

The English Eden: Nationhood and Kingship in Shakespeare and Spenser

by

David Lukens

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Director of Thesis: Dr. Thomas Herron

Major Department: English

Abstract: Throughout the Renaissance in England are works that glorify the nation under a strong nationalistic message. Spenser, with *The Faerie Queene*, presents a chivalric romance that follows the adventures of several knights who seek to complete tasks for the titular queen Gloriana. It is through multiple levels of allegory that these knights and the enemies they overcome become embodiments of the English nation triumphing over foreign and Catholic nations. It is not just this political lens, but also the blending of religious parallels that elevates these English heroes like Redcrosse and Prince Arthur into Christ-figures, primarily in the context of Christ as a righteous warrior and conqueror.

Shakespeare, while not as extensive in the use of allegory as Spenser, also delves into similar ideas concerning the presentation of a strong and united England. However, he also emphasizes the king's role in creating and maintaining a strong nation, with the kings being associated with Christ. Alongside this comparison to Christ is also the recurring conceit that compares the nation to a garden, England as an Eden; such a nation requires a proper gardener, a strong king, to maintain it. By reading in a Spenserian mode, the similarities (and the differences) become apparent in understanding the ideas, praise, and critique for a strong monarch that in turn allows for a strong nation in Shakespeare's English history plays. Though

the focus of this thesis will primarily be on the Henriad plays, the inclusion of Spenser provides a contemporary with which to compare and contrast ideas that are shared between both authors.

The English Eden: Nationhood and Kingship in Shakespeare and Spenser

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by

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by

David Lukens

APPROVED BY:

DIRECTOR OF
THESIS: _____

Thomas Herron, PhD

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____

Marianne Montgomery, PhD

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____

David Wilson-Okamura, PhD

CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF (Put Department Name Here): _____

Jeffrey Johnson, PhD

DEAN OF THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL: _____

Paul J. Gemperline, PhD

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Cover Sheet.....	iii
Title Page.....	iv
Copyright Page.....	v
Signature Page... ..	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	viii
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	1
CHAPTER 2: Spenser and <i>The Faerie Queene</i> (Books I-III)	8
CHAPTER 3: <i>Richard III</i> (and the first Henriad tetralogy).....	17
CHAPTER 4: <i>Henry V</i> (and the second Henriad tetralogy)	28
REFERENCES	41

Chapter 1

Introduction

Throughout the Renaissance in England are works that glorify the nation under a strong nationalistic message. Spenser, with *The Faerie Queene*, presents a chivalric romance that follows the adventures of several knights who seek to complete tasks for the titular queen Gloriana. It is through multiple levels of allegory that these knights and the enemies they overcome become embodiments of the English nation triumphing over foreign and Catholic nations. It is not just this political lens, but also the blending of religious parallels that elevates these English heroes like Redcrosse and Prince Arthur into Christ-figures, primarily in the context of Christ as a righteous warrior and conqueror.

Shakespeare, while not as extensive in the use of allegory as Spenser, also delves into similar ideas concerning the presentation of a strong and united England. However, he also emphasizes the king's role in creating and maintaining a strong nation, with the kings being associated with Christ. Alongside this comparison to Christ is also the recurring conceit that compares the nation to a garden, England as an Eden; such a nation requires a proper gardener, a strong king, to maintain it. By reading in a Spenserian mode, the similarities (and the differences) become apparent in understanding the ideas, praise, and critique for a strong monarch that in turn allows for a strong nation in Shakespeare's English history plays. Though the focus of this thesis will primarily be on the Henriad plays, the inclusion of Spenser provides a contemporary with which to compare and contrast ideas that are shared between both authors.

Among the first things to define is "nation." As defined in the *OED*, a nation is "A large aggregate of communities and individuals united by factors such as common descent, language,

culture, history, or occupation of the same territory, so as to form a distinct people.” In this regard, England is certainly united by these aforementioned factors, with several groups sharing the one island nation of Great Britain. It is primarily through history that Shakespeare and Spenser present their own idealized view of England, in which Phyllis Rackin notes the rising prominence of history as a subject of study not just for the English subjects, but for monarchs as well in the early modern period. This study of history became “a matter of pride and interest as well as an essential source of self-definition” (Rackin 4), and it is through looking at the past that England establishes an identity that is distinctly English. In crafting history in their respective works, both Spenser and Shakespeare blend the classical view of history as being guided by Divine Providence with the rising Renaissance view of history that places an emphasis on human action (6). In reading *The Faerie Queene* and the Henriad plays, one sees congruity between these two “causes” of history, where conscious human action is guided by Divine Providence.

To achieve this presentation of an idealized England, the authors utilize individual characters that serve to represent the nation. Claire McEachern sees among English writers the individual and the nation as bound together, where the self becomes “imagined as a group ideally coherent” (McEachern 12). With an individual character such as Spenser's Redcrosse and Shakespeare's Henry V serving as a representative of the English nation, it endows the nation with a “concerted agency and will” (13). In that regard, it is possible for England itself to be a character, as if having allegorical characteristics, in Shakespeare's Henriad plays. In these plays the English nation experiences the hardships and triumphs of the English people. Just as Redcrosse and Arthur, as individuals, represent the nation and its triumphs, Henry V does the same by association, as he seeks to unite the nation as a singular unit, as a united army dedicated to military conquest. What is perhaps most emblematic of the English nation as “the most

appropriate form of English government” is the monarchy, not as a system of government, but in the sense that it is “the most expressive of the character of its people” (11). This in turn allows allows for a king to represent a nation, and if a king is bad, England will suffer, while a strong king will bring glory to England.

These emblematic characters help to unite the English people under a common history and culture, one that fosters a “deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 7) and that celebrates England beyond the initial definition of a nation as a community bound by a shared language, history, or culture. Both authors further appeal for nationalism through these English heroes, promoting an “advocacy of or support for the interests of one's own nation, esp. to the exclusion or detriment of the interests of other nations” (*OED*). A lesser, obscure definition carries a theological view, that nationalism is “The doctrine that certain nations (as contrasted with individuals) are the object of divine election” (*OED*). Both of these definitions are more than sufficient in explaining what both authors are trying to achieve: the presentation of not just a united English nation, but also as a nation that is divinely favored by God. What is worth noting is that the term nationalism did not appear until 1798; however the definition is applicable to the presentation of an ideal England, a nation that is united and guided by God.

In his presentation of an idealized English nation, Spenser utilizes allegory as a means “to clarify an argument or to intensify our perception of something described” (O'Connell 17). That argument is that his knights are not just representations of specific virtues, but also serve to represent the English nation, namely through Redcrosse and Prince Arthur. Through them, their triumphs and victories also become England's. But when regarding allegory it is important to not take it as “an objective description for *The Faerie Queene* but rather as an indication of how the poet would like us to respond” (16), and thus be able to build a certain constraint around the

narrative. In the use of allegory, the narrative is guided by an ultimate goal, and for *The Faerie Queene*, it is for Arthur, the embodiment of all virtue, to meet and wed the titular queen Gloriana (20), uniting the once and future king of England with the figure that is representative of Elizabeth, and joining the glory of the English past with the present. In Book I, the ultimate goal sees Redcrosse's triumph over the Dragon and the liberation of Eden, and the eventual unity of England with the true church (in Spenser's case, it is Protestantism as represented by Una) echoes the prophetic marriage of Christ with the Church in Revelations. It is not a matter of being strictly Protestant/Christian in design, but Spenser intertwines English national history to make Christian apocalypse not just a religious matter, but one that requires England's involvement in order for Christ to ultimately triumph.

Though Shakespeare does not delve into allegory as deeply as Spenser, it is utilized as a trope (O'Connell 16-17), serving more as a rhetorical device, such as using gardening imagery to compare England to the Garden of Eden, a paradise that represents an ideal to obtain. This extended metaphor compares the nation to a garden, one that requires a gardener, the king, to properly maintain it. Gardening in these plays (and even in Spenser) is not just limited to actual gardens, but also extends to imagery of properly managing fields. The focus on gardening also brings up associations with the earth, with the citizens of the English nation as the products of the nation-garden, while the proper management of a literal garden is compared to the metaphorical need of a gardener-king to maintain a nation. The associations with gardens are not limited to nations, but also the individual body as a type of garden that requires proper care. Without proper management, an individual that is not raised properly to strive for virtue instead becomes a body that cultivates sin. Terry Comito sees the gardens of the histories as rhetorical, cut off from and commenting upon the dramatic substance of the plays, and existing more as

ideas. Those within gardens are in a sense “only reminded of all that he is denied”. In particular, the garden of Iden and the French nation are ideal gardens that serve as goals that the plays hope to achieve (Comito 31-33) compared to the fears and reality of a nation-garden beset by civil war. These gardens (both the literal and the nation-garden) are still very real places within the play that also comment allegorically on the plays themselves. Temporary though they may be, these garden moments serve as a moment of peace before war will eventually resume. They are Edenic spaces that contrast with the war-torn reality of the plays.

