the latter's more ephemeral set of questions, allowing a reader's virtual work to vary from one reading to the next, or perhaps from one moment of the same reading to the next. Considered together, however, these different elements of the reading experience attempt overall to describe variations in interpretation of a single text for a single reader and among several readers. I will put these concepts to use in Part Three after Part Two's examination of how the critics I am including in the conversation evaluate a text's propositions. But because Part Two is much more explicitly involved with rhetoric, I have to pay some attention to the role of the writer in the construction of meaning, and discuss a writer's possible limitations on variation.

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[5]I do this all the time. When I read Stephen Greenblatt, for example, I am convinced that he makes a lot of sense. If I then read Henry V, the questions that I bring to the text are modified by Greenblatt and I see Henry as reifying state power. But if I read someone like Graham Bradshaw, who is diametrically opposed to Greenblatt, I can also get convinced of some of his arguments, and proceed to see Henry V through his eyes. My rhetorical situation, or the external constraints that govern my decisions, seems to depend in part on who I happen to be reading at the time.

iii. The Role of the Writer

> So low has Rhetoric sunk that we would do better just to dismiss
> it to Limbo than to trouble ourselves with it - unless we can
> find reason for believing that it can become a study that will
> minister successfully to important needs (Richards 3).

The fundamental need that I.A. Richards proceeds to identify is

communication. Thus, he revives rhetoric as a remedy to misunderstanding. As we

have seen, when rhetoric is understood in an expanded way it does indeed embody

the general capacity to engender communication. When rhetoric is understood in a

more narrow sense, however, it engenders communication in a very specific manner:

rhetors, or writers, are understood to have control over texts, implying that texts

embody the intentions of the writer which readers then seize on as a text's meaning.

The model I have outlined so far in order to assess readers and their assumptions

would seem to preclude the possibility for communication understood in terms of

intention because the readers I have profiled through reader-response theory evoke a

work from their particular interpretive communities and rhetorical situations. In such a

process, viable interpretive possibilities seem as various as there are readers, making

the notion of someone's intended meaning meaningless. However, as I mentioned in

the introduction, I am following Kenneth Burke's lead in "Antony in Behalf of the

Play" and am interested in Henry as rhetor, rather than Shakespeare, in an attempt to

emphasize the rhetorical relationship between the text and the reader wherein

responses to the character become coterminous with responses to the text. I differ

with Brent on this point, but not enough to interfere with my use of his larger

framework.

Brent believes that the writer has control over the text and thus control over the reader's interpretation of the text: he believes in authorial intention, an issue in deep dispute. Fish, for example, believes that there are no absolute textual or authorial constraints, and that meaning is restricted by only the interpretive communities that one belongs to. Iser, on the other hand, does believe that the text is an author's intentional act, although the reader's subjective participation plays an equally, if not more, important role. Indeed, the critics we will look at in Part Three all have varying positions on intention. Brent, however, goes to just lengths to establish the writer's influence over the text. He has to, for he is interested in communication between actual selves. In part, this is because he is working with, and thinking of, readers in a non-literary context. He therefore finds the idea of an actual self as an agent of meaning much more amenable to communicating ideas, and simply reverts to the common understanding of rhetoric where a rhetor persuades a reader very specifically through the text. I, on the other hand, am not so interested in an identifiable self on the text's side of the transaction between the reader and the text, for my emphasis on the readers as representatives of the tension in literary studies obviates the demand for an author's presence. Moreover, the issue of intention is implicitly involved in the tension, for any stand on intention is bound to be connected to a larger set of critical assumptions.

Much of the current discussion on intention stems from Foucault's postmodern challenge to the subject, perhaps articulated most clearly in The Archeology of

Knowledge. Foucault is, in large measure, expressly devoted to dismantling approaches to literature that are based on notions of an authorial subject as the locus of a text's meaning: he refuses "to see discourse as a phenomenon of expression" (Foucault 55). He says, rather, that he will

> look for a field of regularity for various positions of subjectivity. Thus conceived, discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject, but, on the contrary, a totality, in which the dispersion of the subject and his discontinuity with himself may be determined (Foucault 55).

Such a dismantling of the subject has had profound implications for criticism, as we will see in Part Three. For present purposes Foucault explains my necessary divergence from someone like Brent and his belief in a thinking, knowing and speaking subject. This divergence does not interfere with my use of his larger framework, however, for Brent's author and my rhetor function identically. Not surprisingly, it is a literary critic interested in rhetoric who makes this conflation possible.

Patricia Parker makes the general observation in Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property that "the return to rhetoric in contemporary criticism and theory has had an important effect on recent studies of the Renaissance" (Parker 97). In some ways, rhetoric and theory seem antithetical, for the emphasis rhetoric can place on attention to tropes and devices runs counter to much of the theoretical emphasis on politics, history and questions about subjectivity. Rhetoric applied in a Renaissance context, however, does not automatically mean that one is going, say, to catalogue Shakespeare's knowledge of Latin and Greek. As Parker says,

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> To propose that we pay attention to the structural force
> of rhetorical figures is not in any way to propose the naive
> notion of a "master" or single revelatory trope....[It is] to
> propose, as Kenneth Burke somewhat differently did, the
> strategic and political resources of a technique that has too
> often been dismissed as merely formalistic (Parker 96).

Like the other rhetoricians invoked in my paper, Parker is calling for a re-valuation of rhetoric, taking it out of the "province of dusty scholarship" (Parker 96).[6] With her specific theoretical orientation, however, she re-focuses on rhetoric and says in a tone that echoes Stephen Greenblatt, someone we will look at in detail in Part Three, that

> we need to pay attention to the exploitation of the terms and
> structures of rhetoric, in ways which would lead into the
> figurative logic shaping both lines and scenes, and from
> the plays themselves into the order of discourse and discourse
> of order they both echo and turn on itself (Parker 96).

In other words, rhetoric and insights from theory are compatible. Indeed, Parker invokes Foucault several times in the course of her book and reconciles theory and rhetoric to the point of suggesting that rhetoric was a primary means of social control in the Renaissance: there was a "link between order in the body politic and order in words" (Parker 100). The upshot of Parker's conclusions for us here is that texts can contain rhetorical propositions that do not have to be understood exclusively in terms of the author's intentions. There are manifold relations of power, for instance, that link the organization of society to the regulation of discourse (Parker 3). When we then look at how readers evaluate a text's propositions, we are not relying on the assumption that those propositions are Shakespeare's; they are simply in the text by

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[6]I think Parker earns the right to say such things about traditional rhetoric for her book is full of a dazzling display of and facility with rhetorical tropes and devices.

virtue of a discursive presence stronger than any authorial power absolutely to control.

Or, as I put it earlier, the propositions are questions that the text raises for readers and

that readers have answered in various ways.

Part Two: Deciding on a Proposition

i. Introduction

In Part One I outlined an account of how critics construct readings: the rhetorical situations and interpretive communities of critics all contribute to the evoked reading. Although the emphasis in Part One is on a reader's context, a constructed reading is, finally, responding to the text, for the text contains the various propositions that critics must evaluate from their particular interpretive situations and decide upon in order to come up with their readings. This process is the means through which a critic is affected by a constructed reading, and it constitutes the second part of exchanging discourse in the conversation. In the case of critics reading Henry V, this means that they must evaluate the text's propositions and decide which ones to be persuaded by; classical rhetoric will help us see how readers do this.

First, in the actual terms of classical rhetoric, we are interested in looking at how one reaches a judgement on whether or not a proposition or a set of propositions is at least provisionally worth believing. Brent looks to Aristotle for help, for his three pisteis, or modes of proof, give a rhetorical account of judgement:

> Of the means of persuasion supplied by the speech itself
> there are three kinds. The first kind reside in the character
> of the speaker; the second consist in producing a certain
> attitude in the hearer; the third appertain to the argument
> proper (Brent 53).

In rhetorical theory, these modes are commonly called ethos (persuasion based on the perceived character of the speaker), pathos (persuasion based on appeal to the

audience's emotions), and logos (persuasion based on reasoned arguments) (Brent 53).

Despite the traditional vintage of these modes, they continue to provide a useful way

of discussing how readers are persuaded. Finally, these modes will work together in

Part Three with the construction of the virtual work that we saw in Part One as critical

technique for looking at readers in the conversation.

ii. Logos

Brent begins his description of logos with Aristotle's enthymeme, which is at the centre of the system of logos and is "the rhetorical equivalent of the syllogism, in which a conclusion is automatically entailed by two premises" (Brent 54). When used rhetorically, either of these premises can be left implicit because an audience can likely infer one or the other. More importantly, however, an enthymeme, unlike the syllogism, operates in the world of the probable and is therefore rooted in the realm of the contingent and the rhetorical. To lend the enthymeme credence, then, the rhetor must construct it based on opinions of those in authority. The enthymeme is therefore the means through which the rhetor "establishes contact with the audience by arguing from the opinions that they already hold" (Brent 55) and that they likely adhere to. In classical rhetoric these opinions are called "doxai".

