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"DREAM ON": EXAMINING WATCHING, SLEEP, AND DREAMS IN SHAKESPEARE'S FIRST TETRALOGY

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Table of Contents

Title Page……..……..…...…...i

Table of Contents…….…….……....….iii

Abstract…… ……..…...…...iv

Acknowledgements……..……...vi

Introduction— "If dreams prove true": Dream Interpretation from Aristotle to Shakespeare…….……..…….....1
0.1—Dream Interpretation in the Ancient World……..…….....4
0.2— Shakespeare's Sources …….…..…..14
0.3—Shakespeare's Contemporaries……..…...…17
0.4—Popular Dream Beliefs, Magical Thinking, and Moral Health.…....23
0.5—Chapter Summaries……..……...….27

Chapter 1— "Sleeping neglection": Examining Waking, Watching, and Visions in *1 Henry VI*…..……..36
1.1—The Sleeping Corpse of Henry V…….…..…….……37
1.2—Watching and Waking ……..……....…….41
1.3—Joan's Watch……...……..…….. 46
1.4—Sleep and the Terror of Night…….…….…….....52
1.5— Joan's Dream Vision……..……...…….…..55

Chapter 2— "Stay we no longer, dreaming of renown": Ambitious Dreaming and the *Rex Exsomnis* in *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI*…….....70
2.1—Duke Humphrey's and Eleanor's Dreams…….……....…..71
2.2—The False Dream at St. Albans……..…….....….81
2.3— Cardinal Winchester's Dreams……..…….……..…….…..85
2.4—Rex Exsomnis, The Sleepless King……..……..106
2.5—Richard Dreams on Sovereignty……..…….....115
Chapter 3—"No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine": Nightmares and Bad Sleep in *Richard III*…..……....……..….120
3.1—Clarence's Dream…….……...…….....123
3.2—Lord Stanley's Warning…….…….....139
3.3—Lady Anne's Interrupted Sleep……...144
3.4—Richard and Richmond's Dual Dream……..….151

Conclusion— "A dream of what thou wast […] a breath, a bubble,": The Ephemeral Nature of Shakespeare's Dreams…….....….161
Bibliography……..……..……..…..172

Abstract

"Dream On": Examining Watching, Sleep, and Dreams in Shakespeare's First Tetralogy

Amani Liggett

This dissertation argues that the instances of dreams and sleeping in Shakespeare's First Tetralogy history plays show Shakespeare creating his foundational beliefs about how humankind's fears and desires directly affected English history. The First Tetralogy is a unique dramatic effort because Shakespeare leaves the dreams ambiguous enough that the plays are either full of dreams that present a disenchanted and apathetic world, or dreams that are supernatural warnings which are often ignored and misinterpreted. If the first premise is true, then there is no hope for a stable governing of England, and if the second premise is true, then the tragedy of the series does not stem from collective government, but from the individual. The balance between these two answers is what makes First Tetralogy a uniquely exciting set of plays.

The First Tetralogy, consisting of the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III*, is where Shakespeare describes the most significant story in English medieval history, the Wars of the Roses; but it is a story he chooses to tell partly through the lens of dreams and sleep. The lens of dreams, sleeping, and watching (staying awake) are the means to examine significant questions that Shakespeare introduces in the First Tetralogy, namely, is human history our own creation or is it done to us? And if history is done to us, then who is responsible? To explore these queries, this dissertation uses dream texts of the early modern period, along with chronicle

sources, to describe the atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty surrounding dream interpretation.

The secondary texts range from pamphlets on dream interpretation by authors like Thomas Hill and Thomas Nashe, to historical chronicle sources by Raphael Holinshed and Edward Hall. Classical Greek and Roman dream writing provides an origin point for the dualism that considered dreams to be either natural or supernatural. These authors are informing Shakespeare's work during his early writing career and providing key source material for the scenes involving dreams. The conclusion of my dissertation classifies the dreams of the First Tetralogy into three categories: dreams that provoke the dreamer to act, dreams that do not rouse any action, and fabricated dreams.

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Introduction

"If dreams prove true": Dream Interpretation from Aristotle to Shakespeare

This dissertation argues that instances of sleeping and dreaming are major concerns of Shakespeare's First Tetralogy. The First Tetralogy—consisting of *Henry VI Parts 1, 2, 3,* and *Richard III* — performs the events of the War of the Roses, but Shakespeare picked this era of English history to tell an additional narrative concerning the interpretation of early modern sleep, dreams, and watching. The First Tetralogy includes many references to dreaming, sleeping, and *not* sleeping; these subjects are hardly to be found in Shakespeare's Second Tetralogy and rarely does dreaming receive a mention in any other of his history plays.[1] It is undeniable that the references to sleep and dreaming provide the Tetralogy with a certain conceptual coherence. I argue that these phenomena, along with the psychological disturbances to which they give rise (the anxiety of war, exhaustion, and fear of the night's darkness,) are important clues to Shakespeare's evolving understanding of the place of human activity in the nature and, indeed, about the nature of world in which human beings find themselves. Though the focus will primarily be on the First Tetralogy's dreams, this dissertation will also consider investigations into alternative forms of dreaming; by the inclusion of waking manifestations such as hallucinations, demonic visitations, or mystic visions, there can be a more complete understanding of the early

[1] Two notable connections in other Shakespeare history plays are Queen Katherine's masque-like dream spectacle in *Henry VIII* and King Henry IV's insomnia in *2 Henry IV* because as he says, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." (III.i.31), *2 Henry IV*. Although there are other brief moments concerning sleeping and dreaming other Shakespeare's history plays, none of these histories are concerned with sleep in such a sustained way across multiple plays.

modern supernatural worldview and its connection to health, physicality, and the wellbeing of the soul.

Drawing on texts from the ancient world, early modern dream theorists tended to categorize dreams as either natural or supernatural. The supernatural dream (coming from outward) category is then split into either a demonic or a divine visitation. The ambitious dream and the prick of consciousness dream would fall under the natural dream category (coming from inward). Instead, this dissertation categorizes the dreams into three types, dreams that prompt the dreamer to act, dreams that do not prompt the dreamer to act, and false dreams that were never really dreams and just narration that is posing as a dream. The narrations of false dreams contain messages that are worth exploring in this courtly world composed of lies, warnings, and secret symbols, which all comes to a climax in the Tetralogy's final play, *Richard III*.

While *Richard III* is usually performed as a standalone play, the large number of references to dreaming and sleeping in this play undeniably show the unity of this tetralogy. Critically, *Richard III* is the most popular and successful play of the First Tetralogy; scholars generally argue that the three parts of the *Henry VI* are Shakespeare's early, unpolished writing style that does not meet the sophistication of *Richard III*. This dissertation also aims to read the dreams in the *Henry VI* plays as seriously as any other Shakespeare plays, to show that the three texts are worthy prequels to *Richard III.* I discuss that by reading these history plays as a coherent work of art, it becomes clear that Shakespeare is raising questions about the true sources of human ambition, the unnaturalness of watching and denying our usual

pattern of sleep, and the interpretation and misinterpretation of dreams, nightmares, and visions.

Though the three parts of *Henry VI* live on the outskirts of Shakespeare scholarship as early work, this very characteristic makes this collection of plays worth close examination.[2] It is worth considering why Shakespeare began his career as a playwright in "an unusually bold venture: a linked series of four plays" that focused on English history, but also contained their own unique narrative about the ambiguous nature of sleep.[3] Dreaming in the First Tetralogy can also be read as a metaphor for theatrical activity; an audience member entering the space of the theater enters a transformative (yet malleable and vulnerable) state, like in sleeping and dreaming. The body, mind, and soul are subject to change based on what is seen in the theater or in a dream. The theatrical representation of English medieval history in the First Tetralogy also presents a reminder to the audience that there is a possibility that God, or someone else, will punish you for your sins; they cannot be outrun, you cannot hide from them, and the plays will always strive to avenge the innocent.

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[2] The textual history of the *Henry VI* plays remains a current topic of debate amongst scholars. Barbara Everett wrote a piece in the *London Review of Books* called "Henry and Hamlet" (Vol.46, No.4, February 22, 2024) which discusses the dating and sequencing of the three *Henry VI* plays as lesser issues. In the next volume of *LBR*, Brian Vickers responds with his view that the authorship and dating concerns the in the *Henry VI* plays are still relevant; *Part 1* was written a year later than *Part 2* and *Part 3*, and Vickers believes that most of *Part 1*'s scenes are by Thomas Kyd and Thomas Nashe, with Shakespeare adding three scenes once the Chamberlain's Men received ownership of the playbook. Everett replies that conversing about the context of Shakespeare's early histories is "[…] essentially hypothetical and peculiarly contentious […]" and that scholars will probably never agree on the matter, but they can at least take these hypotheticals into account in their own research. Then, Everett concludes with the more noteworthy question, "[…] we need to explain why Shakespeare was so interested in Henry VI, this insubstantial late medieval monarch, in order to illuminate some of his later, greater writing." Barbara Everett. Letters: Reply to "Which came first?" *LBR.* Vol. 46, No. 6. March 21, 2024.; Brian Vickers. Letters: "Which came first?" *LBR.* Vol. 46, No. 5. March 7, 2024.