Amy Tigner views the Renaissance garden, both the literal and the textual, as a means to recreate the garden paradise of Eden: “The image of the garden during the English Renaissance functions as a microcosm for England, envisioning, and enacting paradise within its own borders” (Tigner 1-2). In both *The Faerie Queene* and the Henriad plays, there is the goal to either reclaim paradise or to see it created through the nation. While gardens are transient, where gardens eventually die and are recreated in the cycle of seasons, it is gardens that exist in text that are, for the most part, as immortal as Eden. However, the textual and metaphorical gardens are not as static as Tigner (or Comito) implies (2). Tigner also sees the body of the king mirroring the condition of the nation, in that, “the monarch’s two bodies, the body natural and the body politic, are intrinsically related to, and represented by, the physical landscape that is England” (12). This unity stresses the relationship between the king and the nation: if the king is ineffectual, England will suffer. This is evident in the Henriad plays, establishing a series of bad kings through Henry VI, Richard III, and Richard II before leading into Henry IV and culminating with Henry V.

In his history plays, Shakespeare also has an ultimate symbolic, even allegorical, goal. Without a proper king, the English Eden can be brought to ruin. Shakespeare shapes a narrative

with England's known history, and beginning from either *Henry VI* or *Richard II*, it will reach the same destination: the crowning of Henry VII, and in time, the ascension of Elizabeth. Anne Prescott, while also noting the emphasis on gardens, also sees a certain “calendrical allegory” (Prescott 181-2). This calendrical allegory is not just a cycle of seasons, but also a metaphorical cycle of the “winters” of war to the “springs” of peace, and also invokes Christ's resurrection as a cycle that echoes death and rebirth. This stresses the importance of not just heroes, but also villains, such as Richard III. He serves as an instrument of God, albeit a destructive one, that allows for a violent cleansing. This cycle of winter and spring, from decay to rejuvenation, is present in Spenser and Shakespeare, visible in the history of kings displayed in Spenser's chronicles and Shakespeare's Henriad plays.

Shakespeare, in crafting the history plays, brought the history of England's civil war to public attention, either for commercial potential or as a means to mould public opinion, or even both (Hadfield 106). In terms of the latter, the Henriad plays serve as a warning by presenting not just the threat of civil war, but also its historical reality. The end of Elizabeth's reign brought fear for England's fate, with the threat of civil war looming should Elizabeth lack a proper heir, as well as the danger of religious civil wars between Catholics and Protestants that had affected France. In the plays, we see the behavior of aristocracy leads to the threat of civil war, as the *Henry VI* trilogy proves when they lack loyalty towards the nation. While *Richard III* displays a strong king, like the nobles he lacks any devotion to the English people for the sake of the nation.

Shakespeare, furthermore, presents what are perhaps the greatest extremes of a bad king and a good king: Richard III and Henry V, respectively. Both kings serve as the culmination of their respective tetralogy: Richard III is the epitome of the nobles' struggle for personal power that brings England to near ruin, while Henry V serves as “the mirror of Christian kings,” one

who embodies the aspects of Shakespeare's ideal king, as defined by Irving Ribner: the king who “must be strong, crafty, and unselfishly devoted to his people” (Ribner 110). Though a strong king can maintain a nation and prevent civil dissent, it requires a Machiavellian streak to act pragmatically so long as it is for the greater good of the nation. Richard III is undoubtedly a strong figure as he makes his claim to the throne, but he merely plays the classical Machiavel to achieve his own desires, but Henry V utilizes pragmatism for the sake of the nation.

These are the major conceits that are shared between these two authors. Spenser places a focus on a need for virtuous Christ-figures to fight for England and achieve the prophetic fate in Revelations to see Christ triumph over Satan and achieve the paradise of the New Jerusalem in place of the earthly Cleopolis/England. The ultimate goal aims for a nation united in an ideal vision of a nation united through warfare. Shakespeare's Henriad plays show comparisons of the kings to Christ, but also stresses virtue as the requirement for one to rule rather than right of lineage. Gardens and the ideal of Eden are also present in both authors' works, with Eden as a kingdom needing to be reclaimed by Redcrosse in *The Faerie Queene*. In the Henriad plays, Shakespeare's characters see England itself as an Eden, but it must be properly maintained by a strong king. Just as Spenser stresses a cycle, not just of the seasons, but also of death and rebirth, such as in the Gardens of Adonis, Shakespeare indicates allegorically how as the winter of bad kings leads to the spring of worthy kings.

Chapter 2

Spenser and *The Faerie Queene* (Books I-III)

Spenser's presentation of a glorious English nation is more mythical than historical, integrating English legend, biblical prophecy, and English history to portray England as a nation that is intertwined with the New Jerusalem that is revealed in Revelations. The earthly glory of England, presented as Cleopolis, is tied alongside the divine glory of God, invoking nationalism on a religious level that elevates England and its people as one specifically favored by God. In *The Faerie Queene*, this image of England is displayed through allegory, which allows for heroic characters such as Redcrosse and a young Prince Arthur (as well as their enemies) to take on multiple meanings.

While on the surface Redcrosse is a knight who embodies Book I's titular virtue of holiness, he is also revealed to be (or rather the man who will become) St. George. Recognized by Spenser as a highly patriotic figure (MacLachlan 330), St. George, as Redcrosse, serves to represent the English nation in the otherworldly Faerie land. The knight also has associations with the earth; he is described as one who "sprong out from English race" (I.x.60) and is found in a furrow as an infant (I.x.66). As one who is rustic and "clownish," Redcrosse embodies both an association with the mortal earth, and as a Christ-figure also embodies the divine. Like Christ, Redcrosse serves as a representation of mortal and divine, the Englishman and Christ. Following McEachern's model, Redcrosse is thus a product of the English nation, allowing him to be not just a saint or a representative of the nation, but also to serve as the average Englishman. Because of his insignia and actions, Redcrosse also serves as a Christ-figure, with the emphasis of both the knight and Christ as a type of "soldier and victor" (MacLachlan 329), particularly through Redcrosse's victory over the Dragon, the apocalyptic figure that embodies Satan in

Revelations. Just as Redcrosse defeats the Dragon and Christ triumphs over Lucifer in Revelations, so will the average Englishman overcome sin and the nation will conquer its foreign and Catholic enemies.

In the beginning of Book I, Redcrosse and Una seek shelter within a dark, almost labyrinthine wood:

They cannot finde that path, which first was showne,
But wander too and fro in wayes unknowne,
Furthest from end then, when they neerest weene,
That makes them doubt, their wits be not their owne
(I.x.10.4-7)

Redcrosse has wandered from the intended path into “wayes unknowne,” a potential threat to all men. The trials of the knight are also the trials the average Englishman must face (though it is against sin rather than literal monsters). As this individual knight serves to represent the English nation as a whole, he is also the average Englishman who has become lost in the dark woods of everyday life. Though there is the threat of straying from God, having faith will allow one to remain virtuous and overcome sin.

Within this wood is Redcrosse's encounter with the serpent-woman monster Error, a blend of a snake with a woman that invokes both Satan in a serpent form as well as Eve. She is a fusion of sinful figures, a double nature that is seen later in Duessa. As Error vomits, among the pile of ink and paper are also “loathly frogs and toades,” echoing the frogs that exit the mouth of the Dragon in Revelations (Rev. 16:13), associating her as a Satanic figure (a trend that is reflected among other enemies throughout Book I). Satan, as a false prophet, also serves as an illegitimate leader compared to Christ, and as the monster's name indicates to error is to wander from the proper path of being a righteous Christian soldier. To be lost in the labyrinthine woods that is the Protestant Englishman's everyday life brings the threat of falling into the monster's “endlesse traine,” to succumb to false guidance.