As we have established, Henry is our rhetor. In terms of Henry V's criticism, I am not suggesting anything out of the ordinary here for, as Claire McEachern notes, the criticism surrounding Henry V frequently takes place in terms of Henry's character even in a current critical climate that has undermined notions of human subjectivity (McEachern 34). McEachern draws on Catherine Belsey's observation that the fact that dramatic constructs are persistently discussed as though they were people perhaps testifies "to our inheritance of the novelistic notions of character" (McEachern 34). McEachern also cites the phenomenology of acting as reason for "affinity with the character who graces us with the intimacy of soliloquy" (McEachern 35). Again, this

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is not meant to suggest some kind of Bradleyism wherein individual character traits become signposts of the universal. Henry is simply a representative for a series of propositions and possibilities manifest in the text--he is the rhetor. It is Henry, then, who finds the doxai and builds the enthymemes that will persuade.

Aristotle provides a list of specific topics (topoi) to which the rhetor can turn for material and which usually fall into the fields of ethics, law and politics. More specifically, Aristotle provides lists of areas of knowledge in which the good rhetor must be informed. As Brent puts it, these include

> matters of government, national defence, and economics, together with the basics of psychology such as the sources of human motivation, and general ethical matters such as the sources of human virtue (Brent 55).

No matter how one finally reads Henry V, these issues are definitely circulating in the text.[7] Henry's job as rhetor, then, is to find the logical shape for his particular argument by echoing the audience's doxai, or "the preexisting agreements of the audience" (Brent 56).

Although Aristotle provides extensive lists of specific arguments that a rhetor may use, our interest is on the reader's side of the transaction. The question we have to ask, then, is what components of logos can help explain how readers judge the theses presented by Henry? To put it as simply as possible, readers' judgments on

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[7]I have to note here that there is an interpretive act prior to judgment; namely, seeing. Before we can judge Henry V in the light of Queer Theory, for example, we have to *see* how the text works in terms of gender ideology. In other words, I am pointing to the fact that the existence of textual topoi is not universal. However, I am working under the assumption that readers' rhetorical situations and interpretive communities to a large extent determine the topoi upon which judgments rest.

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arguments are dependent on the extent to which they share the premises from which the arguments are generated; there is a push-pull balance between the rhetor's arguments and the reader's beliefs. Or, as Kenneth Burke says, "Some of their [the readers] opinions are needed to support the fulcrum by which he [the rhetor] would move other opinions" (A Rhetoric of Motives Burke 56).

As a consequence, readers' responses are firmly situated in their own experiences, or their own interpretive communities. Therefore, if Henry puts forth the enthymeme that his cause is just and his quarrel is honourable (IV.i.122), and evokes a premise that I might share, say, that one must trust those in power, then I would likely agree with Henry's argument. On the other hand, if Henry's words did not evoke premises from me, or, worse (for Henry), evoked challenging premises such as Williams' assertion that if the men in battle do not die well, "it will be a black matter for the King that led them to it - who to disobey were against all proportion of subjection" (IV.i.138-140), then Henry's enthymeme would not likely hold. This process is not often as seemingly straightforward as these examples, or as conscious, for the process of judgment is largely tacit; moreover, premises are connected to complex belief systems, so complex that one person may be predisposed toward the premises of both of these interlocutors here, or, one person may be predisposed to the text's capacity to encourage both predispositions. But what is important here is that the system of logos, the study of how arguments may be chosen in order to persuade, can also be used to describe the mechanism by which arguments are accepted or rejected (Brent 59).

iii. Pathos

Logos is not a rhetor's only means of persuasion, or the only means through which an argument is rejected or accepted, for pathos, or emotion, also plays a powerful role in forming beliefs. Emotions are often distrusted in argument for they can sway through pity and therefore cloud reason. Nevertheless, most rhetoricians recognize that rhetoric must take into account the whole person, and thus account for the role of the emotions in reaching judgements. Aristotle, for example, notes the importance of emotions in argument and provides a detailed analysis of their connection to various human types. How then do we incorporate emotions into evaluating how readers make judgments?

Unlike the logical premises evoked by the enthymeme, evoked emotions are much less straightforward. Rather, they are usually general and difficult to identify specifically. But, as Brent says, these emotions are not simply defects in an audience that can be manipulated by a rhetor; they are inevitable concomitants of a certain type of belief: a belief in the *value* of a proposition.

> We often base our judgments on the emotional overtones
> of these values without instantiating the underlying
> proposition (Brent 63).

That is, we may react favourably to an argument that empowers Henry without consciously invoking the premise that Henry, as King, must be empowered. For example, when Henry attempts to incite his soldiers before the battle of Agincourt and says,

> We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.
> For he today that sheds his blood with me
> Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
> This day shall gentle his condition
> (IV.iii.60-64),

I may react favourably without consciously invoking the premise that one ought to fight for one's country: I would believe in the value of Henry's proposition. I would not likely respond favourably to Henry's proposition, however, if I felt like Williams who says "I am afeard there are few die well that die in a battle, for how can they charitably dispose of anything, when blood is their argument?" (IV.i.141-143).[8]

Like logical premises, then, emotional premises are also an important part of how we make judgments. Although I considered the two modes separately, they should not be thought to work independently from one another. Indeed, they are not easily distinguished from one another, for what we "know" is not just facts: "it is a complex of attitudes and perceptions that shapes our selves and gives us our personal identities" (Brent 63). Readers can therefore make judgments in two very different but related ways: through connecting a rhetor's proposition to existing opinions, and on the basis of feelings and values. But there is also a third: how does the reader assess the rhetor's virtue? That is, how does ethos figure in our judgments?

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[8]Clearly, I am simplifying the pathetic appeal of Henry's stirring speech. It is not dying for your country, but it is becoming ennobled into brotherhood with the sacred blood of the king that is at the basis of the appeal. My simplification, however, is intended to make the simple point that emotional premises (however complex) are part of how we make judgments.

iv. Ethos

Ethos is directly concerned with the character of the speaker. As Aristotle says,

> The character of the speaker is a cause of persuasion when
> the speech is so uttered as to make him worthy of belief; for
> as a rule we trust men of probity more, and more quickly, about
> things in general, while on points outside the realm of exact
> knowledge, where opinion is divided, we trust them absolutely
> (Aristotle 8).

The character of the speaker thus becomes a reason for belief in a proposition. The question that we need to ask here is, "How does the reader use character as evidence for reaching a judgment on the trustworthiness of the representations of belief presented by texts?" (Brent 65). In other words, readers must decide on how Henry appears through the text, which can get complicated.

First, there are different things that may influence how we see the rhetor through the text. Testimony, for example, or things we have heard about Henry independent of his discourse in the text can easily effect our judgment of his character. Basically, this influence can be experienced in three ways: we can carry what we know of the real Henry V into our judgment of Henry V's Henry, we can carry our impression of Henry from the earlier plays in the tetralogy to Henry V, or we can stay within the play itself to make our judgments of Henry.

William Hazlitt's reading of Henry V is an example of the first, for he constantly confuses the historical Henry with the dramatic one: "He was a hero," Hazlitt says of the real Henry, "that is, he was ready to sacrifice his own life for the

pleasure of destroying thousands of other lives....How then do we like him? We like

him in the play" (Hazlitt Taylor 2). But, as Gary Taylor observes, "the historical

Henry may well have been everything Hazlitt says about him; but this need tell us

nothing about Shakespeare's Henry" (Taylor 3). M.M. Reese's Henry, on the other

hand, is an example of the second way of judging. He says,

> After the sustained conflicts of the two preceding plays,
> Henry V is in the main a demonstration. The hero is no longer in
> the toils. The end has proved the man, and his victory over
> himself has been much more than a personal victory. Riot and
> dishonour have been put to flight, reason is passion's master, and
> England has at last a king who can physic all her ills (Reese 88).

To put it differently, if Reese were in a courtroom and offering testimony, he would

be a character witness, basing his judgment of Henry in Henry V on his interpretation

of him from the earlier plays. Reese's case for Henry would then rest in his

witnessing of Henry's obvious maturation over the course of the plays into "the mirror

of all Christian Kings."

There is a third form of ethos, however, "which inheres in the discourse itself"

(Brent 66). The play, for example, sets up Henry's entry in a way that may be read

either to strengthen or weaken ethos. This ethos can be more interesting than the

testimony-oriented ethos, for it falls directly under the rhetor's command and is

therefore more intimately connected to the rhetor's subjectivity, or character.

However, this ethos is more difficult to describe, for it is not a clearly visible process.

That is, we do not have the same recourse to evidence that testimony ethos has, where

we can point to Henry's maturation over the course of several plays, for example, or

where we can compare the dramatic Henry with the historical one--all we've got is all

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we've got. The Henry that we see in <u>Henry V</u> either persuades us or he does not.