[3] Anthony Hammond. "Introduction" to *King Richard III*, Arden Shakespeare: Second Series. London: 1981. p. 115.

Since the tetralogy is framed by bad dreams and improper sleep, what can the play texts tell us about the status of history in the theater? Like early modern dream interpretation, the status of history in Shakespeare's theater was opaque. Characters will either believe in superstition and act based on their understanding of the dream, or think it was nothing important. In the tetralogy, some characters dream of being the monarch and set out to achieve their ambitions, showing that their dreams play a major role in the shaping of history in the theater. This dissertation will describe the tetralogy as a portrait created by Shakespeare's amalgamation of chronicle history and the beliefs of dream theorists to make the claim that the status of history on the stage is malleable.

Dream Interpretation in the Ancient World

It is difficult to say if Shakespeare made use of any particular ancient philosopher or school of thought concerning dream interpretation. His contemporaries certainly did though, especially writer and pamphleteer Thomas Hill, who cites Aristotle's *On Dreams* and *On Divination Through Sleep* as his sources multiple times in *The moste pleasante arte of the interpretacion of dreames* (1571).[4] While Shakespeare may not have read ancient authors on dreams, like Roman writer

[4] Thomas Hill (*c.* 1528–*c.* 1574) was a London-based writer and translator who wrote on a wide range of subjects from practical jokes and divination, to chemical medicine and earthquakes. Hill translated popular books on science and the supernatural from Latin and Italian into English and was also well-known for his series of almanacs. The popular dream interpretation pamphlet, *The moste pleasante arte of the interpretacion of dreames*, was printed in five editions, and Hill also published the first gardening book in English, *A Briefe Treatyse of Gardening*, printed in nine editions. "Hill, Thomas [pseud. Didymus Mountaine] (c. 1528–c. 1574), writer and translator." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. September 23, 2004. Oxford University Press.

Macrobius (c. 400 CE), he nonetheless drew from the cultural set of rules associated with dream books that early modern authors were writing and printing. Of the many significant sources for early modern dream theory, the writings of ancient authors Macrobius, Aristotle, and Artemidorus (an ancient Greek dream diviner, writing in about 200 CE), are the most prominent influencers. With new translations of philosophical texts by classical Greek and Roman authors appearing in print shops, there was much to choose from. By the Elizabethan age, England was absorbing the rise of intellectualism in Italy, as Italian diplomats arrived in London carrying dictionaries, plays, translations, and travel narratives. The general opinion of these texts—whether Italian comedies based off of plays by Terrence and Plautus or the works of Petrarch— was that they were considered erudite because of their original Latin sources.[5] Marjorie Garber notes that "Shakespeare drew upon this extensive body of material selectively," carefully pulling this source material from both the literature of classical Greece and medieval dream visions.[6]

Aristotle

Two of Aristotle's (384–322 BC) key works on sleep and dreams, *On Dreams*, and *On Divination Through Sleep* became essential primary sources for early modern writers such as Thomas Hill in developing their own theories. As a major authority for dream interpretation, Aristotle's claim that "[…] a dream is a

[5] Deanna Shemek. "Lecture 3-16-18," LIT 223—Renaissance Humanism. Graduate Course. University of California, Santa Cruz.
[6] Marjorie Garber. *Dreams in Shakespeare: From Metaphor to Metamorphosis.* New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1974, p. 1.

certain sort of appearance (*phantasma*) […]," had a vast influence in approaching the interpretation of dreams as a scientific field and became a medieval mainstream belief.[7] David Gallop explains in his Introduction to *Aristotle on Sleep and Dreams*, that dreams for Aristotle were truly defined by the dream figures that appear in the dream. The entire dream episode, which a modern reader would think of as the dream, to Aristotle is merely setting the stage for an apparition to present itself. The dream then is, "but simply the phantom item appearing to the sleeping person. It is this apparition that he takes to be the dream proper."[8] For Aristotle, a dream is only a dream if it involves an appearance by a figure or apparition that the dreamer recognizes, this figure is the *true* dream, all other details are extraneous. If Aristotle's idea that a dream is a person can be applied to drama, then a dream is more closely associated with the character who appears rather than with the plot.

In approaching dreams this way—as a private appearance—Aristotle argues the only way to understand dreams is to study them as biological phenomena that are unique to an individual.[9] This lens makes all dreams incredibly personal and subjective, the dream figure is always "[…] an inner likeness of some real external person or object […]" from the sleeper's waking life.[10] The true nature of dreams lies within an understanding of how the mind affects the body's physiological state in sleep and vice versa. Furthermore, Aristotle denies any belief that dreams were

[7] David Gallop. "Introduction" to *Aristotle on Sleep and Dreams: A Text and Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary*. Aris & Phillips, 1996. p. 103
[8] Gallop, Introduction, p. 9.
[9] Gallop, Introduction, p. 13.
[10] Gallop, Introduction, p. 10.

objective visions of the supernatural; to strengthen his biological argument, he also discards Plato's claim in the *Timaeus* that all dreams come from God and are strictly for the purpose of divination, the practice of foretelling future events.[11]

In the essay *On Divination Through Sleep,* Aristotle writes that since dreams happen to ordinary people and even animals, they could not be divine, "For if the sender were God," he writes, "it would happen in the daytime and to clever people."[12] As Gallop explains, Aristotle "rejects religious explanation in favor of the view that dreams are 'daemonic' […]," but not daemonic in the sense of the supernatural, dreams are called daemonic because they belong to the natural order of things, as nature is also daemonic.[13] Aristotle thinks that since dreams and precognitive visions happen to people of relatively average intellect, that it is just a stroke of luck for a common person to experience a dream vision. By claiming that nature is daemonic, Aristotle refers to the random luck of receiving a dream—the dreamers are lucky that it is their *nature*, not divine authority, that allows them to receive the dream.[14]

Aristotle uses this term from the Pythagorean school, which held the belief that "The whole air is full of souls. We call them daemones and heroes, and it is they who send dreams, signs and illnesses to men."[15] The origin point of a dream then, is in the body, though Aristotle also acknowledges common dreams that come from

[11] Plato, *Timaeus* (45d-46a); Gallop, Introduction, p. 14.
[12] Aristotle, *On Divination Through Sleep*. Trans, Gallop. 51.463b31-464a19. p. 113.
[13] David Gallop. "Aristotle on sleep, dreams, and final causes." Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium of Ancient Philosophy, Boston College. 1988. p. 274.
[14] Gallop, Introduction, p. 44.
[15] Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*. Vol. 2. University of Pennsylvania Press. 1999. p. 226.

previous experiences, being a "a residue from sense-experience that is no longer occurring (460b1-3)."[16] It is an elusive concept, and Gallop admits, "[Aristotle's] accounts of sleep and dreams raise major problems of interpretation and leave many questions unanswered," such as how can we be conscious in our dreams, as Gallop asks, when we are clearly unconscious in the state of sleep?[17] Or more importantly, how can the dreamer understand, remember, and answer questions asked to them by the dream figure while in a state of unconsciousness?[18]

Despite the ambiguities in Aristotle's writings on the nature of dreams, he proved to be a source of inspiration for 16th century dream interpreter Thomas Hill. In his own writing, Hill cites *On Dreams* in copying down both the questions Aristotle rhetorically asks himself and the answers he provides the reader. The Preface to Hill's *The moste pleasante arte,* establishes Aristotle as the primary authority. When Hill raises the question, "First Aristotle demandeth, why wicked persons do dream wicked dreams [?]" he sets up the same structure of question followed by answer used by Aristotle to explain the arguments in *On Dreams*, and *On Divination Through Sleep*.[19] But when Hill was writing in 1571, he did not use the word "dream" to mean an apparition that appears during sleep.[20] By the 13th century, the understanding of "dream" was either a series of images and thoughts that have a story-like quality or a

[16] Gallop, Introduction, p. 19.
[17] Gallop, Introduction, p. 54 & p. 57.
[18] Gallop, Introduction, p. 54.
[19] Thomas Hill. The Preface to *The moste pleasante arte of the interpretacion of dreames*. London: 1576. Unnumbered page.
[20] Gallop, Introduction, p. 9.

prophetic vision that could occur while either awake or asleep.[21] Though Aristotle's exact definition of a dream did not last into the early modern period, his focus on the significance of the dream figure, the *phantasma*, did become a literary archetype utilized by Shakespeare in many of the dreams in the First Tetralogy.