Error is also a maternal figure, albeit a sinful, corrupt one. When she is defeated, her brood begin to feast upon her, to make “her death their life” (I.i.25), invoking a twisted version of Christ. Rather than creating life through her death, it is through Error (the monster and the actual concept) that Redcrosse's “foes have slaine themselves” (I.i.26). With the death of the mother, the leader of the brood, Error's children turn upon her body and in their feasting are destroyed by the one that should properly raise them. As the leader falls, Error's subjects consume her, and bring themselves to ruin when their efforts should instead be directed towards Redcrosse, the conqueror who has slain Error.

The emphasis on Christ-figures through characters such as Redcrosse and Prince Arthur is tied with the epic tradition of an underworld journey, as seen in the classic tradition, while also invoking Christ's Harrowing of Hell. This stresses the image of Christ as more a warrior, the ultimate conqueror of Satan in Revelations, as one who entered Hell to conquer it and free the righteous who lived before him. A blending of the mythical and the religious was a common practice, particularly with the Theseus/Minotaur myth being viewed as an allegory for Christ, with Christ being the “true Theseus who slew monsters” (Hamilton 720). This version of Christ as a slayer of monsters can be tied with Redcrosse's encounter with Error in the labyrinthine wood, and through Una's guidance and his faith, he is able to defeat the serpent-woman and escape the dark woods. It is this emphasis on holiness and faith that will allow Redcrosse to survive and ultimately conquer sin, culminating with his victory over the Dragon. The Dragon that is defeated is not just Satan, but also becomes representative of Catholicism and foreign nations, with its wings as “two sayles” (Spenser I.xi.10), invoking images of the Spanish Armada. A significant event that gave to the rise of English nationalism during England's reign

was the defeat of the Armada, attributed as a form of Divine Providence, of a Protestant nation triumphing over its Catholic enemy. Spenser allegorizes this event with the defeat of the Dragon.

The warrior-Christ image is epitomized by Una's initial advice to Redcrosse, to "Add faith vnto your force" (I.i.19). It is one's faith alongside one's virtues that will give way to divine guidance and righteous (if also violent) action. As one who embodies both humanity and the divine, Christ is the paragon to follow. Prince Arthur, with his descent into the giant Orgoglio's dungeon to rescue Redcrosse (I.viii.29-42), echoes Christ's descent into Hell, and as a legendary English figure, the once and future king of England is further tied with Christ as an eternal king, one that will one day return to rule. Both Redcrosse (I.xii.6) and Arthur (II.viii.51; II.xi.48) are explicitly called conquerors, further strengthening their parallel. It is not just through his virtue, but combined with the will of Heaven that allows for Arthur and his squire Timias to achieve victory against Orgoglio, the giant of pride (I.viii.28). Whereas Redcrosse failed due to his own sinful shortcomings of pride and wrath, it is Arthur who will redeem him and allow Redcrosse to continue on his journey; Redcrosse will prove a worthy figure as he defeats the Dragon. As they part ways, they exchange gifts, with Arthur offering a healing balm, while Redcrosse gives Arthur a copy of the New Testament, which is a guide to allow Arthur to become more Christ-like. That it is in Redcrosse's possession also hints at the knight as a Christ-figure, one who is spreading the faith, was saved by Arthur and will have his own victory against the satanic Dragon. Both Redcrosse and Arthur are both emblematic of the English nation as well as of Christ, thus representing the everyday Englishman (Protestants for Spenser in particular) as virtuous men who are capable of overcoming sin. Spenser presents a strong nation that will defeat its foreign and Catholic neighbors. In order to triumph over sin, the Englishman requires faith alongside human action, to act with faith in God to allow his nation to thrive.

An element of this Christ conceit is a certain cyclical pattern, specifically the death and resurrection of Christ. In his battle against the Dragon, Redcrosse experiences two defeats, but is healed by the Well of Life and the Tree of Life, respectively, and is able to rise and defeat the Dragon on the third day, echoing Christ's three days of death, and his Harrowing, before his resurrection. The journey of Redcrosse follows a general pattern: as he encounters an enemy, the adversary (Error, Orgoglio, Despair, and the Dragon) will gain the upper hand, and through God's guidance, primarily through Una (and once through Arthur), Redcrosse is capable of adding faith to his force, and eventually triumph over his enemies. From this succession of falls, he is able to rise even higher, culminating to a Christ-figure slaying the Dragon-Satan by the end of Book I, and the liberation of Eden.

In Redcrosse's journey through The House of Pride, the castle serves not just as a testament of the seven sins, but also as a critique of England's current monarch, Elizabeth, and the dangers of courtly extravagance going hand in hand with pride. This "stately Pallace" that is "full of faire windows," features of Elizabethan homes, suggests that England, the earthly Cleopolis, is sinful compared to the Second Jerusalem because it is worldly. That the castle is built on a foundation of sand (I.iv.4-5) highlights the potential dangers that can befall not just a queen, whether it be the idealized Gloriana or the satanic Lucifera, but also how a nation as a whole can be brought down when not established under a strong foundation, including a just and reliable monarch. It is also stressed that Lucifera is an unlawful queen, that of a "rightfull kingdome she had none at all, / Ne heritage of natiue soueraintie, / But did vsurpe with wrong and tyrannie" (I.iv.12). She is a ruler with no true desire to rule properly, one who is more obsessed with her station as a queen and her own vanity (I.iv.10). In contrast, when Redcrosse reaches the divine counterpart to the sinful House of Pride, aptly named the House of Holiness,

he receives a vision of Cleopolis, the earthly city of fame and glory, a mythological England, alongside the biblical New Jerusalem in Revelations (I.x.46-68). It is here where Spenser links both these cities together, showing the potential that the earthly England is capable of becoming a New Jerusalem.

With the defeat of the Dragon and the liberation of Eden, Una removes her veil to reveal one who resembles a “goodly maiden Queene.” However, though Una reveals herself with the appearance of a righteous queen, the true Church is not wed to Recrosse, a specifically English figure, but is only betrothed to him at this point in time. Eden, less a static garden paradise and more a kingdom, remains once more as an ideal of the past that most likely cannot be obtained (as described by the likes of Tigner and Comito). However, with Redcrosse’s liberation, Eden can be obtained (in this case it is literally regained from Satan). Their marriage will come, and their betrothal once more unites that which is divine with the physical, mortal earth. Thus, Elizabeth and the one true Church become wed not just to the English figure St. George, but to a Christ-figure, intertwining the Christian apocalypse with England's own past and future. The union between England and the true Church ultimately requires not just for Redcrosse to know of the fate of Cleopolis and the Second Jerusalem, but also of his national identity as St. George in order to fully realize the significance of this marriage, one that places England as a divinely favored nation that serves as the model of the utopian city that is Cleopolis and the New Jerusalem.

Though presented as a chivalric epic, *The Faerie Queene* is also a prophetic history, as seen in the prospect that England will defeat its Catholic enemies such as Philip of Spain. In Books II and III, three histories are detailed extensively: Arthur's, Faerie Land, and Britain. Alongside Arthur's history is the history of Faerie Land in Book II, intertwining Gloriana, and in

turn Elizabeth and the Tudors, with Arthur, as a great monarch who is equivalent to a glorious sun that outshines all. Arthur's history is tied with England's, as his chronicle begins with describing England as “Vnpeopled, vumannured, vnproud, vnpraysd” (II.X.5), a land that has yet to be cultivated by the Britons, but in time will prove a fertile planting ground for kings (both good and bad). In Books II and III of *The Faerie Queene*, the two obvious gardens are the Bower of Bliss in Book II and the Gardens of Adonis in Book III. While the Bower is a false paradise of hedonistic pleasures, the Gardens of Adonis serve a productive role (stressing the virtue of chastity; to be properly chaste is to abide by proper marriage and procreation). The only real negative to the Gardens of Adonis is the reminder that all things must die, in that all are susceptible to the “great enemy” that is time (III.vi.39). The enemy of all things, even in this paradise of “continual Spring” and harvest (III.vi.42), is time. Time still has an influence: flowers of the garden will eventually die, but will in a sense resurrect and be reborn. It serves as an Edenic space, a paradise that coincides more with Christ's resurrection and less with the more static Garden of Eden. It is a place in which its subjects are born, enter the earth, eventually wither and die, and return to the Garden and become reincarnated in a new form. This inevitable cycle of live and death, the “calendrical” cycle noted by Prescott, can also be seen in the seasons, where spring gives way to winter, where nature dies only to be reborn again. The Gardens of Adonis are still susceptible to the cycle, and so must the actual English nation. This cycle can also be applied to Spenser's chronicles, and will also be seen in the *Henriad* plays.