No matter which ethos one may prefer, the question remains: why exactly is character persuasive and why do we base judgments on it? We can begin to answer this question by looking at the general meaning of "character" and clarifying what I do not mean by the word. Generally, when we say "character" it refers to an individual's system of beliefs and the way in which we perceive that person operating within the system. Brent refines this definition, saying that it is specifically through actions and words that we make our observations of others, and then quotes Burke to answer why we bestow admiration on some and not others. Burke says,

> You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language
> by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, *iden-*
> *tifying* your ways with his. Persuasion by flattery is but a
> special case of persuasion in general. But flattery can safely
> serve as our paradigm if we systematically widen its meaning,
> to see behind it the conditions of identifications or consub-
> stantiality in general (Brent 69).

Burke thus explains that making judgments in terms of ethos is a two way process, for both the reader's and the rhetor's whole belief systems must be identified in order to understand the persuasion. As a result, we are more likely to accept a belief system akin to our own than one that is not. The identification of that system occurs through an assessment of character. Unlike logos and pathos, then, wherein separate doxai are used to tap into the larger system, ethos is persuasion based on the larger system, and is describable through character.[9]

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[9]Brent notes that in the extreme this effect can become pathological, but I don't think that any of the critics we will be looking at have reached such extremes.

Stephen Greenblatt observes the importance of character in readings of <u>Henry</u> <u>V</u>, for spectators (or readers) are "induced . . . to be dazzled by their own imaginary identification with the conqueror" (Greenblatt 43). Despite Greenblatt's own reading, which seeps through with words like "induced" and "conqueror," he is commenting on the process of identifying through character judgment. A reader need not be dazzled and identify with Henry, however (indeed, Greenblatt is not), for the process is rhetorical and, along with pathos and logos, simply a source of evidence that readers may use in deciding on a text's propositions.

At this point, we have to ask what ultimately determines decision (i.e., why does Reese adopt tetralogical morality, and why Hazlitt his version of history). To do this, we will see that in addition to these modes of evaluating propositions, our process of making judgments on a text is deeply bound with where we are reading from. We have therefore to consider the two different parts of the reading process (as described in Parts One and Two) together and on specific critics in order to get a sense of rhetorical reading as a real critical technique. We will see that reading is a persuasive transaction between the text and the critic, and that critical reading is part of rhetorical invention, for it is "part of a much larger movement: the building of communal knowledge through rhetorical interchange" (Brent 72).

Part Three: Henry V's Critics in Conversation

i. Introduction

I began my thesis endorsing Brent's claim that the persuasive process is part of a larger process of building knowledge through social interchange. Brent begins the last part of his model of rhetorical reading by explaining the point of situating his analysis in a rhetorical context as avoiding "looking at reading acts in isolation" (Brent 75)). He continues,

> We cannot simply ask, then, how a particular person succeeds in interpreting, evaluating, and deciding whether or not to believe this or that particular text. A rhetorical analysis of reading should look at the relationship between the consumption and the production of discourse - at the way knowledge is passed on from one person to another through the paired activities of reading and writing, being continually modified as it passes from self to self (Brent 75).

Brent's model of reading will therefore allow us to see the criticism on Henry V as a sequence of related texts that function together to produce knowledge. For our purposes, this means that we will look at how the readers in the conversation have read the play in the context of other readers who have read the play; moreover, we will do this through applying the processes that I outlined in Parts One and Two: first, we will attempt to observe how readers construct their readings from their specific interpretive communities and rhetorical situations, and, second, we will observe readers' evaluations of the text through the three rhetorical modes of persuasion.

Together, Brent calls these two processes rhetorical reading, or "dialogic criticism," and one of the effects of this criticism is speculation on the "personalities,

assumptions and mindsets" (Brent 77) of the readers involved through looking at their

criticism on the central text. This does not mean, however, that we will psychoanalyse

the different critics; we will consider their assumptions and personalities only as they

appear in their own texts and through examining the more general critical assumptions

that they seem to align themselves with. That is, I will not attempt to understand the

profiled critics in terms of their individual psychologies but, rather, in terms of

"rhetorical relationships between people through texts" (Brent 77). Indeed, this is a

central part of my whole interest in this project, for I believe that looking at the

different critical assumptions through Brent's method will help us see critical

differences in a productive light.

ii. The rhetorical situation as an introduction to the conversation.

In Part One, I claimed that a reader's rhetorical situation affects the evoked reading by guiding the reading through a set of beliefs and, more specifically, a set of questions. The rhetorical situation is therefore a good place to start in order to get a sense of the differences among our readers. In general terms, however, the rhetorical situation is the same for all of the readers, for part of their shared situation is that they belong to a profession that expects them to write about texts. That is, part of the external constraints (such as beliefs, documents, fact, tradition and the like) that govern their decisions is the same. But the specific questions that they each bring to Henry V are different, and these questions then condition their individual responses. In other words, a reader's critical intention, manifest as a specific set of questions about the text (and what that reader wants eventually to answer through writing), conditions the intentions in reading Henry V.

I think that an analysis of Tillyard's rhetorical situation will be a helpful introduction to the critical differences among readers, for Tillyard's historical criticism and its conclusions were, as Edward Pechter notes, accepted "for an entire generation of scholars without effective exception" (Pechter 41). Tillyard is therefore a key figure in the critical conversation, for he was central in Shakespeare studies during the period of 1940-1970, and central to many contemporary critics who have since undertaken analyses of him.

Generally, Tillyard's method (put forth mainly in Shakespeare's History Plays

and The Elizabethan World Picture), uses historical context for both interpretive tools and interpretive reliability. More specifically, one of Tillyard's main interests is in the theme of order. He cites Ulysses' speech from Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida, for example, to illustrate the conception of order in the Elizabethan age, and notes that

> The sun, the king, primogeniture hang together; the war
> of the planets is echoed by the war on earth; the homely
> brotherhoods or guilds in cities are found along with an
> oblique reference to creation out of the confusion of chaos.
> Here is a picture of immense and varied activity, constantly
> threatened with dissolution, and yet preserved from it by a
> superior unifying power (The Elizabethan World Picture 10).

Tillyard uses this passage to claim that in his view of Elizabethan England order always triumphs over potential chaos; he ultimately judges Henry V in these same terms. For although Tillyard explains the text in terms of other Shakespearean texts and the historical sources that Shakespeare used, constructing Shakespeare's historically specific intentions, he then says that "Henry V was constructed without intensity" (Shakespeare's History Plays 312); that is, Shakespeare was not at his best while writing Henry V.

Henry V thus falls short of Shakespeare's capacities in Tillyard's view, but this, I would argue, is because of Tillyard's rhetorical situation: Tillyard focuses on aspects of Henry V that are related to the specific questions about order that he brings to the text. One of the interesting things about Henry V, for example, is the structure, for it helps create the multivalent nature of the text. Tillyard finds the structure unsatisfactory, however, saying that it "evokes no correspondences in the heavens or elsewhere" (Shakespeare's History Plays 312). He notes the "weak construction and

casualness of the comic scenes," and says, "Whereas in Henry IV these were linked in all sorts of ways with the serious action, in Henry V they are mainly detached scenes introduced for mere variety" (Shakespeare's History Plays 312). This is not necessarily the case.

The comic scenes could be an important part of what William Empson calls the double plot. Understood in this way, the comic scenes are not "detached" and put in for "mere variety" but are necessary in order to create the text's different propositions. Act Two, for instance, opens with a flourish and the Chorus speaking of the youth of England as on fire with the desire to fight for the country. But directly following the Chorus' prologue to Act Two we meet Corporal Nym, Lieutenant Bardolph, and Pistol who see the war as a money making venture rather than a patriotic gesture. The comic effect of these three familiar characters lends to Henry V's complexity rather than its simplicity. The view of Henry V that Tillyard evokes, then, is affected by Tillyard's goal, which is to see Henry as reflecting Shakespeare's ambition to show Henry in his "traditional role of perfect king" (Shakespeare's History Plays 305), further reflecting the "order which prevails in the heavens" (Shakespeare's History Plays 10).

I bring up William Empson to emphasize the influence that Tillyard's rhetorical situation puts on his evoked reading, but Empson is also writing from his own rhetorical situation. Although Empson does not explicitly talk about Henry V at length in his Some Versions of Pastoral, his ideas definitely frame an inferable reading of the text, further suggesting Empson's specific set of questions if he were to talk

about <u>Henry V</u> in more detail than he does. Empson's notions of ambiguity and irony, for example, encourage a reading that appreciates the simultaneity of the text's different propositions. He says,

> The fundamental impulse of irony is to score off both
> arguments that have been puzzling you, both sets of
> sympathies in your mind, both sorts of fool who will
> hear you; a plague on both their houses (Empson 62).

Furthermore, Empson's conception of ambiguity is directly connected to this definition of irony, for he says that irony must be conceived as a "full-blown 'dramatic ambiguity' in which different parts of the audience are meant to interpret the thing in different ways" (Empson 63). Empson thus plays the audience members off of each other, unifying the different propositions symbolically through the audience. In addition, ambiguity and irony function through the double plot, documenting a relationship between the king and people, the serious and the comic, and the symbol and the symbolized, which "can hardly be kept from irony" (Empson 29). <u>Henry V</u> thus becomes almost exemplary of Empson's critical beliefs for, as we saw above, it is a text in which the double plot is alive and well.