Aristotle and Plato were debating over the most fundamental questions that dreams elicited in this period, were dreams a natural or a supernatural phenomenon? That is, did they originate from external supernatural beings, or did they derive from purely natural causes?

Artemidorus

Artemidorus Daldianus was a Greek diviner who composed the dream treatise *Oneirocritica* in about 200 CE. In the text, Artemidorus explains, "I have patiently listened to old dreams and their consequences," as this is the only possible way to gain experience in dream interpretation.[22] He reprimands other dream diviners who have only produced copies of each other's work— though much of the *Oneirocritica* simply repeats what is found in Artemidorus' sources, writings by Antiphon of Athens and Aristander of Telmessus.[23] The central argument to the *Oneirocritica* is the distinction Artemidorus makes between dreams that are predictive and not predictive. It is the predictive dream that interests Artemidorus because he believed it

[21] "Dream, *N.* (2) & *Adj.*" *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.
[22] Shakespeare inserts Artemidorus as a character with a minor prophetic role in *Julius Caesar*. Artemidorus; *The Interpretation of Dreams: Oneirocritica by Artemidorus*. Trans. Robert J. White. Noyes Press. 1975. p. 13.
[23] Robert J. White, "Introduction," *The Interpretation of Dreams: Oneirocritica by Artemidorus*. Noyes Press. 1975. p. 6.

required great skill and years of study to interpret predictive dreams correctly. *Oneirocritica* is written in conversation with Aristotle and multiple other sources that Artemidorus collected during his travels. Like Aristotle, Artemidorus tries to approach dream interpretation "in a logical, seemingly scientific way."[24] He gives attention to minor details in the dream he is studying, often focusing on the importance of the ordinary. Seemingly extraneous details are the key to the correct interpretation, such as a dream of eating one's lunch; Artemidorus's method would use a minor feature of the dream—the lunch included walnuts— to predict upcoming disturbances in the dreamer's life, just as the disrupting noise made when cracking a nutshell breaks the silence of a room.[25]

Artemidorus took the empirical nature of his research quite seriously, relying on observation based empirical evidence, a method he copies from Cicero.[26] In answer to the all-consuming question of where dreams come from, Artemidorus sides with Aristotle, writing "dreams are products of the mind, and do not come from any external source," meaning he does not believe dreams come from the gods.[27] He departs from Aristotle in that each case begins as a search for a diagnosis and an opportunity to collect new knowledge, though he recognizes that objective knowledge about a dream can never be fully realized.[28] The *Oneirocritica* also argued for thinking about a dream as a unique and personalized experience; Artemidorus makes

[24] White, p. 7.
[25] Peter Thonemann, "Introduction," *Artemidorus: The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. Martin Hammond. Oxford World's Classics. 2020. p. xx.
[26] Thonemann, "Introduction," p. xix.
[27] Thonemann, "Introduction," p. xix.
[28] White, p. 9.

a point of explaining that the dream interpreter must consider things like the general health, age, and occupation of the dreamer to provide an accurate analysis.

The text gestures to the idea that each dreamer is the author of their own dream, and it is an important step in the interpretive process to ask the subject what *they* thought of their dream, how they felt about each component, and whether they thought the dream's meaning was related to their profession.[29] The work that Artemidorus compiles in the *Oneirocritica* is dispersed and translated into many languages, setting up the future of dream interpretation so as to take the small details of the dreamer's life into account, treating the patient's dream as a physician would treat an infection.

Macrobius

The Roman scholar Macrobius (c. 400 CE) is best known for his work *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* (*Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*), a fourth century dream text that defines and categorizes prophetic dreams. This work is Macrobius's response to the last chapter of Cicero's *De re publica* (*On the Commonwealth*) called *Somnium Scipionis* (*Scipio's Dream*); written in the form of a Socratic dialogue, the text describes a dream experienced by the statesman Scipio Aemilianus, who lived about seventy years before Cicero. In this dream, Scipio Aemilianus is visited by his deceased adopted grandfather, the Roman general Scipio

[29] Artemidorus, p. 188, *Book 4*.

Africanus, who gives his grandson predictions on future events of his life and when they will happen.

In contrast to Cicero, whose focus was telling a story about political dynasty rather than the nature of dreaming, Macrobius was concerned with how to classify dreams and decided on five types of dreams: the enigmatic dream, the prophetic vision, the oracular dream, the nightmare, and the apparition dream.[30] The enigmatic dream was perhaps the most common type of dream, an ordinary dream with slightly vague and inscrutable components, like a riddle that needs to be solved. The enigmatic dream is identified as such "[…] because of the truths revealed to [Macrobius] were couched in words that hid their profound meaning and could not be comprehended without skillful interpretation."[31] But Macrobius was more interested in the prophetic vision—a prophecy in a dream which comes true in real life— and the oracular dream of a parent, priest, or a god appearing and telling the subject what actions to take or not take in the future to avoid disaster.[32] For Macrobius, nightmares were simply the results of mental or physical stress, and not worth interpreting. Similarly, the apparition dream holds no prophetic significance for Macrobius, as these are the dreams had in the moments between waking and sleeping, it is just your imagination flashing a random image at you before waking up completely.[33]

[30] Macrobius. Trans, Stahl, p. 88.
[31] Macrobius. Trans, Stahl. Macrobius also categorized the enigmatic dream as the only type of dream that does not contain real divination. p. 90.
[32] Macrobius. Trans, Stahl. p. 90.
[33] Macrobius. Trans, Stahl p. 89.

In his *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio,* written as an instruction manual for his son's future divination career, Macrobius is straightforward in explaining that all dreams are vague or confusing. This is especially true for oracular dreams in which a message is passed from dream figure to sleeping human, Macrobius declares that "[…] all portents and dreams conform to the rule that their announcements, threats, or warnings of imminent adversity are always ambiguous."[34] Macrobius seems to be covering all of his ground by stating that some dreams do come from gods or from the shades of dead ancestors, and some dreams are ordinary, but all of them are ambiguous and difficult to interpret correctly. Macrobius re-defines Aristotle's dream figure, or *phantasma,* into what he calls the prophetic vision. But Macrobius diverges from Aristotle and Artemidorus by fusing dream theory with theology; in the text of the *Commentary*, Macrobius says, "the purpose of the dream is to teach us that the souls of those who serve the state well are returned to the heavens after death and there enjoy everlasting blessedness."[35]

Over time, Macrobius's *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio* became a foundation for thinking about the nature, types, and true meaning of dreams throughout Shakespeare's era. Shakespeare himself seems to be open to both sides of the argument that dreams are divine and supernatural or that they are not and come from within. Macrobius's emphasis on the ambiguous nature of all dreams fits well with Shakespeare's First Tetralogy, where the dreams are often vague and mysterious

[34] Macrobius. Trans, Stahl, p. 118.
[35] Macrobius. Trans, Stahl. p. 92.

riddles, and potentially exciting spectacles to perform on a stage. Shakespeare seems to believe that dreams reveal something about the morality of the natural order, but always reminding the reader that this order is corrupted by human events. The dreams in the First Tetralogy also align with Macrobius's theory that a dream can be defined as many things, like a narration of deep unconscious thought, an imaginative replay of daytime events, or a space for prophetic declarations made by religious or authoritative dream figures.

This classification of dreams aligns more closely with how Shakespeare uses dreams in the First Tetralogy, where the dreams can be a device to introduce a character's innermost private thoughts but can also be visitations from figures who prophecy future events. Dreams in the First Tetralogy can manifest from stress happening in the dreamer's waking life or from a guilty conscience, or a combination of any of these components.

Shakespeare shows his audience dreams that could have a supernatural origin but could also plausibly originate from the body's stress and fears, or from the mind's wishes and fantasies. Each of the dreams in the series reveals clues concerning the morality in the First Tetralogy's natural order, and how that order becomes corrupted by human desire.