In the course of this chronicle is a cycle of four dynasties, with each one falling due to the lack of an heir: “The noble braunch from th'antique stocke was torne / Through discord, and the roiall throne forlorne” (II.x.36). The loss of a proper heir to maintain the throne, and thus the nation, leads to discord and potentially civil war, and serves as a potential warning should

Elizabeth lack a clear successor, with the imagery of the torn branch invoking comparisons to gardening and a family tree. The prophecies of Merlin in Book III detail another history, particularly that of Britomart to be wed with Artegall (III.iii.26), “Arthur's Equal” and cousin. In the course of his vision, Merlin adds what will become of the Britons as they begin to establish a nation:

The feeble Britons, broken with long warre
They shall vpreare, and mightly defend
Against their forren foe, that commes from farre,
Till vniuersall peace compound all ciuill iarre
(III.iii.23)

This trend of history in the chronicles, along with Merlin's prophecy, is not unlike the actual history and what is portrayed in Shakespeare's plays. Though England was once wracked (and will continue to experience) civil war, there will come a time when the nation will focus its armies against foreign nations. Merlin's prophecy also touches upon Richmond's ascension to the throne as Henry VII, as one who hails from the “fruitfull Ile / Of *Mona*.” Springing from this isle, Richmond is described as one who has hidden within the ashes to arise as a “bright burning flame” and reclaim the crown for the Britons (III.iii.48). With the rise of Henry VII, Merlin shares a utopian vision:

Thenceforth eternall vnion shall be made
Between the nations different afore,
And sacred Peace shall louingly persuade
The warlike minds, to learne her goodly lore,
And ciuile armes too exercise no more:
(III.iii.49)

It is at this point that Elizabeth, the “royall Virgin,” will reign. Through the cycle of lost dynasties and civil war will come Richmond and Elizabeth, and usher in a time when civil strife will be no more, and peace will extend beyond the English nation, where perhaps the union between nations will erase what makes these nations “different afore.” It serves as a vision of utopian peace to come with Elizabeth. Before Merlin can continue, the prophecy ends with a

reference to a “ghastly spectacle” (III.iii.50). He is unable to continue as the “prophecy” of England's future has yet to happen, but like the prospect of the *Henry VI* tetralogy, it serves as a warning of civil turmoil that may follow should there be no clear successor to follow Elizabeth. Though a monarch will eventually die, and civil war is ever a present threat, the cycle of history indicates the planting of a new dynasty that will bring peace to the nation.

Chapter 3

Richard III (and the first tetralogy)

Before Shakespeare celebrates England as a mighty nation under an ideal king with his second Henriad tetralogy, his first series of history plays instead displays an England that suffers the turmoil of civil war, and the king is an ineffectual leader who is unable to prevent it. Beginning with the three *Henry VI* plays, the inability of the young titular king proves a cause for England's continued decay, until the nation reaches the height (or rather its deepest depths) of corruption culminating with Richard III, the epitome of the self-serving noble who has forsaken loyalty to his country for his own desires. Both kings lack the features of Shakespeare's ideal king; Henry VI certainly has a devotion to God and a genuine love for his nation, but lacks the strength and the required Machiavellian mind to prevent civil war. While Richard III has the power and craftiness to obtain the throne, it is merely for his own ambition rather than for utilizing his abilities for the sake of the nation. However, through this cycle of civil war and peace, of good and bad kings, the ultimate goal reveals that despite England's hardships, Divine Providence will see the nation restored with the help of human action.

The series of plays essentially begins where it will end: with Henry V, though here it starts with Henry's funeral. While *Henry VI* is the first play in this series, chronologically this history begins after the rise and reign of Henry V, a character who will not be seen in depth until *Henry IV* and *Henry V*. The cycle begins by leading not to England's high point, but rather England's coming descent into civil war with the death of Henry V, one of England's greatest kings, as the nobles lament:

England ne'er had a king until his time.
Virtue he had, deserving to command,
His brandished sword did blind men with his beams,
His arms spread wider than a dragon's wings:
His sparkling eyes, replete with wrathful fire,

More dazzled and drove back his enemies
Than midday sun fierce bent against their faces.
What should I say? His deeds exceed all speech;
He ne'er lift up his hand but conquered.

...
He was a king, blest of the King of kings.
Unto the French of the dreadful Judgment Day
So dreadful will not be as was his sight.
The battles of the Lord of Hosts he fought;
(*1 HVI* 1.1.8-31)

If ever there was a great English king, it was Henry V, one who was “deserving to command” just by his virtues and his prowess. In his death, he has been elevated to not just a Christ-figure, but his deeds are also blended with apocalyptic imagery. He is not just a glorious sun that outshines all, but also a violent dragon, utilizing violence that is guided by God. In his death Henry V is also invoked in a manner similar to imploring God or St. George, to protect England “from civil broils”(1.152-56), his name elevated as a sign of victory. Henry V is both a warrior-Christ and a mighty dragon, one who is both virtuous and violent, capable of “glorious brightness” and “great terrour,” a Christ who has ushered an Apocalypse against the French. With the death of Henry V, so does the English nation suffer a loss, and without a strong monarch to maintain the nation and its conquests, England will suffer not just the loss of Henry V, but also of its holdings in France, and will also experience violence from within as civil war manifests itself. In the wake of Henry's triumphs, a winter will follow that is the War of the Roses.

It is in *1 Henry VI* that the War of the Roses begins. It is within the Temple Garden, within an English garden, that the nobles begin to choose their sides (2.4) by the plucking of roses. The literal plucking serves as an indication of the dissent that originates within the ideal, Edenic space before civil war eventually consumes the nation. As plucked flowers will eventually decay, so will the nation as a whole suffer as the civil war continues to rage. The

young king Henry VI recognizes the danger and presence of civil war, in which “Civil dissension is a viperous worm, / That gnaws the bowels of the commonwealth” (3.1.71-72), with the destructive worm echoing the intrusion of the serpent within Eden.

As the worm of civil dissension eats away within the English garden, the nation will continue to suffer civil war if there is no proper gardener, a king, to prevent it, and the young king is unfortunately an inept one. One of his virtues is his capacity for speech, though it falls short of convincing others for peace over civil war. The other is in his piety for God, and where he lacks in concrete power, he places an intense faith and devotion to God (*2H VI* 3.2.136-148). In these three plays, there is at least one instance of direct action by Henry, and it is one done through the help of the common people, with the banishing of Suffolk. Despite the state of England, with France lost and the War of the Roses in full swing, the commoners stand behind their king, though Henry himself views himself as an “unworthy deputy” (3.2.283-292). There is at least some semblance of order that remains within the English nation, a possible foreshadowing that England will be restored following the civil war and the reign of Richard III.

Another indication of order remaining in England is in Part 2 with the suppression of Jack Cade and his attempted rebellion. The rebellion is short lived when Clifford makes an appeal to the rebels for their loyalty to England by speaking the name of Henry V (4.8.34-52). In Cade's retreat, this anarchic rebel (4.2.67-70; 4.7.22-44) sneaks into the garden of Alexander Iden (a name that is one letter away from being “Eden”), and as this garden's caretaker muses:

Lord, who would live turmoiled in the court
And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?
This small inheritance my father left me
Contenteth me, and worth a monarchy.
I seek not to wax great by others' waning,
Or gather wealth I care not with what envy;
Sufficeth that I have maintains my state,
And sends the poor well pleased from my gate.
(4.10.16-29)

Though Iden speaks of his love for the garden over the court, there are faint nods to how one should tend not just a garden, one that is “worth a monarchy,” but also of how to run a nation. The gardener-king must not seek to “wax great” or seek personal gains, but to simply maintain the garden/state, to keep it stable, and in this regard, prevent the worm of civil war from destroying the garden-nation. Cade, a rebel leader, a Lucifer who makes false claims to the throne, intrudes upon this garden but is slain by the rightful gardener (and supporter of king). Iden cries for Jack's soul to be thrust to hell (4.10.76-77), indicating that there is some semblance of order within the English garden, or at least it shows how rebellion must be stamped out. Where Henry VI primarily attempts to end civil war through speech and pious faith, Iden has removed Cade through violent action by killing him. Though this garden and this scene may be more rhetorical than literal, as suggested by Comito, the garden still exists as a concrete place within the play. This scene also provides the model of the strong king (and the average Englishman) defending his garden-nation, and of the loyal citizen defeating a Satanic and anarchic figure, one who is against the king and the nation. It serves as a temporary reprieve of the chaos that engulfs England, but the cycle sees civil war continue.