It is important to note, however, that when Empson talks about audience, he means a specifically Elizabethan audience, for such an audience was capable of the "sympathy" that dramatic ambiguity required. He contextualizes to explain what he means:

> The Elizabethan feeling can be seen most clearly in the
> popular rogue pamphlets, which express warm sympathy
> for the villains while holding in mind both horror for their
> crimes as such and pity and terror for the consequences (Empson 64).

To make his criticism amenable to more modern times, Empson adds a qualifier for the single reader, saying that the single reader translates into a single mind that embodies the capacity for sympathy because "the mind is complex and ill-connected like an audience" (Empson 68).

There is clearly a lot going on in Empson, making it hard to pin him down and figure out his general orientation let alone his more specific rhetorical situation. But I am focusing on his more text-centred observations and will therefore align him with the New Critics and their formalist readings, although there are several key differences between Empson's criticism and the New Critics which will become clear in Part Three. In general, however, the New Critics place a heightened importance on the text as a coherent whole held together by its inherent meaning and formal complexity, and able to stand autonomously. The text coheres like this through such things as irony, ambiguity, and paradox. The double plot, then, with its connected terms and used as a foil for Tillyard's rhetorical situation, is at the root of Empson's own rhetorical situation, for it helps shape the questions that Empson would bring to the text. Like Tillyard, Empson's view of Henry V would be affected in part by his critical goal, which would be (in part) to identify the formal structures that enable the text's meaning.

At this point, our examination of different critics' rhetorical situations is serving as an introduction to the participants in the larger epistemic conversation in that the questions that critics bring to the text are not inspired by the text only, but by the critical context in which critics are writing, and the other critics to whom they may be

specifically writing. What critics want to communicate either generally or to other critics specifically therefore conditions the questions that they bring to the text, not to mention the answers that they quite possibly had even before their questions were formed. The questions that determine one's rhetorical situation therefore start to place critics and their texts in a relationship to other critics and their texts. In the case of some critics, this process is more or less implicit. With others, however, the rhetorical situation can be charged with questions that are explicitly reacting to their critical colleagues. Graham Bradshaw is one such critic.

Bradshaw is a text-centred critic, but I include him more for his difficulties with contemporary critics than I do for his criticism, for he acts as a good polemical constituent of the conversation. The book of his that I will focus on is called Misrepresentations: Shakespeare and the Materialists, indicating from the outset that he has difficulties with certain contemporary critics--he says as much in his prologue:

> those prematurely politicized readings of Henry V which I
> consider in Chapter 1 all sample that play in a dismayingly
> partial way, while using it to 'instantiate' whatever theory
> underlies the reading. Yet it is still open to us to do what these
> readings do not do, and allow the play to test, not merely
> 'instantiate' the theory" (Bradshaw 2).

Bradshaw's own approach to Henry V is indebted to Rabkin's either/or reading which argues that Henry V's "ultimate power is precisely the fact that it points in two directions, virtually daring us to choose one of the two opposed interpretations it requires of us" (Rabkin 34). Like most critics, Rabkin places his reading in the context of the second tetralogy, and so sees Henry V as coming on the heels of the previous plays, Henry IV Part One and Henry IV Part Two in particular. In Rabkin's

view, <u>Henry V</u> carries the opposing energies of the two previous plays:

> At the end of <u>Henry IV Part One</u>, Hal seemed able to accommodate all of England into his family as he moved toward its symbolic fatherhood. By the end of <u>Henry IV Part Two</u>, in order to become king of England he has reached out to murder both of his fathers (Rabkin 42).

Hence, Rabkin's use of Gombrich's rabbit/duck paradigm to describe the text (as I described in Part One).

Bradshaw builds on Rabkin's either/or reading and offers instead a "both/and" reading in an attempt to stave off the ambiguity that Rabkin's reading ultimately leads to. Bradshaw's reading is therefore similar to Empson's, claiming that the text's different possibilities can act simultaneously.[10] But, in the end, Bradshaw says that <u>Henry V</u> has a profoundly integrated conclusion that somehow seems unresolved, which is pretty close to saying that the text is ambiguous. A closer look should show this to be true.

Bradshaw is concerned with "perspectives" which "frame" elements of the text and draw a reader in opposing directions (both/and). He says,

> I used the term 'framing' to emphasize the way in which these perspectival conflicts are not isolated flare-ups, but are developed and articulated through the play's structural dynamics. Often, this issues in some powerfully organized collisional moment...in which we find ourselves simultaneously apprehending opposed potentialities of meaning, as we try to collect and make sense of our own startingly divided responses (Bradshaw 38).

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[10]By comparing Bradshaw to Empson I am not suggesting that Empson would want to "stave off" ambiguity. Empson would, of course, embrace the ambiguity. I am rather saying that Bradshaw is trying to avoid an ambiguous reading but does not succeed and is therefore offering an Empson-like reading, but without any of Empson's power.

Bradshaw's reading is thus principally structural, for, as this quotation indicates, he pays close attention to how the text builds on itself. Moreover, his both/and conception is chiefly dependent on how these structures come together in a reader's experience of the text. Bradshaw's simultaneity clause therefore upgrades Rabkin's either/or reading, but does not, I would argue, offer anything that Empson's dramatic ambiguity does not. For a reader's apprehension of the "collisional moment" is just a more structural version of Empson's sympathy. In this respect, Bradshaw's rhetorical situation is similar to Empson's, for his view of <u>Henry V</u> is affected by his goal of identifying the text's formal elements and how those elements function together in a reader's mind (if we take Bradshaw's "apprehension" to mean a process that goes on in a reader's mind) to produce the reading of the play.

Bradshaw has another, and perhaps more important, agenda, however, which is also part of his rhetorical situation and therefore affects his reading: he has difficulties accepting contemporary criticism that is influenced by theory, such as new historicism and cultural materialism. In particular, Bradshaw takes issue with Stephen Greenblatt, the target for many critical attacks on contemporary criticism. However, as Edward Pechter notes, "the important thing about the attacks on Greenblatt is not whether they are justified or not but the imposing testimony they supply to the enormous influence of his work" (<u>What Was Shakespeare</u> 79). Bradshaw is not alone, then, for it would seem that Greenblatt is at the centre of discussions that attempt to dismiss or simply to define the new historicist and cultural materialist projects.

One of Bradshaw's main problems with Greenblatt centres on the distinction

between old historicism and new historicism. Specifically, Bradshaw sees the new

historicist's use of Foucault as replacing the "old ruler-centred way of doing history"

(Bradshaw 92). That is, the new historicist's use of Foucault challenges Bradshaw's

old text-centred way of doing literature. He says of Greenblatt's predominantly

Foucauldian conception of history, for example, that when it

> is applied to Shakespeare - the directing intelligence at work
> within fictions which are in some sense his, like those "sub-
> versive doubts" - we need to know who or what does the
> containing; or indeed, "plotting," since Greenblatt's argument
> also invokes, and turns on, that "carefully plotted official strategy
> whereby subversive perceptions are at once produced and contain-
> ed" (Bradshaw 82).

It would seem from this quotation that Bradshaw's difficulties with Greenblatt revolve

further around a different understanding of intentionality. For Greenblatt's Foucauldian

influenced and context centred criticism runs against Bradshaw's notion of

Shakespeare's "exploratory dramatic thinking" (Bradshaw 39), and how that thinking is

observed textually. Bradshaw's rhetorical situation therefore results in his close textual

reading of Henry V (his structural both/and approach), but the real set of questions

that shapes his situation derives from his desire to question new historicism's

contextual emphasis, and the challenge such an emphasis makes to Bradshaw's own

critical assumptions. In other words, Bradshaw's view of Henry V is affected by his

goal of attending to his disagreement with Greenblatt.

It is not surprising that Greenblatt is an impetus to Bradshaw's critical project;

most disagreements about texts hinge on disagreements about the proper, extra-literary

contexts within which to understand texts, creating the critical tension through the

interpenetration of critical texts. What interests me, however, is the way in which the tension itself can be regarded as meaningful. Thus, in the way that Stanley Fish makes an apparently insoluble problem of interpreting a text signify, so the critical tension begins to signify. If we look at Greenblatt himself and Bradshaw's difficulties with him, we will continue to develop our sense of how the tension becomes significant, or becomes knowledge.

In "Invisible bullets: Renaissance authority and its subversion, Henry IV and Henry V," Greenblatt begins in his customary anecdotal way with an esoteric text from the Renaissance archives, Thomas Harriot's 1593 A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia. Greenblatt uses Harriot's text in the belief that such cultural expressions are "complex symbolic and material articulations of the imaginative and ideological structures of the society that produced them" ("Resonance and Wonder" Greenblatt 79). Harriot thus helps establish the Machiavellian Renaissance machinery that Greenblatt then applies to the Henry plays:

> Shakespeare's Henry plays, like Harriot in Harriot's New World,
> can be seen to confirm the Machiavellian hypothesis of the origin
> of princely power in force and fraud even as they draw their audience
> irresistibly toward the celebration of that power ("Invisible Bullets" 20).