Shakespeare's Sources

The First Tetralogy of Shakespeare's histories is sourced heavily from the chronicle works of Edward Hall and Raphael Holinshed; Edward Hall's 1548 text *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke, and*

Holinshed's 1577 work the *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* were two of the most popular and significant chronicles in early modern England. Holinshed drew on the earlier work done by Hall for his chronicle, of which it is widely believed that Shakespeare used the second edition from 1587, edited by Abraham Fleming.[36] Holinshed's *Chronicles* covers the conflict known later as the War of the Roses, which he believed were not the result of divine punishment on humans.[37] Though it seems easier to view the tetralogy as a set of plays that contain a philosophy of history that shows the order of divine justice, Holinshed rejects divine justice, and it cannot be known whether Shakespeare thought there was divine justice inherent in the history.[38] Henry Ansgar Kelly writes that Holinshed did not "[…] regard the troubles of the Wars of the Roses as a punishment sent by God upon England" and that he also denied the suggestion that God decided to give Henry Tudor the throne in order to finally bring an end to England's period of punishment.[39] Holinshed's rejection of the Tudor myth also creates room for him to discuss other potential catalysts of major historical events. The *Chronicles* record the events before, during, and after the battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, including King Richard III's dream on the eve of the battle. This dream interests Holinshed, who writes that Richard's "strange vision" was so effective that it "[…] stuffed his head and troubled his mind

[36] Edward Burns, "Introduction" to *King Henry VI, Part 1.* Arden Shakespeare, Third Series. 2000. p. 22.
[37] Ronald Knowles. "Introduction" to *King Henry VI, Part 2.* Arden Shakespeare, Third Series, 2000. p. 53. (Citing H. A. Kelly, *Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories*, Cambridge, MA, 1970. p. 160).
[38] Knowles, p. 53.
[39] Henry Ansgar Kelly. *Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories*. Harvard UP, 1970. p. 158 & 160.

with manie busie and dreadfull imaginations […] his heart being almost damped, he prognosticated before the doubtfull chance of the battell to come; not using the alacritie and mirth of mind and countenance as he was accustomed to doo before he came toward the battell."[40] Here, Holinshed suggests that it was Richard III's dream the night before that distracted his usually keen mind, costing him the battle and his life. Holinshed describes a dream that he believes influenced major historical events, a method also used in the 1559 work *The Mirror for Magistrates*.

This text held up a metaphorical mirror to the royal and famous personages involved in this period of English history. *The Mirror for Magistrates* was written by a few different authors, who each give voices to dead figures in order to critically examine the political actions they took in life. *The Mirror* also describes the power of dreams and sleep have over some of these historical figures, like the Duke of Gloucester's wife, Dame Eleanor. In Shakespeare's version, Dame Eleanor narrates a dream of her sitting on the king's throne and being crowned. But in *The Mirror*, her story makes it sound like she experienced a series of dreams and recurring sleeping problems, "In the night time when I should take my rest | I weepe, I wayle, I weat my bed with teares, | And when dead sleape my spirites hath opprest, | Troubled with dreames I fantazy vayne feares."[41] *The Mirror* is a didactic work, meant to teach lessons on ethics while maintaining the political theology from St Augustine's *Civitate Dei*, which encouraged Christians to believe that God manipulates the

[40] Richard Hosley. *Shakespeare's Holinshed: An Edition of Holinshed's Chronicles (1587)*. New York, 1968. (iii.755/1/45).
[41] William Baldwin and Lily Bess Campbell. Sackville's "Induction," *The Mirror for Magistrates*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1960. First printed 1559. Lines 41-44.

governments and political movements of the world through divine intervention.[42] An example of this theology in *The Mirror* is in Lord Stanley's message of warning to Lord Hastings, "Hastings, away, in sleepe the gods foreshew | By dreadfull dreame, fell fates vnto vs two" in which the dream is a significant divine prophecy.[43] Though Hastings does not take the hint in *The Mirror* or in Shakespeare's play, there is an important connection drawn between dreams and the crucial choices made by English historical figures.

Using these chronicle sources in conjunction with dream texts of the early modern period, the sleep and dreams in the First Tetralogy may now be approached from a post-structuralist position as a single cohesive narrative addressing the nature of consciousness and the psyche through the interpretation of dreams and sleep.

Shakespeare's Contemporaries

Shakespeare took his plots and characters from the chronicle sources and the didactic patterns of history in *The Mirror*, but he also drew upon contemporary writing about sleep and dreams. Thomas Hill and his fellows were greatly indebted to dream manuscripts of the classical era, particularly the *Oneirocritica* by Artemidorus. The cultural work of dreaming in early modern England was founded on the general belief that a dream's meaning lies in the crossroads between the body's physiology, the workings of the supernatural world, and the acceptance of occasional prophecies and omens. Though Aristotle was not convinced that the supernatural explained the

[42] Burns, p. 107.
[43] *The Mirror for Magistrates*, lines 50-51.

source of dreams, most of the early modern dream authors writing in Shakespeare's time were likely using a combination of Aristotle along with other theorists who do not completely rule out the existence of paranormal dreams.

Thomas Hill

Thomas Hill made his name by writing the first popular book about gardening in English, "The profitable arte of gardening" in 1563. But it is pamphlet *The moste pleasante arte of the interpretacion of dreames,* first printed in London in 1571, and reprinted in 1576, that became incredibly well-known in early modern England. Hill offered his readers the interpretation of hundreds of dreams as metaphorical mirrors into an individual's physical and mental wellbeing and used well-known authors like Aristotle and Artemidorus or cited physicians Galen and Hippocrates as respected authorities on dream science. Hill's text will receive the most attention in the following chapters due to its immense popularity in Shakespeare's period. Despite the church's efforts to ban any reading that encouraged divination or attempts to foretell the future, Hill's text and the dream book genre remained widespread up to the sixteenth century.[44] Though Hill's intention is to instruct others in the practice of dream interpretation, many of his answers about the meaning of certain dreams are predictions about events in the dreamer's future.

Shakespeare evidently learned a lot from Hill about dream interpretation. Like the First Tetralogy, Hill is interested in all kinds of dreams and is open to the possibility

[44] Cappozzo Valerio. *Editions of the "Somniale Danielis" in Medieval and Humanist Literary Miscellanies*. 73-10 A(E). Indiana University. Bloomington, Indiana.

of either supernatural origins or natural ones. Hill tells his reader that his goal is to attempt to create order out of dreams and use them to explain that which was not understood. In one of his examples, he poses the question, why do people go blind? Without scientific evidence, Hill seeks to explain human misfortunes like blindness by explaining it came from a dream about the lighting a candle under the moon. "And if one dreame that hee lightethe a candell at the moone," Hill writes, "shal in shorte tyme after fall or become blynde, as hath bene founde true."[45] The explanation he provides is that blindness looms because the moon reflects light from the sun, it does not produce its own light. Hill tries to understand such a dream as metaphor by concluding that the dreamer's eyes will soon not be able to process light anymore. In his pamphlet, Hill writes that he seeks to find and "vse a surer and easyer way" for the common person to understand the secrets to interpreting dreams.[46] This easier way that Hill assures his reader of can be is his classification of dreams into four options: bodily, not bodily (coming from the outward environment), new events, and past events.[47]

Here, Hill is trying to understand how the dream world connects to the real world, what symbols and meanings are paralleled, and why he thinks humanism is better suited for figuring out dreams than medical science. He is building from Aristotle and Artemidorus in explaining that most dreams are a personal inward experience that can

[45] Hill, Fv7.
[46] Hill, Er3.
[47] Hill, Dv7.

be explained with factors in the material world, but leaving also space for the rare occasions when a dream might have a supernatural source.

Thomas Nashe

The extremely prolific Elizabethan pamphleteer Thomas Nashe produced a small book in 1594 entitled *The Terrors of the Night in which his chief aim was to debunk nightmares and frightening dreams as* products of superstition and an over-active imagination, rather close to Aristotle's views that dreams do not come from supernatural sources.

I argue that Nashe clarified for Shakespeare how the frightening and ambiguous nature of nighttime was a resource for the kind of plays Shakespeare was developing. In the First Tetralogy, Shakespeare is interested in the changing states of a person's mind in response to sensory perception and psychological experiences, like eventful dreaming and waking, or the contrast between day and the inhospitable night. In describing the frightening and ambiguous nature of night, Nashe pinpoints the uncanniness of tragic events that happen at night. The night's potential terrors then become especially frightening for the early modern sleeper, who believed their body to be in a state of complete vulnerability during sleep and dreaming, open to demonic visitation and possession.

Ghostly visits and apparitions likewise receive the same treatment, with Nashe dismissing sightings of spirits at night due to poor vision and hearing, among other potential causes such as alcohol-induced sightings. In terms of early modern dreaming, Nashe's work argues that the reader must take caution against the over-

interpretation of dreams. Here the author echoes much of the skepticism about the nature of dream interpretation in the early modern period, though he does save room to discuss visions, which he contends are different from dreams as they are sent from heaven. Here Nashe accepts some of Aristotle's view of the biological origin of dreams, but also includes exceptions for Christian theology.