In Part 3 the most prominent instance of allegory in this tetralogy is when Henry VI laments about the state of England in the molehill scene. In the midst of this he sees two pairs of a father and son, where one son has killed his father and has not realized it until he attempts to loot the body, and another father has killed his own son (3 *HVI* 2.5). It is here where the horrors of civil war are presented in a very literal way. A nation has turned against itself; family ties have broken down, and are even severed by a family's own hands. The father laments, “What strategems, how fell, how butcherly, / Erroneous, mutinous, and unnatural / This deadly quarrel deadly doth beget” (2.5.89-91). He stresses a sinfulness that comes from civil war, as a wholly

unnatural crime not just against nation, but a mutiny towards God. Civil war contrasts with the utopian vision and prophecy of a time when civil war will no longer occur, and a strong nation will direct war outwards for conquest. Henry, in sight of this spectacle, further expresses the futility of civil war, “Wither one rose and let the other flourish, / If you contend, a thousand lives must wither” (2.5.101-102). As civil war continues, regardless of the victor and loser, the end result will see the death of their own countrymen.

The conflict is now culminating in a supreme anarchic figure: Richard III, one who declares himself as one that is “like no brother” (*HVI* 3 5.6.80). Before his death by the hands of Richard, Henry reveals a prophecy of the ill omens that will befall not just upon England, but also upon Richard, this “undigested and deformed lump” (5.6.35-56). As Tigner states concerning the relationship between the body of the king alongside the state of the nation, Richard does not just have his own innate desire to bring ruin to England, but his deformed body also hints at his inability to properly rule the throne, a sort of predetermination by God from birth.

In his death, Henry is a parallel to a Christ-figure, with his dying words echoing Christ's in Luke 23:34, “O God forgive my sins, and pardon thee” (5.6.60). Before Henry can finish his prophecy, he is silenced by Richard, declaring that it is “For this amongst the rest I was ordained” (5.6.58). Richard himself views that he is chosen for a certain purpose, and though this Satan is able to kill this ineffectual Christ, Richard will ultimately be punished for his crimes, as another Christ-figure, Richmond, will rise and defeat him. While Henry VI has a strong faith and love for God and his country, he lacks the ability properly maintain the nation, whereas Richard will prove to be all action but has no love or loyalty for country.

Richard III begins with an in-depth soliloquy, in which Richard resolves himself in a manner similar to his claim to be no brother following Henry's murder. He views his brother, now Edward IV, as an inept king, and wishes that the king and the court should follow the business of war (*RIII* 1.1.9-13). Though his brother has brought peace to the nation, Richard chooses to become a villain:

But then I sigh, and, with a piece of scripture,
Tell them that God bids us do good for evil;
And thus I clothe myself in naked villainy
With odd old ends, stol'n forth of Holy Writ,
And seem a saint when most I play the devil
(*RIII* 1.3.333-337)

It is not just a matter of being ordained, of being born into this possible role, but it is also his own conscious decision, that he is “determined to prove a villain” (1.1.30). Determined, in this sense, to both making this conscious choice as well as being ordained by God. As the famous opening lines indicate, the “winter of discontent” has ended, giving way to a spring through the sun that is Edward IV. However, the cycle must give way to another winter, one that Richard has resolved himself to be. As Lady Anne laments and curses upon Richard early in the play:

Either heaven with lightning strike the murderer dead,
Or earth gape open wide and eat him quick,
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood,
Which his hell-governed arm hath butchered.
(1.2.64-67)

Richard, though governed by hell, is thus governed by God in the grander scheme, and his ultimate fate will be to die. Though he swears to isolate himself, he is ultimately choosing a path that has been determined by God, to make “the happy earth [his] hell” (1.2.51). The widow Queen Margaret continues where Lady Anne left off, with her own curse against Richard:

If heaven have any grievous plague in store
Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee,
O, let them keep it till thy sins be ripe,
And then hurl down their indignation
On thee, the troubler of the poor world's peace.
The worm of conscience still begnaw thy soul;

...
Thou elvish-marked, abortive, rooting hog,
Thou that wast sealed in thy nativity
The slave of nature and the son of hell;
(1.3.215-229)

Like Cade in the garden of Iden, Richard the hog is an intruder upon the English garden.

However, in a manner similar to the viperous worm of civil dissent, the “worm of conscience” will intrude upon Richard and manifest itself within him. This “abortive, rooting hog” is one of the first comparisons to Richard and his symbol, the boar. The worm of civil war has become a hog, one that has uprooted the previous family with the murder of Henry VI, and will continue to serve as a “weeder-out” (1.3.121), removing the nobility that lack loyalty for the nation. The wife of Edward, Queen Elizabeth, also comments on the civil war, that Englishmen are “themselves the conquerors / Make war upon themselves, brother to brother, / Blood to blood, self against self” (2.4.62-64). Here the nation and the self are intertwined; civil war is not just a war between countrymen or family, but a war against the self. Essentially, as conflict that stems from within, the one who is essentially harming England is the nation itself, and it will require not just the actions of men, but also God's guidance.

Among Richard's victims is his brother Clarence, who receives a prophetic dream before his coming death, and who experiences a hell journey descent. The earthly wealth he sees in the ocean depths (1.4.24-30) serves as a reminder of the transience of material glory, with the bones perhaps reflecting on the nobles who sought the crown for their own sake, and evident in Richard's own eventual ascent to the throne. The dream serves to foreshadow not just Clarence's own death, but also Richard's fall, as the vision of his step-father Warwick questions to Clarence: “What scourge for perjury / Can this dark monarchy afford Clarence?” (1.4.50-51). Just as Clarence comes to acknowledge his crimes and begs God for mercy (1.4.69-72), so will Richard experience his own prophetic nightmare and face his own crimes, and this dark monarchy will

pay with the king's death. Prior to his actual death, Clarence warns his murderers “they that set you upon / To do this deed will hate you for the deed” (1.4.251-252). Again, it reinforces the severity of their crimes, of the murderers, of the nobles, and of Richard. In time they too will be punished, and it will be through the one who employs them: Richard, just as he has sent the murderers to kill Clarence.

One of Richard's last victims is his closest ally Buckingham, with his execution that starts the final act. Sentenced to die on All Souls' Day, Buckingham accepts his coming death, and this day will be his “body's doomsday” and the “determined respite of [his] wrongs” (5.1.11-19). He also echoes Psalm 37:15, “Thus doth he force the swords of wicked men / To turn their own points in their masters' bosoms” (5.1.23-24). It is inevitable that the wicked shall be punished, and as a corrupt nation, those without loyalty to the nation will ultimately be destroyed through violence against each other. Richard, in his conquest for the throne, sees the death of those who lack complete dedication for the English nation, and despite the destructive campaign, also sees a certain cleansing of England. Once Richard's task is complete, it will require a new agent of Providence to remove the current king, and it will be achieved through the actions of Richmond, the future Henry VII.

In the coming battle between Richmond and Richard, Richmond also refers to Richard as a boar:

The wretched, bloody and usurping boar,
Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes his trough
In your embowelled bosoms, this foul swine
Is now even in the centre of this isle,
(5.2.7-10)

Like the boar in Spenser's *Gardens of Adonis*, Richard, at the center of England, is one who is “right in the midst of that paradise” (III.vi.43). Thus there is a cyclical pattern, particularly of the seasons. Following the harbinger of winter, the boar, spring will come again with a new sun

in this “calendrical allegory” (Prescott 181-182). Though this boar has made a hell of this English garden, in time winter must make way for spring, heralded by the rise of Richmond.