Clearly, this statement rests on Foucault's conception of power. Indeed, Greenblatt says that "[t]o understand Shakespeare's whole conception of Hal, from rakehell to monarch, we need in effect a poetics of Elizabethan power" ("Invisible Bullets" 44). Such a call for an investigation into power in Elizabethan society issues directly from Greenblatt's visibly new historicist perspective in which context and text are mutually constituted, which itself issues from Foucault's ideas of power. In

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Volume One of <u>The History of Sexuality</u>, for example, Foucault describes power as "something to be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization" (Foucault 55). From the new historicist perspective these force relations come to bear on all aspects of a culture, including the theatre and a playwright. It is therefore through an understanding of how power works in a culture that we can understand how it is manifest in a text; more specifically, we can understand how power is manifest in Hal's movement from rakehell to Monarch. A closer look at Foucault will therefore clarify Greenblatt's rhetorical situation, or the set of questions that Greenblatt brings to the text and through which he reads the text. Moreover, a closer look at Foucault will prepare us for the role he plays in the larger assumptions of Greenblatt and the other critics who are influenced by theory.

To begin, it is necessary to look at Foucault's conception of power while also looking at his conception of the subject, for the two are closely coupled. Greenblatt's claim, for example, that a "poetics of Elizabethan power" is needed to understand Hal suggests the pairing of power and subjectivity in the Foucauldian universe. As I mentioned in Part One while discussing the authorial subject, Foucault refuses "to see discourse as a phenomenon of expression" (Foucault 55). Instead, he dismantles the subject as a unified entity, making discourse something that issues from various positions of subjectivity. Foucault's concept of power, thus, sounds remarkably like his description of discourse and its relation to the subject:

> Power's condition of possibility, or in any case the viewpoint
> which permits one to understand its exercise...must not be

sought in the primary existence of a central point, in a unique source of sovereignty from which secondary and descendent forms would emanate (Foucault 93).

Like the subject, then, power is also dispersed and cannot be conceived of as emanating from a unified source. Rather, "power is everywhere" (Foucault 93) and therefore comes to bear on the subject from many directions. It follows that a subject's discourse cannot "majestically unfold" for the operation of power is fundamental to the production of discourse (Sheridan 116), making the dispersion of the subject under power a necessary condition for discourse.[1] Foucauldian power is thus immanent in all societal relations, which would include the relations between an author's context and the author, an author and the text, and the text and readers (or spectators). Indeed, both authors and their texts are produced by the culture. The texts are thus articulations of that culture; more specifically, texts are expressions of the meeting between the realm of culture and the realm of political economy. The texts are therefore steeped in ideology; or, ideology is embedded in the subject matter of the text.

Greenblatt sees ideology as written into Shakespeare texts; thus, there is a necessity for a poetics of Elizabethan power in order to understand Hal. If Greenblatt does not supply such a poetics, he does supply a contextualised reading of Henry V as an expression of Machiavellian Renaissance power. Or, in terms of Rabkin's

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[1]I should note the importance of Jacques Derrida to these issues, for it was both Derrida and Foucault that gave rise to the post-modern dispersion of the subject. Derrida, for his part, offered a critique of western metaphysics, or a critique of the metaphysics of presence, thus beginning the opposition to classic structuralism, empiricism and, most importantly for our purposes, traditional humanism.

rabbit/duck paradigm, Greenblatt sees in <u>Henry V</u> a rabbit only; rather, he sees a rabbit and a duck, but the rabbit eats the duck. For Hal is "the charismatic leader who purges the commonwealth of its incorrigibles and forges the martial national State" (Greenblatt 42). We can say, finally, that Greenblatt's rhetorical situation, or the set of questions that he brings to <u>Henry V</u>, is determined in part by Foucault's conception of power and the connected conception of the subject. To put it differently, Greenblatt's <u>Henry V</u> is produced by a Foucauldian understanding of the meaning of historical process.

Foucault is clearly central to the new historicist project; he is also central to contemporary criticism more generally. Cultural materialists see Hal as an embodiment of imperial ideology and its costs (Dollimore and Sinfield), and an embodiment of various cultural energies and therefore capable of manoeuvring these energies into the service of the state (Tennenhouse). Foucault thus shapes the rhetorical situations out of which many critics function. Indeed, Foucauldian inspired criticism has gone to interesting extremes, and the further it goes, the tighter the tension within criticism becomes.

One of these extremes is to question Renaissance sexuality, leading to Queer Theory approaches to Renaissance texts. These approaches cannot be put in a single camp, however, for there are critics such as feminists, new historicists, and materialists all operating under the title of "Queer Theory." But, as Jonathan Goldberg says, despite the different orientations among these critics, what they do have in common is that their "various antihumanist agendas have been brought to bear upon the period"

(Goldberg Queering the Renaissance 1); that is, one of the things that these critics

have in common is an agenda to question such things as the presumed humanism of

the Renaissance. As in Bradshaw, then, some of these critics take explicit issue with

other critics, making the often implicit workings of the critical conversation explicit. I

will thus look at the rhetorical situations of two critics who use their own readings of

Henry V to question the assumptions behind other readings of the text and of literary

criticism more generally.

Since Foucault is the impetus behind much of Queer Theory, I will use him to

make the introductions. One of the ways in which Foucault analyses and puts forth

his notion of the subject and subjectivity, and which Queer Theory has seized on, is to

examine sexuality and the relation of power to sex. Foucault states in Volume One of

The History of Sexuality that the received opinion on power and sexuality is

characterised by what he calls the "repressive hypothesis" (Foucault 10): the delusion

that power represses. Rather, power is "productive of an ever-proliferating discourse

on sexuality" (Sheridan 166). It is with this understanding of power and its relation to

sexuality and, in turn, subjectivity, that some contemporary critics, including Queer

Theorists, have approached Renaissance drama and subsequently formulated their

opinions about Hal, and their opinions about Hal's other critics.

Valerie Traub and Jonathan Goldberg are good representatives of Queer

Theory. Traub, for example, says that

> questions of sexuality cannot be divorced from issues of
> subjectivity [and]...analyses of subjectivity should not
> subordinate erotic concerns (Traub, 3).

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And Goldberg:

> Reading Renaissance texts for sodomy-and for sodomites-
> involves...seeing the ways in which normative bonds that
> structured society also allowed for sexual relations. It means...
> to allow the gender trouble (to borrow Judith Butler's title) that
> follows from the incoherence of sexuality, to ask of sexual identity
> the question that Denise Riley asks of gendered identity, am I that
> name? (Goldberg, 23).

Traub and Goldberg are clearly working out of shared assumptions here. Indeed,

words like "sexuality" and "subjectivity" suggest their indebtedness to Foucault, and

both projects are fuelled by the Foucauldian idea that sexuality is constituted in

relation to the social processes of power, and that thus formed, sexuality in turn

produces the concept of gender as fixed. Moreover, Traub and Goldberg see this

understanding of fixed gender as an ideological normalization which has ramifications

for the development of male and female subjectivities. Finally, both critics look to

Renaissance drama (Shakespeare in particular) to interrogate its subjects in order to

see how this normalized heterosexual ideology functions in the texts and in the

criticism on the texts.

Basically, what Foucault and Queer Theorists such as Traub and Goldberg want

to say is that there were (homo)sexual acts but not (homo)sexual persons in the

Renaissance. They make this argument as part of the larger argument that there were

not persons in the Renaissance, in the sense of autonomous meaning-producing

authors. From this perspective, a text like Henry V (or anything else for that matter)

is going to look different from the way it does to Bradshaw and the other critics I

have mentioned. But the difference is what I am interested in. I will therefore discuss

Traub and Goldberg in some detail and uncover their rhetorical situations while developing their place in the larger conversation.

Traub, in a chapter from <u>Desire and Anxiety: Circulation of Sexuality in Shakespearean Drama</u> called "Prince Hal's Falstaff: positioning psychoanalysis and the female reproductive body," and Goldberg, in a chapter from <u>Sodomotries: Renaissance texts, modern sexualities</u> called "Desiring Hal," are both interested in the relationship of desire and sexuality to Hal's formation as a subject. And both figure Falstaff prominently in this formation. Goldberg contends that the thrust of criticism on Hal (excluding William Empson, interestingly, whom he invokes in detail to make his own argument) has been to place him as an ego ideal, a moral and national hero, or, at very least, a powerful character. Such criticism plays out an oedipal drama, says Goldberg, and rests on the assumption that male self promotion and ambition are entwined with heterosexual desire. To accept such a view of Hal, then, is to read the <u>Henriad</u> only from the modern position of a heterosexual ideology with "its suppositions of rigid differences in gender and the impermeability of homo and heterosexualities" (Goldberg 175).