As I will argue in the following chapters, the fear of interpreting dreams and nighttime events incorrectly, as Nashe recounts in *The Terrors of the Night*, informs the plays of the First Tetralogy, specifically the unease of the night watchmen, the wariness of nightfall, and night's increased potential of bringing divine portents foreshadowing great tragedy. While Nashe offers many insights to the true nature of the majority of dreams, he also readily admits belief in the claim of his title that "the terrors of the night [are] more than of the day, because the sins of the night surmount the sins of the day. By night-time came the deluge over the face of the whole earth; by night-time Judas betrayed Christ, Tarquin ravished Lucretia."[48]

Nashe's argument is a materialist one, explaining that most dreams happen because the sleeper over-ate or drank too much; one might hear wailing in your dream that is really just a dog howling near the sleeper. For Nashe, the material world answers most of the questions about why dreams happen the way they do.

[48] Thomas Nashe. *The Terrors of the Night. London, 1594.* Modern spelling edition Nina Green, 2002.

Ludwig Lavater

Swiss author and theologian Ludwig Lavater held quite different views from Nashe or Aristotle, instead contributing to the various superstitions surrounding sleep, apparitions in the night, and protecting oneself from the dangers of the night. Lavater published a Latin text on demonology – *De spectris, lemuribus et magnis atque insollitis fragoribus, —* in 1569, and *printed in English three years later in 1572, translated as Of Ghosts and spirits walking by night.* Lavater feared that the majority of spirits were truly demonic and capable of occupying the body of an unknowing sleeper and making their body perform unholy rites. Lavater's influence on Shakespeare is clear during moments in his plays when superstition or the supernatural is invoked. In *Hamlet* for example, Horatio expresses his worry that their ghostly figure is also of the demonic type and will tempt Hamlet "toward the flood" and convince him kill himself, to fling his body over "the dreadful summit of the cliff that beetles o'er his base into the sea."[49]

Lavater's pamphlet also promises explanation of *"sundry forewarnynges, which commonly happen before the death of menne, great slaughters & alterations of kyngdomes,*" matters of deep consideration in the First Tetralogy that reach catastrophic heights during the reign of Henry VI. Lastly, Lavater's text suggests intuitive knowledge about the nature of consciousness, in which the author states, "If a man see such a one walking in the night, either apparrelled or naked, and after

[49] William Shakespeare and Harold Jenkins. *Hamlet*. The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works, 2001. (I.iv.71).

here him say he was at the same time in his bed, he will straight thinke, it was his soule that he sawe."[50] Here, Lavater describes a situation in which you see someone you know walking alone at night, but later that same person says he was asleep in his bed at that very time. It was not the real person, but the person's soul that appeared and walked around. Lavater argues that a human soul or consciousness can travel to different locations and imitate human activity. Shakespeare constructs a world in which some of the dreams suggest that the dreamer's consciousness is moving around in a new location, such as the underworld or purgatory. Shakespeare perceives human experiences at night or in dreams as moments of helpless observation for the subject, such dreams can be influenced by the outward environment or from one's inward torment, or perhaps a little of both.

Popular Dream Beliefs, Magical Thinking, and Moral Health

Philip Henslowe's account book, known as Henslowe's Diary, is interesting in that it "[…] includes personal memoranda, spells and cures, folk wisdom and formulae of popularized magic" alongside business records and accounting notes.[51] The First Tetralogy is a bit like Henslowe's Diary, as it contains magical thinking but also skepticism and disbelief in the supernatural. Edward Burns asks a good question in his introduction to *Henry VI, Part 1*, "What is magic doing in this and other Elizabethan history plays anyway?"[52] History as a dramatic genre was still in its

[50] Ludwig Lavater. *Of ghostes and spirites walking by nyght.* London, 1596 edition. Chapter X. p. 49.
[51] Burns, p. 7.
[52] Burns, p. 36 & p. 61.

nascent stage during Shakespeare's time, and so there were less rules about what counted as history. Still, the question is worth considering because many key figures in the First Tetralogy truly do believe in magic, spells, and prophecies and operate their lives based on these beliefs.

This folkloric magic was also bound up with medical problems and ethics; as Arden editors Cox & Rasmussen state, "In the late sixteenth century, magical thinking was still deeply bound up with moral thinking,"[53] Generally, the early moderns believed that there was undeniably a relationship between dreams, health, *and* moral virtue. Many respected the authority of classical writers, such as Plutarch's citation of a passage from Plato's *Republic* in connection with his own view "[…] that people can measure their progress towards virtue by the kinds of dreams that they have (*Quomodo quis suos in virtute sentiat profectus* 82 F–83 E). Epicurus, Philo, Clement of Alexandria, and Synesius, among others, also claim that dreams reveal the moral character of the dreamer.[54]"

Sleep was understood to be the time when the body was at its most passive, most vulnerable state, and the dreams that came during sleep were then the signals of either good or bad physical health.[55] It follows that dreams of the prick of conscience nature reflect the dreamer's guilty moral conscience. So, if one's health was bad, it

[53] John D. Cox & Eric Rasmussen. "Introduction" to *King Henry VI, Part Three*. Arden Shakespeare, Third Series. London: 2001. p. 57.
[54] Pigman, G. W., and S. J. Wiseman. Review of *Reading the Early Modern Dream: The Terrors of the Night; Dreaming the English Renaissance: Politics and Desire in Court and Culture*, by K. Hodgkin, M. O'Callaghan, & C. Levin. *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 2, 2009, p 640.
[55]Janine Rivière. "Dreams in Early Modern England: Frameworks of Interpretation." Dissertation, University of Toronto. 2013. p. 62.

could be argued that one's *morals* were also in decline. This is much like one of the last pieces of news heard of King Edward IV, Richard's brother, as he is dying at the beginning of the play from what Richard says is gluttony and over-indulgence. Richard pretends to lament that the bedridden king "[…] hath kept an evil diet long, | And over-much consum'd his royal person," commenting on both Edward's overeating and his well-known affair with Mistress Shore.[56] As the priest Thomas Wright explains in his treatise *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604), "[…] we may confirme that olde saying to be true, *Animi mores corporis temperaturam sequntur*, the manners of the soule followe the temperature of the body."[57] Wright dedicated his work to Henry Wriothesley, third earl of Southampton, as an instruction manual on keeping the body and soul healthy by avoiding excessive passions.[58] Learning how to moderate one's passions, Wright argued, was not only the key to a prosperous Christian life, but was also the ideal state of morality all should aspire to.

The question is not whether magical thinking exists in these plays, but how it affects moral thinking. Why is Shakespeare showing us what sort of political disasters can occur in a world where dreaming of the supernatural and the natural are both part of the world's order?[59] In the late medieval period, the space of a dream became the essential venue for the merging of the moral and the medical, as "new medical and scientific texts to the Latin West gave the body and bodily process a new prominence

[56] William Shakespeare and James R. Siemon. *King Richard III*. Arden Shakespeare, Third Series. London: 2000. (I.i.139-140).
[57] Wright, Thomas. *The Passions of the Minde in Generall.* London, 1604. D3r-D4v.
[58] Lawrence D. Green and James J. Murphy. *Renaissance rhetoric short title catalogue, 1460-1700* (2nd ed.). Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate. 2006. p. 465.
[59] Burns, p. 58.

in European dream theory."[60] Though it seems odd to include magic in a history play, Burns writes that magic is really being used as a dramatic manifestation of communal fears in an uncertain world.[61] In the opening scene of *1 Henry VI*, the death of Henry V and the ineptitudes of England's war on France are blamed on "magic verses" by French sorcery.[62] The lament and confusion over Henry V's death—and the necessity of placing blame somewhere— come from a desire to better understand the body.