Early in the play there is a window scene, and one of the commoner's comments involves the coming of the seasons:

When clouds appear, wise men put on their cloaks;
When great leaves fall, the winter is at hand;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?
Untimely storms make men expect a dearth.
All may be well; but, if God sort it so,
'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.
(2.4.36-41)

Though winter comes, through God's will spring will eventually follow. On a larger scale, this cycle of seasons can also be seen in England's history. As the entirety of the Henriad plays indicate, there is a repetition in the rise and fall of kings, both good and bad. From Henry V comes his son, from glory to civil war. In turn, Richard may have made England a hell, but Richmond will soon come to redeem it. Just as the sun of York cleared away the winter of discontent, only to be overshadowed by the wintry boar that is Richard, so will Richard's winter eventually give way to a new spring with Richmond. The boar may have laid claim to this English Eden, but a virtuous Christ-figure will arise to defeat it. The cycle is allegorical, echoing once more Christ's Harrowing, and the redemption of Eden by Redcrosse.

Richmond himself, though appearing only near the end of the play, is built up as an agent of Providence, the one who will overthrow Richard. He is also another Christ-figure, another conqueror, one who is, according to the ghosts of Edward's sons, “Virtuous and holy, be thou conqueror” (5.3.128). He shall “fight and conquer for fair England's sake” (5.3.158), to save this England that has been razed by the raging boar Richard. In this “sort of Harrowing of England” (Prescott 182), Richmond shall be the one to “Live and flourish,” while Richard will “despair

and die” (5.3.129; 127). In the procession of ghosts that curse Richard and bless Richmond as they sleep, the sons of Edward prophecy of Richard's downfall and Richmond's glory:

Thy nephews' souls bid thee despair and die.
Sleep, Richmond, sleep in peace and wake in joy;
Good angels guard thee from the boar's annoy.
Live, and beget a happy race of kings;
Edward's unhappy sons do bid thee flourish.
(5.3.147-153)

Just as Richard has determined himself to play the villain, so is Richmond ordained to not just remove Richard, but also to create a line of kings, to flourish in the garden of England.

From Divine Providence comes the procession of the ghosts that bless and curse Richmond and Richard, respectively. This gives way to the human action that leads to Richard's downfall and Richmond's triumph. Left alone following the procession of spirits, Richard realizes how terrible he truly is, that there is a murderer in the room and it is himself. Awakening from his nightmare, Richard is left to confront himself and realizes how terrible he truly is, and like his victims before him, comes to admit his crimes:

Perjury, perjury, in the highest degree;
Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree;
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all, 'Guilty, guilty!'
I shall despair.
(5.3.196-201)

As he awakens, he declares himself to be the villain he was determined to be at the start, yet it is not a sense of accomplishment but fear that arises. The worm of conscience has affected him, and Richard is left with a fear that has forced him to recognize his crimes. In a manner similar to his opening soliloquy, Richard has once more determined himself, but rather than being the villain, is left to despair, and resolves to go “hand in hand to hell” (5.3.309-311). Once more, it is a matter of his conscious choice within the grand scheme of Divine Providence. Once Richard has finally been removed, Richmond ends the play with an appeal to God:

Abate the edge of traitors, gracious Lord,
That would reduce these bloody days again
And make poor England weep in streams of blood.
Let them not live to taste this land's increase
That would with treason wound this fair land's peace.
Now civil wounds are stopped; and peace lives again.
That she may long live here, God say amen.
(5.5.35-41)

With the death of Richard and the crowning of Richmond, so will there be a union between the Red and White Roses. Just as Redcrosse's betrothal to Una sees a union between England and the one faith, the marriage between Richmond and Elizabeth will bring an end to conflict. As Eden is liberated by the defeat of the Dragon, so is England freed from the destruction under Richard III. Richmond's speech, along with his status as a righteous king, makes him a prototype to Henry V given Richmond's emphasis on unity and the removal of civil war. This also aids in presenting Henry V as a righteous king, just as he is celebrated at his funeral, and what will occur in the second tetralogy. Though chronologically this sees the end of England's lowest point and a return to glory, there is an ever-recurring cycle, the "calendrical" cycle where peace, this new sun of Tudor, is not exempt from the threat of a wintry civil war.

Chapter 4

Henry V (and the second tetralogy)

While the first tetralogy culminates in a self-serving noble who plays at a villain without regard for the nation, the second would see the opposite, one that embodies Shakespeare's ideal king. Whereas *Henry VI* and *Richard III* serve as a warning of another English civil war if Elizabeth's succession is not clearly established, the second series of Henriad plays would be a study of what makes a strong king, and in turn, a strong nation. If Richard II is a failed king, Henry IV is one who is capable of ruling but has moral failings in his guilt from the deposition of the previous king. However, as the crown is passed, his son, Henry V, will carry on his father's rule without such personal guilt. Henry V will rule unfettered and allow for England to thrive (Ribner 157).

Richard II, as the start of the tetralogy, establishes not just the chronology, but also the themes and ideas that would be prevalent in *Henry IV* and *Henry V*. Richard's greatest attributes as king are undoubtedly his speech and his rightful claim as king through lineage, but both fail to prevent the threat of civil war. Just as in the previous tetralogy, the threat of civil war looms, but like Henry VI, Richard lacks the strength to maintain the nation. Preceding the duel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, Richard makes an appeal for peace, "For that our kingdom's earth should not be soiled / With that dear blood which it hath fostered, / And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect / Of civil wounds ploughed up with neighbor's sword," (*RII* 1.3.125-128). Since Richard cannot prevent the duel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, he instead chooses to banish them. Following the banishment of these two men, it will be Bolingbroke's father, the dying John of Gaunt, who will speak as a "prophet new inspired" (2.1.31), to tell the truth against Richard's failures. Like the dying Henry VI and the ladies that curse Richard III, Gaunt fears what will become of England once he himself is gone, and adds to the series of curses

and prophecies prevalent in the previous tetralogy. Though loyal to his nation and the king, on his deathbed he speaks out against the king:

Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.
This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
...
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
...
Is now leased out – I die pronouncing it –
Like to a tenement or pelting farm.
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds.
That England that was wont to conquer others
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.
(2.1.37-66)

Gaunt views England as the greatest garden, another Eden. This island is a garden, a “teeming womb” that (should) produce only good kings. This praise of England is one of the closest associations with Spenser, of England as a uniquely blessed, even divine, nation. However, this vision of England is not of a great city of fame, like Cleopolis, intertwined with the fate of the Second Jerusalem or an Eden that must be rescued from a Satan-Dragon; rather, Gaunt's prophecy sees that Richard II is an ineffectual gardener and thus an inadequate caretaker and king of this English Eden. He is more a landlord, one who has “leased out” (2.1.113-114) this garden. Rather than focusing on maintaining this garden, Richard's desire for a war in Ireland will ultimately lead to the civil war that he hoped to prevent with the banishing of Bolingbroke and Mowbray. Instead of England being a great, warring nation that should expand outwards via conquest, England will instead conquer itself before it can achieve (or regain) its status as an Eden.

Immediately after Gaunt's death, Richard claims Gaunt's estate to fund the war in Ireland, and it is this crime, the breaking of succession laws, that will begin Bolingbroke's campaign against him, and in turn allows for the removal of Richard despite him being the rightful king. Richard himself states that, "no hand of blood and bone / Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre / Unless he do profane, steal or usurp" (3.3.78-80). It is Richard's own staunch belief as God's elect that prevents him from seeing the wrongs he has committed, lacking the virtues to rule and be among his people. It will lead to his downfall, and will eventually lead "From Richard's night to Bolingbroke's fair day" (3.2.214-215). It is a cycle of divine Providence and the seasons; like with the wintry boar Richard III who is defeated by Richmond, so will Bolingbroke arrive to remove the incompetent Richard II.

In the midst of this conflict there is a scene between an actual gardener and a servant, and a conversation that compares England to a garden:

Go thou and like an executioner
Cut off the heads of too-fast-growing-sprays
That look too lofty in our commonwealth –
All must be even in our government
(3.4.33-36)

The gardener, urging the servant, presents a hierarchy of command not unlike a king and his subjects. The servant, like a subject in the midst of civil war, questions the need to manage the garden when their king has failed in his own management. However, the gardener retorts that Bolingbroke will pluck the weeds that endanger the nation, and restore it (3.4.40-53). It is not enough to have a proper gardener-king, but must require loyal and strong citizens. As in, why should the apprentice bother abiding by the laws of the nation when the chief gardener, the king, is lacking in his care for this garden-nation? The gardener shows support for Bolingbroke, one who has already begun grooming the English nation, and will remove its pests, namely Richard's flatterers. Bolingbroke, in his return to England, brings with him the threat of civil war, but it

will be Bolingbroke who calls himself to “be the yielding water, / The rage be [Richard's] whilst on the earth I rain / My waters – on the earth and not on him” (3.3.57-59). Through this coming conflict, Bolingbroke will be cleansing water that will rejuvenate the barren garden of England that has been made desolate by the fires of Richard, even if it requires violent action to overthrow the king. From this cycle of violence and civil war will once more come peace, one that sees Bolingbroke as King Henry IV.