Drawing on the work of Foucault that looks at the historicity of sexuality, and that has destabilized concepts of gender difference, Goldberg then questions the allure of understanding Hal as an ideal as seen from a heterosexual matrix. He claims that such readings are complicit with "the reinforcement of a misogynist heterosexuality always in danger of homophobia" (Goldberg 148). What he sees in particular in the critics' admiration for Hal is a political policing of women "so that effeminacy can be

avoided, so that 'proper' male\male relations can be secured that are not tainted"

(Goldberg 168). That is, he sees a policing over homosexuality; and he arrives at this

point in no easy way. Conveniently, the best way to make use of Goldberg for my

own purposes is not to emphasize the torturous route he follows to arrive at his

conclusions, but rather to use him along with Traub to develop our sense of Queer

Theory's assumptions and how those assumptions make Queer Theorists invent a

fundamentally different text from humanists. What I am therefore interested in is the

rhetorical exigence of Goldberg's situation, or his set of questions that he brings to the

text. And there is no doubt that those questions have been dictated in part by his

Foucauldian desire to address the ways in which "supposedly neutralist formalist

criticism carries heterosexist assumptions" (Queering the Renaissance 3).

If we move on to Traub, we see that her set of questions is similar to

Goldberg's, for she contends that the predominantly male perspective on desire found

within Shakespearean drama and criticism both demonstrate "an attitude toward female

bodies that, in its most potent form, is revealingly paranoid" (Traub 3). Like

Goldberg, then, Traub is also interested in the function of erotic desire in

Shakespearean drama and the relation of this desire to a subject's construction. In

particular, Traub draws from a Lacanian psychoanalytic tradition wherein a pre-

cultural maternal is necessary for the organization of culture within the symbolic order.

More importantly for my purposes here, Traub sees literary criticism as

following the lead of psychoanalysis in reading the process of the enculturation of a

subject as predicated on a male subject only, and that this subject "is constituted in

relation to a fantasized other--an other that is at once engendered as 'woman' and eroticized in reference to female reproductive functions" (Traub 50). In an attempt to break out of this relation, Traub examines the role of the female reproductive body in both Lacan's revision of Freud and Shakespeare's Henriad. Between them, says Traub, they constitute two narratives of male subjectivity that demonstrate, despite their historical differences in family and social structures, the repetition of a conception of gender wherein the male subject depends upon the repression of the female reproductive body. In the course of this articulation, and in addition to her more implicit assumptions, Traub usefully (for us) voices her discontent with critics whose work functions within "the syntax of a normative heterosexuality" (Queering the Renaissance 3); like Goldberg, Traub thus nicely documents and propels the conversation, for her rhetorical situation leads her in her reading of the Henriad to reckon with what she identifies as traditional literary criticism (Bradshaw and the like).

At this point, we can see that all of the critics I have mentioned in my thesis have evoked different readings of Henry V, or of Hal and his movement through the Henriad, and that these differences are in part a result of the different questions that the critics each bring to Henry V or Hal and his movement through the Henriad and that they wish to answer through their own texts. Often, these questions are generated by the statements or texts of others. Thus, the readings that critics evoke are influenced not just by the text or what is found at the text's sentence level but by previous readings--because readings are all we have. As Brent says,

> by the place of that text in the larger epistemic conversation
> in which the reader is immersed, a conversation that generates

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certain questions about the text and places it in relationship to
other texts partly on the basis of those questions (Brent 82).

The broadly defined rhetorical situation therefore lets us see that reading is

"interpenetrated by rhetoric" (Brent 82) even before we start to look explicitly at how

readers judge the text's propositions. This rhetorical model will continue to develop

when we look at the influence of larger assumptions that come out of a reader's

position in an interpretive community, or, as Fish says, when we look at "the structure

of a reader's experience" ("Interpreting the Variorum" Fish 167).

iii. The Influence of Assumptions.

Although our discussion of the critics' different rhetorical situations crossed over at times into a discussion of the critics' larger critical assumptions, we can now look more closely at those assumptions and the role they play in rhetorical reading. Also, we will see these assumptions in action by looking at the ways in which the critics judge the text's propositions and evoke their views of Henry. Finally, in order to develop fully the conversational model, we will pay more explicit attention to these various critical responses as a network of interconnecting texts. That is, we will continue to account for the ways in which the critics' judge not only Henry V but each other.

As with our discussion of the rhetorical situation, Tillyard's criticism is a good place to start in order to get the conversation going. We saw that Tillyard's rhetorical situation led to a reading that believes that Henry V falls short of Shakespeare's capacities. In addition to the influence of the rhetorical situation on this reading, however, Tillyard is also influenced by his interpretive community. Tillyard's judgment of Henry is directly symptomatic of the assumptions involved in these structures (as Fish would call them). If we then look at the Henry that Tillyard sees and judges we will in turn see Tillyard's larger critical assumptions; moreover, we will see that those assumptions are in dialogue, if only implicitly, with another set of critical assumptions.

This focus on assumptions and their interconnection returns us to Aristotle's

three rhetorical modes of logos, pathos and ethos and their simultaneous operation in yielding a judgment. Each mode, however, may be foregrounded more or less at any given moment in the actual process of judging. I would argue that from Tillyard's old historicist perspective ethos operates most prominently in the judgment of Henry, although pathos does play a role. In terms of pathos, for example, Tillyard seizes at times on the emotional overtones of Henry's rhetoric, for these overtones fit into his view that Shakespeare

> clearly intended the play as a splendid interlude, when the
> ancestral curse was for the moment suspended, figuring in some
> sort the golden age of Elizabeth (Tillyard Henry V 43).

But it is through ethos, finally, that we can see what is behind Tillyard's judgment of Henry, and why, in his opinion, Shakespeare's intentions ultimately fall short of their goal of the splendid interlude.

Tillyard claims that Shakespeare had mutually exclusive obligations to live up to in Henry V: one to the chronicler Hall's precedent and the creation of the epic of England, and the other to the Elizabethan audience. Henry is at the centre of the difficulty here. Tillyard says, for instance, that

> Shakespeare came to terms with this hopeless situation by
> jettisoning the character he had created and substituting one
> which, though lacking in all consistency, satisfied the requirements
> both of the chroniclers and of popular tradition. No wonder if the
> play around him shows a great falling off in quality
> (Tillyard Henry V 38).

To be sure, a lot is resting on Henry in Tillyard's view; indeed, so much so that Henry "could only fail" (Tillyard Henry V 37). If we remember that making judgments in terms of ethos is a two-way process between the rhetor and the reader, and pair this

with a discussion of Tillyard's critical assumptions, we can then begin to see why

Tillyard has to see Henry, and therefore Henry V, as only being able to fail.

I claimed above that persuasion occurs through an identification between belief

systems, for we are more likely to accept a set of beliefs that is more akin to our own

than one that is not. Moreover, the identification of another's system happens through

an assessment of character. Thus, Tillyard looks at-and judges-Henry from his own

set of beliefs, but he cannot identify with what he sees. For the Henry in Henry V is

inconsistent with the Henry in Henry IV Part One and Henry IV Part Two. Tillyard

does claim, however, that there are moments in Henry V when Henry does succeed

and makes "us insensible to any inconsistencies" (Tillyard Henry V 38). Act one

Scene two, for example, is consistent with the old Henry, and also "once or twice

later" (Tillyard Henry V 38) in the play. But I would argue that Tillyard identifies

with Henry in these scenes because Henry speaks Tillyard's speak and walks Tillyard's

walk.[2] That is, in these few scenes Henry fits into, and perhaps even demonstrates,

Tillyard's larger critical assumptions.

As I noted in Part One, these assumptions specifically involve placing Henry in

the "grand context of English history" (Tillyard Henry V 39). We can now look more

closely at this claim and consider how Tillyard's assumptions arise from his particular

interpretive community. We saw, for instance, that Fish explains interpretation in

terms of the social structures that determine readers' interpretive strategies. Wolfgang

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[2]Please recall Burke's claim that you "persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, *identifying* your ways with his" (Burke in Brent 69).

Iser similarly explains interpretation in terms of social forces that guide the act of invoking a virtual work. Readers therefore create a text's meaning, but they do so from specific social positions which shape and control the reading act. Tillyard's critical assumptions, witnessed most clearly, I think, through the window of ethos, are thus rooted in the critical community from which he reads. If we look at the context out of which Tillyard's interpretive community grew, we can therefore see the assumptions involved in Tillyard's historical criticism; moreover, we can see how his criticism is in heated conversation with the more textually oriented criticism that grew, in large part, out of William Empson, a student of I.A. Richards, himself one of Tillyard's Cambridge colleagues.

Tillyard's emphasis on Shakespeare's historical background or, more precisely, his construction of Shakespeare's historical background which he then reads back onto the texts, arose, in part, out of his dissatisfaction with the "direction being taken by the new discipline of English studies" (Grady 158). As one of the architects of English at Cambridge, Tillyard found the increasing popularity of what became known as "New Criticism" troubling. He recounts this tension himself in The Muse Unchained, which Hugh Grady says articulates "an alienation from the direction that Cambridge New Criticism had taken from Empson to Leavis" (Grady 158). Tillyard's books on the English Renaissance resulted directly out of this alienation, says Grady, and document his historicist perspective and method, or the "Tudor Myth." Tillyard's criticism is, then, deeply immersed in a specific understanding of history as objective and teleologically ordered; moreover, this understanding of history (which reflects his

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dissatisfaction with the New Critics) is reflected in the texts, resulting in Tillyard's aim

"to provide a settled and unitary reading of the plays, with ambiguities resolved and

cruxes decided" (Grady 174). Tillyard's view of Henry V can be understood as

developing logically from the assumptions he brings to the play: since Tillyard's

method does not have room for Henry V's inconsistencies, he evokes a play that

largely fails. Tillyard's reading of Henry V, witnessed principally through his judgment

of Henry, is therefore describable in terms of the social structures (interpretive

community) that shape his critical assumptions and that guide his interpretive process.