In the early modern period, the human body was always in a state of exposure during sleep. The sleeping body was then constantly in some danger from malevolent spirits or demons that may trap themselves inside the sleeper's body. Sleep's apparent imitation of death was a disturbing thought for many and inspired many stories and folktales that warned of the dangers of too much sleep. As European society approached Age of Enlightenment, these stories remained popular in Shakespeare's lifetime and in the years after his death, such as *The True Relation of Two Wonderfull Sleepers* (1646), which relates the tale of "[…] Elizabeth Jenkins, who felt "a slothfull Guest" inside her, fell asleep for five days, and then died."[63] This pamphlet claims that sleep, which should be restorative, could be capable of killing someone not otherwise ill; the author includes the chilling reminder of "how near of kinne is

[60] Steven Kruger. "Authority in the Late Medieval Dream," Peter Brown (ed.), *Reading Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams from Chaucer to Shakespeare*. Oxford UP, 1999. p. 55.
[61] Burns, p. 38.
[62] William Shakespeare and Edward Burns. *King Henry VI, Part One*. Arden Shakespeare, Third Series. London: 2000. (I.i.27).
[63] Matthew J. Rigilano. "Waking the Living Dead-Man: The Biopolitics of Early Modern Sleep," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 2017 Fall. 17(4): 75-112. University of Pennsylvania Press. p. 81.

sleep to death."[64] While not getting enough sleep poorly affects one's health, too much sleep would kill you. Any abnormalities in sleep were then a cause for extreme concern, such as sleepwalking or talking in your sleep. As Sasha Handley explains, this would be considered a "violation of sleep's sanctity, marked as most unnatural," the doctor in *Macbeth* states, "A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching!"[65]

Chapter Summaries

Each of the following chapters focuses on scenes in which Shakespeare's characters dream, sleep, debate the meaning and nature of their dreams, and apply what they understand about dream interpretation and other visionary experiences to their reality. The First Tetralogy tells the tale of the aftermath that occurs from the death of King Henry V; the first scene is at Henry V's funeral, and quickly establishes that his son Henry VI succeeds as an infant king. Young Henry VI can only rule under the Protectorate of his uncles, who further destabilize England through their petty jealousy and bitter rivalry.[66] The next plays in sequence, *Part 2* and *Part 3*, describe the civil war that breaks out between the York family and the reigning Lancastrian family. Then in *Richard III*, Richard of Gloucester becomes a tyrant king and is defeated at the Battle of Bosworth.

[64] Ibid.
[65] Sasha Handley. *Sleep in Early Modern England*. New Haven Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016. p. 129; William Shakespeare and Kenneth Muir. *Macbeth.* The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works, 2001. (V.i.10–12).
[66] Graham Holderness. *Shakespeare: The Histories*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. p. 109.

Chapter 1 examines sleeping and waking in the context of nocturnal warfare in *1 Henry VI*. The terror of the night and limitless darkness is controlled by the practice of watching—staying awake on purpose—but ends up being one of the root causes for military losses in the play. As Thomas Nashe displays in his introduction to *The Terrors of the Night, the early modern attitude towards the night was one of extreme caution,* "As touching the terrors of the night, they are as many as our sinnes. The Night is the Diuells Blacke booke, wherein hee recordeth all our transgressions."[67] Walking outside at night would make one extremely vulnerable not just to thieves, but to the devil who is about and actively searching for any wrongdoing. These dangers leave the characters in *1 Henry VI* exposed during key scenes; to Nashe the fear of the night's darkness is interminable, he writes, "yet feare hath no limits, for to hell and beyond hell, it sinkes downe and penetrates."[68] The sinking fear that happens at night also plays with human perception, turning the any unknown factor into an immediate threat. Lavater includes an anecdote about (Charles) sending scouts on horseback in hopes of getting an idea of the number of enemies. But the scouting mission takes place in the dark, and the horsemen first see vast numbers of spears and pikes, but on closer looking, they realized the pikes were thistles planted in the field. The story is a reminder that "the night beguileth mens eyes. And therefore, none ought to maruell, if trauellers towardes night or at midnight, mistake stones, trées, stubbes, or such like, to be sprites or elues."[69] Such a

[67] Nashe, Br1.
[68] Nashe, unnumbered page. Image 24 on ProQuest.
[69] Lavater, Chapter III. Cv2. p. 20.

confusion may also be due to poor quality or not enough sleep, as this chapter will describe in more detail.

The consequence of watching is that the body does not get enough sleep, but sleeping too much in *1 Henry VI* is also dangerous; though sleep was understood as a crucial time for the body and soul to rest, to oversleep or to sleep at a bad time risks defeat in the drawn-out Hundred Years' War. The argument for this chapter is that the play characterizes sleep as neglectful, indulgent, and lazy. Sleep is the source of the lax attitude that allows Joan la Pucelle and her soldiers to sneak through the city gates of the English-held city Rouen, but it is also the English bane and reason for Henry V's death.

Joan herself represents the hope of the French army, a helper sent by God to defeat the English, but she is also characterized by others as a practitioner of witchcraft. I argue that the famous scene in Act V, where Joan appears to summon devils, should be read as a dream vision. This reading changes the understanding of what dreams and visions can be in this play, while also fulfilling the audience's expectation to see the character known for their powerful visions actually having just such a vision on stage. The dream figures that emerge to her appear as fiends, or demons, and silently refuse Joan. Reading this scene as a dream that ends with Joan's military defeat and capture by the English shows the progressive psychological deterioration and melancholy she experiences commanding the French

army.[70]Although the play gestures towards warfare as a romanticized dream of the past, chivalry in the play world is bound to fail.[71]

Joan's dream vision also raises questions about the nature of heroism versus cowardice. Is it wrong for Joan to ask for supernatural help in her dream? Lady Macbeth makes the same request, "Come, you spirits | That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, | And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full | Of direst cruelty!" calling on demonic aid to fully achieve her ambition.[72]

In Chapter 2, the relationship between dreams and human psychology comes to the fore as the stability of the royal court comes under the pressure of personal ambition. In *2 Henry VI,* Humphrey the Duke of Gloucester begins the play in the role of Lord Protector over newlywed King Henry VI, but Gloucester is stripped from his title and does not survive the play. These events were set off by a conversation Gloucester has with his wife Dame Eleanor about their respective dreams the night before and what they might mean. Gloucester's dream is violent, he sees his official staff of office broken in two by his political enemies, and the heads of two dukes impaled on the sharp ends. His wife, Eleanor, explains that his dream is proof of his authority in court—whoever crosses Gloucester loses their heads. Eleanor narrates her own dream, which showed her sitting in the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey, with the current monarchs King Henry and Queen Margaret yielding their power to her. Both characters have dreams which serve as the spark for the violence

[70] Burns, p. 33. "Michael Hattaway follows A.W. Sclegel in reading this and the scene after her capture as stages in a progressive psychological deterioration."
[71] Knowles, p. 48.
[72] (I.v.39-42.), *Macbeth*.

that takes place in this play; Eleanor thinks her dream is encouraging her to weaken Henry and take his role as the monarch, Humphrey believes his own dream is too vague to interpret properly. These dreams reveal the psychology influencing the middle plays in this tetralogy; Eleanor's excessive ambition is paralleled by the Duke of York and his son Richard, who both create extraordinary circumstances in order to reach for the crown amidst the chaos. The dream Gloucester describes shows his consciousness in a state of utter fear, but also in the dangerous position of resisting the reality that the world is changing; if Gloucester does not change with it, he becomes obsolete.

The argument for this chapter continues to examine the role of dreams and sleep in a neglectful rule, with the additional problem that the medieval doctrine of *rex exsomnis* demands that a king keep constant watch over his kingdom by never sleeping. Lastly, the chapter explores sleep's proximity to death with the recurring image of the deathbed. The beggar who makes up a fake dream uses dream interpretation as a method to swindle others; Eleanor is also deceived when sham sorcerers inflate her ambitious dream. The two episodes pair well, as both point to the issues of humans using dreams as roadmaps to achieve higher social status in a world with magical thinking that takes the supernatural seriously.

Using episodes such as the false dream at St. Albans to reflect the courtly world, and Cardinal Winchester's two dreams to expose the underworld, this chapter examines each dream as Shakespeare's medium for addressing the status of history in the play. The structure of Chapter 2 explores reading *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI* as a

united effort that can be discussed in the same chapter.[73] In *3 Henry VI* the dreams continue to take on the role of symbolizing ambition and fantasy, especially those emphasizing personal and selfish desires that affect historical events. During the battle of Towton, King Henry breaks away from the fighting to imagine a carefree life that includes sleep that is free from the burdens of being king. Like Richard of Gloucester, he "dreams" of having a different role in an alternate world, but in this case, a world in which he is a "homely swain," or a simple shepherd.[74] When Henry shrinks away from his duties, his rival, Edward IV, names himself the true king of England. To prove his right to the crown, the play text shows three watchmen discussing Edward's choice not to allow himself any sleep. As Henry VI dreams of moving down the social ladder, Eleanor and Richard's dream is to move up to the highest possible rung—both are extreme and selfish measures that are inspired by the power and language of dreaming.