Bolingbroke will supposedly serve as the ideal king that Richard is not, one who will properly maintain this English garden-nation, to remove its “caterpillars of the commonwealth / Which [he has] sworn to weed and pluck away” (3.2.165-166). The gardeners prove to be detractors of Richard and supporters of Bolingbroke, stating that had Richard acted like a proper king, he could have prevented this civil war, and instead could have groomed men like Bolingbroke to properly serve the nation (3.4.61-64). Instead, rather than removing the superfluous branches of his flatterers, he is unable to produce the bearing boughs of loyal supporters. As a garden scene, it once more serves as a means to present a model of a proper king and his relationship to the nation-garden similar to the garden of Iden. With the support of the gardeners and the commoners, Bolingbroke will at least serve as an adequate king if not the ideal gardener-king that he is built up to be.

As *1 Henry IV* begins, the king is unable to make that journey to Jerusalem he swore in repentance for Richard's death. In his desire for pilgrimage, Henry IV has a utopian vision of an England no longer besieged by civil war:

No more the thirty entrance of this soil
Shall daub her lips with her own children's blood;
No more shall trenching war channel her fields,
Nor bruise her flowerets with the armed hoofs
Of hostile paces
...
March all in one way and be no more opposed

Against acquaintance, kindred, and allies.
The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife,
No more shall cut his master.
(*IH IV* 1.1.5-18)

Once more, England is compared to a garden, and civil war's destructive effects will cut the flowers of England's youth. However, as a prophecy, there will come a time when war will not be from within, where the nation will instead conquer outwards rather than itself. His vision is also similar to Merlin's prophecy in *The Faerie Queene*, in which the Britons will rise "Against their forren foe, that commes from farre, / Till vniuersall peace compound all ciuill iarre (III.iii.29). There is a vision of eternal peace, but it is only capable of existing once England has conquered its foreign foes.

Among his fears is that his own son has strayed from the court in favor of the commoners, and criminals, in Eastcheap. Despite this happening, it is in Eastcheap where the young Prince Hal will develop from an unseemly criminal (according to public view) to a strong leader. Henry's ability to be loved by the people is one that is shared by his father (and one Richard lacked), when Bolingbroke looked to be "the next degree of hope" (*RII* 1.4.24-36). He embodies the best qualities of both kings, Richard's speech and Bolingbroke's pragmatism, and will be able to succeed beyond his father because he lacks the personal guilt that haunts Henry IV throughout his reign. Hal is not just able to live among the common people, but he is also able to gain their loyalty, producing loyal subjects in peacetime, and an army in war (*IH IV* 2.4.4-19).

In the only verse soliloquy of the play, Prince Hal reveals a Machiavellian mind, one that will fain being a braggart, only to reveal his true colors as the sun (1.2.185-207). Though he utilizes deception, he has ultimately decided his fate already: he must abandon his current friends when it is time. This also makes his development not as clear-cut compared to Spenser's knights, but Hal is not without temptations. Hal's journey can be seen as one of temperance

(Ribner 175), seeking a middle ground between “That villainous, abominable misleader of youth, / Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan” (2.1.450-451), and the prideful Hotspur, a young man who has gained the favor of the king, serving almost as a stand-in for Hal until the prince is ready to assume the responsibilities of the crown. However, his deliberate choice to surround himself with lowlifes begins a deliberate descent into a sinful hell, one from which he claims that he can easily rise up and be the great sun people hope for him to be.

As the opposite to nobles such as Hotspur, Falstaff is not merely symbolic of Vice, but a mere lover of life, and it is not how a king must live (Ribner 170). Falstaff on one occasion describes Hal as a field, one that has been properly tilled through his guidance as Hal's mentor and father figure:

for the cold blood he did naturally inherit of his
father he hath, like lean, sterile, and bare land, manured,
husbanded, and tilled, with excellent endeavour of
drinking good and good store of fertile sherry, that he is
become very hot and valiant
(4.3.113-117)

To an extent Falstaff is correct. Hal's body itself is a type of garden, and like England, must be properly tilled to become a strong king, though Falstaff instead seeks to manipulate Hal for his own ends. Falstaff serves a role similar to Richard III in being a Satanic figure counter to Hal, but in this case Falstaff is swiftly removed rather than allowed to fester for the sake of the nation. Falstaff serves as a false teacher and tempter who potentially can lead Hal away from the behavior of a proper king, but at the same time he displays the path that Hal should not follow. Once Hal is king, Falstaff is no longer needed as a guide, and so is quickly rejected and banished by Hal. Divine Providence sees that Falstaff performs his role as a Satan, and through his own form of education to the young prince, Hal is able to choose virtue over vice.

In Part 2, Hal's most important confrontation is with his own father. The king, like his father John of Gaunt before him, will speak his fears on his deathbed:

Harry the Fifth is crowned! Up, vanity!
Down, royal state! All you sage counsellors, hence!
And to the English court assemble now
From every region, apes of idleness!
(4.3.249-252)

Once his son is king, Henry fears that his son will bring the nation to ruin into a metaphorical wilderness, and in turn the threat of civil war will return. He is also wracked with guilt concerning the removal of Richard, and his inability to reach Jerusalem, but asserts the necessity of it: "God knows, I had no such intent / But that necessity so bowed the state / That I and greatness were compelled to kiss" (3.1.71-2). In this regard, he is not unlike Richmond, who acts as an agent of Providence, and Hal asserts both his father's right to the crown as well as his own:

You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me;
Then plain and right must my possession be,
Which I with more than with a common pain
'Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain.
(4.3.350-354)

Compared to the monarchs currently seen in the Henriad plays, Henry IV proves to be a competent king, one who has not just maintained the crown, but also suppressed two civil wars. His virtue to rule and return order to England makes it right for Hal to inherit the throne. The king's final advice to Hal proves to be effective: "Be it thy course to busy giddy minds / With foreign quarrels, that action hence borne out / May waste the memory of former days" (4.3.342-5). To prevent potential dissent, Hal must focus the energy of the nation toward wars with nations outside of England, lest war begin to manifest itself within England again. Once king, Henry V reveals himself to the people as the sun that he truly is, resulting in the banishment of Falstaff (5.5.46-70), and the adoption of the Chief Lord Justice as a father (5.2.101-139). Contrary to his father's fears, Henry V will prove to be one of England's greatest kings.

Henry V begins with the Archbishop of Canterbury commenting on Henry as a king, noting the significant changes Henry has made in becoming a proper king compared to the frivolousness of his youth, that “Consideration like an angel came / And whipped th'offending Adam out of him, / Leaving his body as a paradise / T'envelop and contain celestial spirits” (*Henry V* 1.1.28-31). Just as Falstaff compared Henry to a properly tilled field, according to the Archbishop the garden that is Henry has become an Edenic space, one that embodies God's will on Earth (as a king). This reformation may also concur within the overarching narrative of England, that it is necessary to experience a period of sin, and through adversity be made all the stronger, just as Henry VI and Richard III gives way to Richmond, and Richard II and Henry IV lead to Henry V. Though his reformation may echo *Redcrosse in the House of Holiness*, what differs is that Henry V, even as the young Welsh Prince Hal, proves to be more Machiavellian than one would suspect. Henry has proven himself to be a more than capable gardener in terms of his own self-development as a king, but also a worthy gardener for the English nation-garden.

Though Henry is in a sense leading a crusade against the French to claim what he views as his birthright, it brings to question the morality of waging a bloody war. It is difficult for Henry to claim himself the rightful heir of France, but he does and still requires a military crusade in order to obtain the crown. Though a king, Henry is careful in his words, and is capable of transferring responsibilities to others. As he warns Canterbury in describing his claim to the throne, he will be responsible for the deaths that would come from an unjust invasion. On the other hand, Henry at least appears to be genuine in his faith in God and his right as proper heir to France, particularly in his prayer before the Battle of Agincourt. He is honestly repentant, seeking forgiveness for his father's sake and the removal of Richard II (4.1.286-302), but this proves not to be a major hindrance compared to the guilt of Henry IV.