Furthermore, Tillyard's reaction to other critics is clearly caught up in both his

assumptions and his process. In particular, Tillyard reacts to other critics who might,

unlike himself, appreciate Henry V's inconsistencies, such as the critic who caused him

so much anxiety, William Empson.

Tillyard groups Empson in with those critics who were central to New

Criticism's development and so dismisses Empson's Seven Types of Ambiguity, saying

> Anyone quick to distinguish the rotten from the ripe and to
> sniff the taint of incipient corruption might now have guessed
> that an impulse had attained its maximum strength and that
> henceforward a decline or coarsening might be expected (Muse
> Unchained, 130).

Despite some shared tendencies which allow us to pair them here for the sake of our

discussion (and maybe led Tillyard to pair them also), Empson's alignment with New

Criticism is tenuous. Perhaps the confusion whether to put Empson in with the New

Critics or not issues from the difficulty in establishing New Criticism's early

orientation. For, as Annabel Patterson notes, the New Critical position was

popularized and made much more uncompromising than the original proponents may have wished; indeed, New Criticism at its inception had a tendency to move between the two poles of a committed social interest on the one hand, and utter self-referentiality (art for art's sake) on the other; Empson becomes almost emblematic of these two tendencies.

Although Empson was I.A. Richards' student, and was therefore nurtured in a New Critical environment, his criticism weans itself from the New Critics in several important ways. First, unlike the New Critical tendency to close the literary work, Empson sees it as open-ended: for Empson, thus, textual understanding involves looking beyond the text to its social contexts. Empson seems to anticipate critics like Stanley Fish in this respect, for like Fish's readers, Empson's readers bring to the text their various social contexts and tacit assumptions. More importantly, however, like Fish, Empson does not insist on a text's final interpretation. Therefore, despite attention to formal structures, a text to Empson may simply remain ambiguous. It is here that Empson's dramatic ambiguity differs from New Criticism's emphasis on paradox, irony and ambivalence, for the New Critics do insist on at least a certain amount of textual unity and closure, even if that closure is explained in terms of "the economic fusion of two opposite but complementary meanings" (Grady 52). All of this does not mean that Tillyard was mistaken in his disagreement with Empson, for despite the confusion about the purposes generating Empson's critical practice, his notion of both the double plot and ambiguity are at odds with Tillyard's own assumptions. For Empson's criticism would lead to a reading of Henry V that

appreciates the inconsistencies that Tillyard finds so troublesome.

In Part Two, I conflated Empson's criticism with Graham Bradshaw's criticism, for Bradshaw also offers a reading of Henry V that rests on the text's inconsistencies. Whatever the intrinsic interest of Bradshaw's work, it offers a specific reading of the play and can therefore serve effectively to illustrate the nature of conversational interaction in which I am primarily interested. For Bradshaw's text-centred criticism speaks to both old and new historicism, nicely demonstrating the rhetorical nature of the conversation surrounding Henry V. Cultural materialists, for example, understand their own work as a critical response to old historicists. But Bradshaw's move is to suggest underlying similarities between the two and to position his own criticism in contrast to the values and methods he claims they share. That is, Bradshaw's intention is to put both into question for the same reasons, despite recent criticism's attack on Tillyard's authoritarian Shakespeare, or ideological Shakespeare. Bradshaw says, for instance, that Jonathan Dollimore's Radical Tragedy

> carries on the old bad Tillyardian habit of giving particular
> characters and speeches a supradramatic significance, which
> is then identified with what the play or the dramatist "really"
> thinks, and usually coincides with what the critic thinks (Bradshaw 9).

Bradshaw thus speaks backward to Tillyard's brand of historicism, while at the same time speaking with the more theory oriented historicism of his contemporaries. Implicitly, Bradshaw moves us toward his textual criticism while at the same time attending to his difficulties with other critics; hence, his two-fold project.

I claimed above that Bradshaw's rhetorical situation plays an important role in the two-fold nature of his criticism. We can now look more closely at the Henry that

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Bradshaw evokes and judges, and the interpretive community, or social constraints, behind that judgment. To begin with, Bradshaw hints at his textual propensities when he says that "we should be trying to address Henry V in ways that better acknowledge its power to read us" (Bradshaw 110). Such a statement feeds directly into Bradshaw's structural reading of the play which claims that the structural dynamics are effected principally through Henry who is "constantly before us as king, yet he also seems to be constantly receding from us, and perhaps from himself" (Bradshaw 112). To make this statement, Bradshaw borrows Stephen Greenblatt's concept of self-fashioning, despite his overall difficulties with Greenblatt's new historicism. Bradshaw, although fundamentally antagonistic to Greenblatt, thus makes use of some of his strategies and insights: Bradshaw winds up sharing as well as differing. This is the claim Bradshaw himself makes about cultural materialists and old historicists--that they have things in common despite the self-pronounced antagonism of the latter. Now here Bradshaw's own critical practice illustrates or embodies the same complex overly-determined conversational relation, whether he himself is aware of it or not.

In particular, Bradshaw uses Greenblatt's help to establish Henry's different ways of being himself (his self-fashioning), or, in rhetorical terms, Henry's different propositions. But Bradshaw quickly parts from Greenblatt (and shows his own textual colours) when he discusses the effect of Henry's many possible selves. He says, for instance, that although Greenblatt

> directs attention to the crucial contrast between different ways
> of being oneself...his commentary shows how he isn't concerned
> with what makes this contrast so timely and telling at this moment in
> the unfolding drama (Bradshaw 113).

In Bradshaw's view, then, Greenblatt glosses over the contrast that gives Bradshaw his

perspectival reading and further gives the text its "power to read us" (Bradshaw 110)

For Greenblatt's version of Henry's "being oneself," says Bradshaw, is simply to

perform one's part in the scheme of power in an ideological rather than a textual sense.

It is through Henry, then, that Bradshaw organizes his perspectival reading of the text;

it is also through Henry that Bradshaw responds to those critics whose politicized anti-

Henry readings are, he says, too simplistic. If we look more closely at the ways in

which Bradshaw judges the text's propositions (the way he judges Henry), we will

account for the ways in which he judges not only Henry V but Greenblatt and other

critics as well.

Bradshaw's evocation and judgment of Henry rest on both the logos and pathos

modes of making judgments. In particular, logos helps Bradshaw establish the

structural tension, or the both/and reading, for Henry's different selves find the logical

shape for the different propositions that make up the text's different structural

elements. Together, these different arguments then function to echo Bradshaw's

dramatic doxai; that is, Henry's different selves put forth different enthymemes which

evoke different premises in Bradshaw's mind. However, these different evocations

ultimately function together to put forth the over-riding enthymeme that the text is an

experience of what Bradshaw calls collisional moments. Moreover, these moments are

witnessed through the Henry that is constantly before us but also receding. Finally,

such an enthymeme evokes a premise in Bradshaw that coheres with the text's

dramatic and textually contained capacities. Or, to put it differently, Bradshaw's

judgment of Henry is situated in his predominantly textual and, I would argue, New

Critical assumptions.[3]

The textual constraints of Bradshaw's larger interpretive community therefore

put him at odds with both the context-oriented criticism of both the old historicists and

more recent historicists. There is, however, another set of assumptions, which, I think,

also have a shaping control on Bradshaw's reading. And these assumptions are

witnessed through the influence of pathos on both Bradshaw's judgment of Henry and

his pronouncement on the text. As we saw above, Bradshaw's reaction to those

critics with whom he disagrees is definitely involved in his both/and approach and his

favourable reaction to the text's different questions; moreover, his disagreement rests,

in part (perhaps large part), on an emotional reaction to what, I would argue, he

perceives as a threat to his own critical and, arguably, more general ethical values.

His judgement of Henry is then influenced by pathos, or by his personal values.

I have already suggested some of the particular difficulties that Bradshaw has

with his theory oriented contemporaries, but I have not discussed how these difficulties

are attached to underlying values and perhaps even to emotions. Although such things

are difficult to identify, I think that Bradshaw himself helps us when he says the

following in the acknowledgments to Misrepresentations:

> Finally, some special words of thanks to Stephen Greenblatt,
> whose readings of Shakespeare I criticize at length in this
> book. I admire Greenblatt but love Shakespeare, and think that
> new historicist readings-even his-diminish the plays (Bradshaw x).

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[3]Bradshaw does pay attention to context generally, but his reading is finally textual for there
is very little recourse to context in his structural account of Henry V.