The last dream in this chapter is Richard of Gloucester's figurative dream to have the crown for himself. If Richard did not frame his desire to be king as a dream, then he would have to face what the dream really is: treason and filicide. Graham Holderness argues that "Such 'dreams' are the means by which history is guided and

[73] Some revisionists argue that the quarto of *Part 2*, called *The First part of the Contention betwixt the two famous Houses of Yorke and Lancaster* and the octavo of *Part 3, The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke, and the death of good King Henrie the Sixt, with the whole contention betweene the two Houses Lancaster and Yorke* were two parts of one play that Shakespeare later revised to become the two First Folio plays *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI*. The two plays are continuous, it is clear that only a little time has passed since the ending of *Part 2* and the beginning of *Part 3*.
[74] (II.v.22), *3 Henry VI.*

directed: in Richard's consciousness they are both ancillary to, and constitutive of, very precise plans of historical sequence and succession […]."[75]

The subject of Chapter 3 is *Richard III*, the final episode of the story. This is the play that contains the most references to dreaming than any of the other plays of the tetralogy. The power of dreaming has reached its apex in this play, with Richard telling the audience in his opening soliloquy that he has learned how to weaponize dreams and the culture of dream interpretation against his family. The same scene (Act I, scene i) shows Richard is successful, and has spread the rumor of a prophecy that turns King Edward IV against their middle brother George, Duke of Clarence. After he is taken to the Tower of London, Clarence has his own dream, which he then wakes and narrates to the Tower guard with exceptionally rich language and imagery.

Chapter 3 concludes with examining Richard and Richmond's shared dream in Act V of the play, the night before the Battle of Bosworth. This shared dream is the dramatic height of the tetralogy, where a procession of Richard's victims appears as dream figures to shame and curse him but also to offer kind words of encouragement to Richmond to win the battle. Many dreamers in the First Tetralogy wake and feel guilt or shame, but in *Richard III*, Richard wakes from his dream and refuses to feel ashamed about what the dream showed him. This chapter's argument is that weaponizing dreams to use as different dramatic functions makes pageantry, history, and rhetorical power a political phenomenon. Clarence's dream foretells his ensuing death, but the account he provides gives him sympathy. His reappearance as a dream

[75] Holderness, p. 85.

figure, along with ten others, is a scene that takes some of Richard's skills in speech and performance and turns it against him. The play ends with Richard's death on the battlefield, but the dream procession reminds the audience why he must die and recapitulates the scope of his crimes. However skeptical Shakespeare is about the order of the natural world, there turns out to be some form of belated justice in the tetralogy, though there are no major characters left to enjoy it.

In Shakespeare's play world, he takes on a part-Aristotelian, parti-Nashe view in which dreams are not divinely sent, but are unique to each individual. Shakespeare applies this to the stage, writing the dreams of the First Tetralogy almost as a character study that performs either desire and greed, or fear and suffering. Like Macrobius, Shakespeare appears to agree that all dreams are vague; this quality allows them to have multiple meanings at the same time. Shakespeare's contemporaries Hill, Nashe, and Lavater complete his worldview, as all leave room in their writing to acknowledge that supernatural figures appearing in dreams could be real, but one must exercise caution and good judgment when interpreting such as dream. The result from leaning into the ambiguous nature of dreams allows Shakespeare to set up more dramatic opportunities and suggestions throughout each play.

Whether it was Shakespeare's own invention or a historical fact (Hall and Holinshed), every dream and episode of abnormal sleep connect to each other, unifying the four plays in a way that defies genre conventions and presents the story of English history unfolding through a new and unique lens. The historical chronicles

and the dream theorists are at two opposite ends of the spectrum, there are either dreams that came from an inward human cause or are dreams that are sent from elsewhere by supernatural forces. Shakespeare is charting a middle course in order to keep both possibilities alive for his theatrical audience. Although the dream writers Hill, Nashe, and Lavater do not align neatly with each other, their contribution to popular contemporary dream interpretation allows Shakespeare the freedoms he takes with crafting a narrative, a potential source, and an outcome for each dream in his First Tetralogy plays. Through the framework of early modern literature on dreams and sleep, these four plays reveal the crucial relationship between deep unconscious thought, magical thinking, the human mind's tendency to imaginatively replay daytime events and the choices that shape the course of history.

Chapter 1

"Sleeping neglection": Examining Waking, Watching, and Visions in *1 Henry VI*

Sleep is a state of ultimate vulnerability in *1 Henry VI*, whether one is nobility or a common soldier, the characters in this play typically prefer staying awake at night—watching—rather than sleeping.[1] The plays take place in an already watchful society, but during a time of civil strife, that vigilance becomes insomnia. It makes sense then, that in this opening play of Shakespeare's First Tetralogy, excessive watching does not help matters, it only highlights the world of exhausted soldiers fighting in the Hundred Years' War. The play begins with a funeral service for King Henry V, with the tone of ultimate woe in Bedford's opening lines stressing the size of their loss, "England ne'er lost a king of so much worth."[2] This solemn memorial that is attended by the English nobility quickly turns sour when two messengers enter at different times to inform the lords that the English army has lost control over a massive amount of territories in France. This abysmal news, delivered on top of the heavy loss of Henry V's death, causes the nobles to jump into action to find munitions, plan a rescue for their captured leader Talbot, and quickly crown infant Henry as king. This opening scene begins to construct this play's particular universe as one that is ruled by a lack of clear purpose, where crucial assistance arrives too late or not at all, and the government is run by mishaps.[3] Therefore, the instances of sleep

[1] In the medieval period, watching was necessary because the night was a vulnerable time, not just from enemy attack, but from spirits that could get inside sleeper's body while their guard is down. Aristotle says that humans are especially vulnerable in the nighttime because it was easier for outside "impulses" to enter into a sleeper's body. Aristotle, 51.463b31-464a19. p. 113.
[2] (I.i.7), *1 Henry VI.*
[3] Burns, p. 6.

and dreams in *1 Henry VI* reflect these waking woes: sleep that is disrupted or avoided entirely, and dreams of neglect or of help that is not coming. The sleeping body in the early modern era was a vulnerable body, susceptible to attack, to mischief, and to magic.

1.1 The 'Sleeping Corpse' of Henry V

Shakespeare's First Tetralogy presents a world in which achieving military victory, heroism in battle, and acquiring honor and glory for oneself and one's nation are the central existential concerns, and this is especially so in *1 Henry VI*. However, the proliferation of magic in the play communicates an anxiety about attaining this honor.[4] These two preoccupations converge as the play opens with the English court mourning the death of King Henry V, when Exeter asks, "shall we think the subtle-witted French | Conjurers and sorcerers, that, afraid of him, | By magic verses have contrived his end?"[5] Any tragic events that come unexpectedly, any martial threats, are attributed to magic— and magic is fused with demonology and devil worship in early modern England.[6]

The breakdown of the male martial body becomes a running theme in the play for the English nobles, as if in losing Henry V, the English officers have also lost their own vigor and confidence in the war effort against France. In the moment a messenger enters and recites the list of territories recently lost, Bedford responds in a

[4] Burns, p. 38.
[5] (I.i.25-7), *1 Henry VI*.
[6] Burns, p. 36.

particular way that invokes sleep, "What sayest thou man, before dead Henry's corse? | Speak softly, or the loss of those great towns | Will make him burst his lead and rise from death."[7] Bedford speaks these lines as though the corpse of the king is not truly a dead body, but rather a sleeping body. Further, in this imagined sleep, Henry V can also hear the proceedings and will awaken from his sleeping death in utter rage that much of the land he conquered during his lifetime has been lost, his life's work undone. Bedford seems to process his grief by presenting Henry V's death as a long sleep and imagines further that the corpse can hear the discussion and will burst out of the lead lined coffin and "rise from death" as an epic hero leaving the ancient underworld might do.

Bedford speaks these hypotheticals about the properties of the dead king's body with a tone of fear and dread, that it would be terrible to disturb the rest of their fallen king, and how it would torment the peacefully sleeping soul of Henry V to be woken by news of failure. But there is also a suggestion of a subtle longing in the lines, as if to say, if *only* we could somehow reanimate and wake Henry V's corpse so that he can lead England again. The characters in *1 Henry VI* often look nostalgically backwards to the now mythologized figure of King Henry V; he gains an almost godly or supernatural narrative as a fallen hero-king who had the natural ability to inspire, and who led the English army to victory at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. This transforms the recently dead Henry V into England's savior who paradoxically watches over the land while in his eternal sleep as the *rex exsomnis*, or sleepless king,

[7] (I.i.62-4), *1 Henry VI.*

whose watch never ends.[8] The *rex exsomnis* figure is seen in Shakespeare's later history plays, such as King Henry IV's inability to sleep in *2 Henry IV,* and Henry V's nighttime wanderings on the eve of the battle of Agincourt.