It is possible to interpret the campaign in France as a hell journey. Throughout the play there are various comparisons of war with hell. Before the Siege of Harfleur, Henry offers King Charles to surrender peacefully, to “Deliver up the crown and to take mercy / On the poor souls for whom this hungry war / Opens his vasty jaws” (2.4.103-105). The jaws of hell can invoke the images of Spenser's dragon, with attention towards its jaws, “for his deepe devouring jaws / Wide gaped, like the griesly mouth of hell, / Through which into his dark abisse all ravin fell” (Spenser I.xi.7-9). Following the siege, Henry uses threats of violence on the mayor in a manner similar to his warning the Archbishop, that Henry will not be responsible for the brutal actions his men will perform should he not surrender, to summon a hell that “The gates of mercy shall be all shut up, / And the fleshed soldier, rough and hard of heart, / In liberty of bloody hand shall range / With conscience wide as hell” (*HV* 3.3.10-13). These implications make war, like hell, a very sinful practice. However, while his enemies invoke hell in this war, Henry is able to associate Christ and camaraderie through war. Henry V, as a conqueror, is not just strictly a Christ-figure. As seen in beginning of *Henry VI*, he is also associated with a dragon, with his reach as mighty as its wings and will deliver an apocalypse unto the French. The apocalyptic associations can tie to the calenderical allegory in *Richard III*, that through war and conquest, and from the destruction of war comes a restoration not just for the garden-nation of France, but also the restoration of the “proper” king as Henry conquers France as the rightful ruler.

At the Siege of Harfleur, Henry rouses his men in an inspirational speech, comparing war to a transformative state and implores his men to be like savages. Set within the structural center of the play, it is possible to view their descent into the breach as its own entry into a hell. Though he calls for his soldiers to be brutal, he begins the speech by advocating for peace, “In peace there's nothing so becomes a man / As modest stillness and humility” (3.1.3-4). For the sake of

country, they must replace peace for war, like Redcrosse, who must take violent, but righteous, action. Henry also makes appeals to English nationalism to rouse their spirits:

Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding
For there is none of you so mean and base
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes
(3.1.26-30)

Through war, even the lowliest soldier is just as great as the highest noble. He ends the speech with praise to God, calling 'God for Harry! England and Saint George!' (3.1.34), reinforcing England's righteousness in the face of adversity. This can echo *The Faerie Queene* with the mention of invoking God to fight for the side of England and St. George/Redcrosse. Henry's removal of social status brings a nationalistic message of unity, in which even the most "mean and base" of his men share the "noble lustre" of English eyes. Rather than strictly having one figure such as St. George, the everyman is represented by the soldiers of Henry's army, guided by their own Christ through Henry V. There are also similarities with Richmond and his speeches, where Richmond implores his own men "if you fight against God's enemy, / God will, in justice, ward you as his Soldiers" (*RIII* 5.3.253-4) and "If you fight against your country's foes, / Your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire" (5.3.257-8). Richmond also seeks unity of the country for the sake of fighting foreign enemies, and as one ordained by Divine Providence to remove the anarchic Richard III, helps to provide legitimacy for Henry's own campaign. Englishmen have been called by their king fight their foreign enemies, and for a time they are united simply as Englishmen on the battlefield.

The blurring of social lines occur again in Act IV, as Henry disguises himself as an average soldier to walk amongst his men. As he speaks to a group of common soldiers, he presents his own opinion of the King Henry V:

I think the king is but a man, as I am:
the violet smells to him as it doth to me; all his senses have but
human conditions; his ceremonies laid by
in his nakedness he appears but a man
(4.1.102-106)

Like Redcrosse who is a rustic Christ-figure and the saint who embodies the English nation, Henry is both king and commoner as he blends with his army. A passing mention of the violet, a symbol of faithfulness and love, associates Henry with something not unique, but merely one violet among the garden. The reference can be compared to Henry IV's referring to Englishmen as flowerets (*IH IV* 1.1.8). Henry V, speaking as one who smells the violets the same way as his fellow Englishmen, must embody the same virtues of his father to create a strong nation. In his speech before the Battle of Agincourt, Henry once more removes social class and shares the glory: "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" (4.3.61-63). This sacrifice of shedding blood is reminiscent of Christ and his own sacrifices of his body and blood in both the Last Supper and his crucifixion. Thus, Henry and his men are virtuous figures who sacrifice their own blood, even their lives, for their country. It is also reminiscent of Richmond's speeches at the end of *Richard III*. Ultimately, no matter what questionable actions Henry may commit, what he does is for the good of the nation, as seen when punishing traitors to the crown. As he explains to Cambridge, Scrope, and Grey of their betrayal (and echoing his predecessors who are threatened by civil war), "Touching our person we seek no revenge, / But we our kingdom's safety must so tender, / Whose ruin you have sought, that to her laws / We deliver you" (2.2.175-178). Henry proves a more than competent gardener, and despite his ability to be as one among his soldiers, the king must make difficult choices, as seen in preventing a potential rebellion. Compared to other kings of the *Henriad* plays, Henry V is able to suppress rebellion quickly without the proliferation of civil war.

Following England's victory, Burgundy's appeal for peace includes a lengthy comparison to France as an unattended garden, this "best garden of the world, / Our fertile France". He advises that if the nation-garden is not properly taken care of, both the plants and the French people will become "Defective in their natures, grow to wildness" and "grow like savages, as soldiers will, that nothing do but meditate on blood" (5.2.23-67). Without peace (or at least order) in a nation, it will ultimately succumb to destruction, and the fall of the French garden will echo the "defective nature" that has come from the Fall of Man. Similarly, Henry IV fears that his son will turn the English nation into a potential metaphorical wilderness. Without peace, or God's guidance (perhaps through a king), mankind will degenerate and remain in his fallen/sinful state, but France can be restored under the rule of its Brother England. The play is not without a presentation of an idealized unity of Britain. The play shows an army under Henry that is not exclusively English. Among the officers include the Irish MacMorris and the Scottish Jamy alongside the Welsh Fluellen and the English Gower. This alliance proves to be temporary: once the war is over, the Welsh Fluellen and the English Pistol exchange insults (5.14-40).

The resolution of *Henry V* is very similar to Book I of *The Faerie Queene*, as both works end with the betrothal of Henry with Katherine and Redcrosse with Una, respectively. With the defeat of the Dragon, Eden is liberated, and the betrothal thus sees the eventual union of England with the one truth faith. That Redcrosse, the emblem of England, becomes "heyre apparaunt" (I.xii.20) to a literal Eden, turns him into the next potential king of Eden, thus tying, or transforming, England to an Eden. Nonetheless, though Redcrosse has defeated the Dragon and saved Una's parents, whereby we see that this Christ-figure has conquered the Satan of Revelations, eternal peace has not been achieved. Before the actual marriage, Redcrosse must "returne to that great Faerie Queene, / And her to serve six yeares in warlike wize, / Gainst that

proud Paynim king...” (*FQ* I.xii.18). Though the dragon is defeated, the dangers of sin have not ended, with possible allusions of Gloriana's battle against a “proud” king as one of Elizabeth against the Catholic Philip of Spain. That Duessa attempts to do harm following the Dragon's death shows that the Christian must remain vigilant against sin. In *Henry V*, though England and France are at peace, even united through the marriage of Henry and Katherine, the Chorus reminds us in the Epilogue that their son Henry VI will be the beginning of England's descent into ruin: “Whose state so many had the managing / That they lost France and made his England bleed” (Epilogue 11-12). Though victory has been achieved, in the grander scheme it is only a temporary glory as England will suffer the tumultuous War of the Roses and the tyranny of Richard III. While Henry V was viewed as the greatest gardener-king, Henry VI and his weakness will bring the loss of the nation-garden of France and the decay of his own England. Harkening to the coming apocalypse in Revelations, as England descends into a hell, it will culminate with a new sun through Richmond that will restore England, so that it will become the heavenly paradise, an Eden on Earth, with the crowning of Henry VII.

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