To put it differently, Bradshaw's love of Shakespeare precludes agreement with

Greenblatt, despite appreciation of Greenblatt's insights and writing power. This

impasse stems, I would argue, from the new historicist's diminishment of the

Shakespeare whom Bradshaw loves, thus invoking Bradshaw's ire and challenging his

values. For Bradshaw asks "Who, if not the dramatist plots 'the play?'" and

continues, "In new historicist and Foucauldian terms that question is naive, since the

'who' should be a 'what'" (Bradshaw 82-83). In other words, the impasse stems from a

difference in the conception of Shakespeare--Bradshaw sees him as a who, but to

Greenblatt and the new historicists Shakespeare more easily becomes a what.

There are differences in not only critical but personal and even political values

behind this distinction. Bradshaw's love for Shakespeare, for instance, depends on a

thinking, knowing subject which, when combined with Bradshaw's formal emphasis

that we discussed above, results in the belief in the aesthetic integration of the text.

Furthermore, such an integration implies a set of values wherein there is a vision of

"high culture as a harmonizing domain of reconciliation based upon an aesthetic labour

that transcends specific economic or political determinants" ("Resonance and Wonder"

Greenblatt 78). The new historicists, on the other hand, says Greenblatt, are more

concerned with

> unresolved conflict and contradiction than in integration; they
> are as concerned with the margins as with the centre; and they
> have turned from a celebration of achieved aesthetic order to an
> exploration of the ideological and material basis for the production
> of this order ("Resonance and Wonder" Greenblatt 78).

Clearly, Bradshaw's and Greenblatt's critical assumptions are at complete odds, but it

is important to look at the larger implications of what Greenblatt is saying here, for

they underpin the tension in literary criticism that we are interested in examining.

We can begin by looking more closely at the Henry that Greenblatt evokes and

judges in "Invisible Bullets." We saw above that Greenblatt puts forth a

Machiavellian Henry; and, given such a conception of Henry, Greenblatt clearly bases

his judgment of him on the principles of ethos and pathos. For Greenblatt evokes a

specific Henry (using the mode of ethos), but he also reveals emotional responses to

the values implicit in that Henry (shifting to the mode of pathos). In order to specify

Henry's exact Machiavellian nature, Greenblatt draws on Foucault's notion that

effective power has within itself its own resistance. For Greenblatt's reading sees

subversive possibilities operating in the text but claims that these possibilities are, in

the end, contained through Henry's martial power. Indeed, the text's subversive

elements serve to bolster Henry, says Greenblatt; or, the "subversion of the

glorification of the Monarch" actually participates in Henry's improved glory:

> we may say that the subversive doubts the play continually
> awakens serve paradoxically to intensify the power of the king
> and his war, even while they cast shadows upon his power
> (Greenblatt 43).

Thus, Greenblatt's appraisal of Henry occurs through ethos. As I noted in Part Two,

Greenblatt sees the possibility for an "imaginary identification" with such a Henry;

pathos, however, plays an important role in preventing, I would argue, Greenblatt's

own imaginary identification. For the Machiavellian Henry in Greenblatt's version of

the play generates a scepticism that prevents full commitment to the text's martial

proposition. Greenblatt responds to what can be called the emotional overtones of the

Machiavellian Henry. It is here that the social constraints of Greenblatt's interpretive

community and assumptions come into play.[4]

Greenblatt articulates the assumptions involved in his interpretive constraints

when he re-states in "Resonance and Wonder" what his intentions are in "Invisible

Bullets." He begins by saying that his subversion-contained concept is not meant to

suggest a foreclosing on "the possibility of dissent or change or the radical alteration

of the processes of history" (Greenblatt 76). He says, rather, that he

> wished to show, at least in the case of Shakespeare's histories
> and several analogous discourses, how a set of representational
> and political practices in the late sixteenth century could produce
> and even batten upon what appeared to be their own subversion
> (Greenblatt 76).

That is, he was saying in "Invisible Bullets" that his reading was not offered in

support of the general truth of the containment hypothesis. Rather, he was talking

about one particular play, and he was offering his version of this play within a context

which routinely attached subversive values in texts. Such a position implies that

Greenblatt was working from the basically Foucauldian assumption that agency is not

bound within the individual; or,

> actions that appear to be single are disclosed as multiple;
> the apparently isolated power of the individual genius turns
> out to be bound up with collective, social energy (Greenblatt 77).

Hence, we see the new historicist focus on context rather than text, for context

illuminates the text's imaginative and ideological structures. Moreover, we see

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[4]I feel particularly safe making this claim with Greenblatt, for he says himself that "one's values are everywhere engaged in one's work" ("Resonance and Wonder" 77).

Greenblatt's difference from Bradshaw's humanism. Although Greenblatt notes the

displacement of the work of art that this emphasis on context invites, for instance, and

tries to account for the displacement through his notion of cultural negotiation and

exchange where "one cultural practice intersects with another" ("Resonance and

Wonder" 79), Bradshaw maintains that Greenblatt cannot escape the fact that in his

argument

> the "ideological strategies that fashion Shakespeare's plays"
> and "help in turn to fashion the conflicting readings of the
> play's politics" are "no more Shakespeare's invention than the
> historical narratives on which he based his plots" (Bradshaw 85-86).

Bradshaw thus lumps Greenblatt and the new historicists in with the old historicists,

saying that they practice "old historicism with a Foucauldian facelift" (Bradshaw 85),

for context, or a specific conception of history, governs the text in both brands of

historicism.

Greenblatt, on the other hand, makes a point of distinguishing his work from

old historicism, and the distinction rests exactly on how history is differently

conceived of by both. He makes this distinction while discussing the place of value

judgments in historicism. Old historicism claimed impartiality in terms of value

judgments, says Greenblatt. Yet instead of avoiding value judgments, old historicism

"simply provided a misleading account of what it had actually done" ("Resonance and

Wonder" 77). New historicism, however, claims no such impartiality. To be sure,

Greenblatt considers his value judgments to be necessarily implicated in his criticism.

IIe says,

> [t]o study the culture of sixteenth-century England did not

present itself as an escape from the turmoil of the present;
it seemed rather an intervention, a mode of relation
("Resonance and Wonder" 76-77).

Greenblatt thus makes the political orientation behind his criticism explicit[5]; moreover,

he contrasts his politicized criticism with both old historicism and formalism, saying

that traditionally they both conceive literary criticism to be the promotion of a vision

of high culture. Greenblatt's intentions, on the other hand, are to "eschew an

aestheticized and idealized politics of the liberal imagination" ("Resonance and

Wonder" 76): so the tension in literary studies. For like his contemporaries who are

"queering" the Renaissance and keeping the critical conversation going on late into the

night, Greenblatt is also bringing his "anti-humanist" agenda to bear upon the period,

and other critics of the period. I have no doubt, however, that Bradshaw and his

colleagues will continue to promote their own agendas and will continue to hold up

their end of the conversation (as long as they live).

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[5]Greenblatt begins his discussion of value judgments in criticism by talking about how his own critical practice was shaped by the "America of the 1960s and early 1970s, and especially by the opposition to the Viet Nam War" ("Resonance and Wonder" 76).

iii. An arbitrary ending

I am calling this an arbitrary ending because my inquiry has involved only a limited number of critics who, as Kenneth Burke might say, have entered a parlor in which there is a heated discussion. After listening for awhile, someone says something and "[s]omeone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent" (The Philosophy of Literary Form Burke 110); hence, the conversational model of rhetorical interchange, or the "unending conversation" (Burke 110). In particular, I have tried to apply this model to the critical conversation surrounding Henry V in order to see how Henry V's critics are influenced by the text but also by each other, whether that influence takes either an implicit or explicit form of response or rebuttal. Furthermore, I have tried to show how this particular conversation documents the tension in literary studies; or, documents what Gerald Graff would call the "major conflict of today," which pits

> those who conceive the goal of literary study to be the promotion
> of literate appreciation of the traditional monuments of high culture
> against those who want to subject that culture and what they see
> as its repressive effects to a radical critique (Professing Literature 259).

Finally, I have tried to show how this conversation is interpenetrated at all points by rhetoric, resulting in "the enmeshing of ideas in a complex set of interchanges" (Brent 96), and the growth of knowledge through reexamining and testing critical assumptions in this process of social interchange.

The question that might be asked at this point is, "so what?" As I said in the

introduction, I did not intend to make huge epistemic claims here. Rather, I am interested in the rhetorical process through which critics take in other critics' observations in the process of making their own claims. Although one participant does not necessarily bring another to believe in the same reading, there is an enmeshing of ideas, contributing to individual knowledge and knowledge in the field by forcing critics to re-evoke the text while in some way accounting for the evocation of others. One may ask again or, worse, say flatly, "so what." To this I can only respond by saying that while negotiating the differences and accommodating the disagreement within the structure of the socially productive ongoing discussion, I believe that I too was persuaded by Henry's rhetoric; that is, my manoeuvring of the play's diverse critical responses became my *reading* of the play, itself arguably manoeuvred by Henry. I return, then, to something I mentioned in the General Introduction to answer for so what: the centrality, the persistence even, of the text.

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