Bedford's lines concerning the state of the king's body also tell us something about the early modern belief that when a body is in the state of sleep, that person's soul is left exposed both to the events happening in the waking world, but also open to malevolent magic and spirits. Though Exeter's accusation that the French are dishonorably using magic and spells aid them in battles, the English now find themselves in a similar situation in which they are hoping their recently dead king will somehow reanimate during his funeral. Imagining Henry V's corpse as both sleeping and dead at the same time follows the ancient Greek belief that the gods of sleep (*Hypnos*) and death (*Thanatos*) are twin brothers, sons to Nyx, the goddess of night.[9] However, the bitter finality of Henry V's death is emphasized by the late king's uncle, Exeter, who dismisses Bedford's wild hope stating, "Henry is dead, and never shall revive: | Upon a wooden coffin we attend."[10] The coffin is described here in the colloquial sense of "wooden" to mean lifeless, dull, or flat.[11] Despite the reality of these lines by Exeter, Henry V's brother Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, picks up on the idea of his return put forth by Bedford. "If Henry were recalled to life again | These news would cause him once more yield the ghost" says Duke Humphrey,

[8] Benjamin C. Parris. *Vital Strife*: *Sleep, Insomnia, and the Early Modern Ethics of Care*. Cornell UP, 2022, p. 98.
[9] Claude Fretz. *Dreams, Sleep and Shakespeare's Genres*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. p. 14.
[10] (I.i.18-19), *1 Henry VI.*
[11] Burns, p.117, footnote 19.

echoing the vain hope that Henry V was merely in a death-like sleep and somehow may be "recalled to life again".[12]

In her first scene of *1 Henry VI*, Act I scene ii, the character Joan la Pucelle convinces the Dauphin and head of the French army, Charles, that she is the exact person he needs to manipulate Henry V's death to their advantage. Joan astutely observes that with Henry V's death, an English dynasty is coming to an end, and now England has overextended its resources in this war. Joan wants to be the one responsible for end of Henry V's legacy and here seeks to convince Charles that any glory England had in the past is now scattered.

Glory is like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought.
With Henry's death the English circle ends:
Dispersed are the glories it included.[13]

Unlike the English court in the previous scene, Joan states definitively that Henry V is dead and gone, and sees her identity as wrapped up in the mission to dissolve his heroic legacy.[14] In order to accomplish this, Joan will utilize any means possible to drive the remaining English army out of France, employing disguise, surprise attacks at night, and calling for help from demonic fiends. Rather than reading Joan as a practitioner of witchcraft and a villain, this chapter seeks to reshape the fiend-summoning narrative as Joan's dream-like and complex emotional response to the high-pressure nature of martial achievement. Joan is only confirmed as a witch because the men of

[12] (I.i.66-7), *1 Henry VI*.
[13] (I.ii.133-137), *1 Henry VI*.
[14] Phyllis Rackin. "Women's roles in the Elizabethan history plays," *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's History Plays*. ed. Michael Hattaway. Cambridge UP, 2002. p. 74.

the play have decided that it is so; the proof of her sorcery relies entirely on a scene that reads more like a terrifying dream vision— a nightmare of all her greatest fears coming true (a French military defeat; her impending capture and helplessness; her divine gift being interpreted as infernal).

Using the popular early modern dream theory text, *The moste pleasuante arte of the interpretacion of dreames* (1576) by Thomas Hill, this chapter argues that Shakespeare intended his audiences to understand Joan's summoning as a dream vision, which for early moderns was caused by an overabundance of melancholy. Hill's pamphlet echoes the common belief that such an imbalance of the melancholy humour resulted in a particularly vivid dream life."[15]

1.2 Watching and Waking

Sleep is a negative and weak trait to succumb to during wartime in *1 Henry VI*, so it follows that sleepiness can be blamed for the forfeiture of lands in France conquered by Henry V. In Act IV scene iii, the English are at a disadvantage on the battlefield before Bordeaux, but Sir William Lucy takes a moment to briefly speak a soliloquy, explaining that an atmosphere of sleepy laziness, akin to a betrayal, is what caused the inattention to and eventual loss of Henry V's land in France:

> Sleeping neglection doth betray to loss
> The conquest of our scarce cold conqueror,
> That ever-living man of memory,
> Henry the Fifth.[16]

[15] Steven Kruger. "Authority in the Late Medieval Dream," from Peter Brown (ed.), *Reading Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams from Chaucer to Shakespeare*. Oxford UP, 1999. p. 54.
[16] (IV.iii.49-52), *1 Henry VI.*

Lucy describes the "sleeping neglection" that lost the territories gained by Henry V as the same lackadaisical and mild attitude that presently threatens additional territorial losses for England, and perhaps the loss of the war. The fractured and hostile feelings created by the English nobles results in a disastrous scenario in which York and Somerset's "sleeping neglection" is their failure to assist Talbot in battle. This moment is truly an abandonment of England's heroic legacy and of chivalrous behavior for the English. Lucy's themes of carelessness and neglect paired with sleeping is a remembrance of Act I scene i, in which the nobles ponder the vain hope that Henry V's "scare cold" corpse is sleeping rather than dead, "ever-living" in their memories. But as English commanders start to fall in the war, it becomes apparent that all the noblemen who knew Henry V are dying or dead; their memories of him erased and the English army discouraged, just what Joan la Pucelle hopes for.

The play connects sleep and Joan together as early as Act II, but rather than linking her sleep and dreams to weakness, Joan boldly declares herself invincible, "Sleeping or waking must I still prevail," despite the French army being caught off guard and unready.[17] Joan is perhaps the most compelling character in the play, so this optimism regarding sleep and waking is not the case for the common soldier. As Act II scene i opens at night, a French Sentinel is given the order by his Sergeant to "[…] take your places and be vigilant. | If any noise or soldier you perceive | Near to the walls, by some apparent sign | Let us have knowledge at the court of

[17] (II.i.56), *1 Henry VI.*

guard."[18] Alone at his watch, the Sentinel states his longing for the comfort of sleep in a bed, "Thus are poor servitors, | When others sleep upon their quiet beds, | Constrained to watch in darkness, rain and cold."[19] The Sentinel's tone suggests resentment towards the Sergeant who assigned his watch, not only in the terror of the darkness, but in miserably cold and rainy conditions too. When the English do mount their night attack, the cold and lonely Sentinel fails to alert the sleeping aristocratic French commanders, and so they enter the scene "half unready," or incompletely dressed.[20] It would seem reasonable that soldiers who stay awake and keep guard at night should meet with success, but in this play, watching does not help in the way it is meant to; instead of offering security, watching only highlights a world of sleepy and exposed soldiers.

If sleep secures the body and soul, then frequent poor sleep or disrupted sleep could drive a person to madness or extreme illness. The consequences of poor sleep are weaponized in the play when the French army is forced to use fatigued soldiers to stand watch against sudden attack. The mood in the play is one of exhaustion, where commanders order sleepy soldiers to "be vigilant" and stand watch for arduous lengths of time, causing chaos and unreadiness.[21]

The tactics of waking the enemy suddenly while using the cover of night and darkness leave the French soldiers terrorized, seen in the brief exchange between a concealed French Gunner and a Boy in Act I scene iv. The Gunner describes his

[18] (II.i.1-4), *1 Henry VI.*
[19] (II.i.5-7), *1 Henry VI.*
[20] (II.i.38-39) SD, *1 Henry VI.*.
[21] (II.i.1), *1 Henry VI.*

prolonged and patient watch for the ideal moment to shoot at the English lords in the nearby tower with his cannon. But the Gunner's body has reached its limit, and he must rest after his long watch and transfer the task of watching onto his son, the Gunner's Boy, stating, "And even these three days have I watched if I could see them. | Now do thou watch, for I can stay no longer."[22] The Gunner has stayed awake for three days in a row watching for a glimpse of the English lords in the tower, which strategically overlooks the main bridge into Orleans. It is significant that the Boy only responds after the Gunner exits, "Father […] I'll never trouble you, if I may spy them," revealing that he does not intend to alert the Gunner if he spots the English, rather he wants to be the one to make the fatal shot.[23] This line spoken by the Boy confirms his desire for a moment of brief personal glory, rather than a communal victory, which seems to be a much stronger cause for action in this play.

True to his plan, the Boy sees the English commanders appear and rather than wake the Gunner, he lights the cannon with a linstock and fires it himself. The resulting explosion is catastrophic for the English, fatally injuring the Earl of Salisbury and striking Sir Thomas Gargrave (who then dies offstage), while only Talbot is left unscathed. Salisbury's death represents the fallen state of the old guard and the dying influence of Henry V's mythic status; as a descendant of King Edward III, Salisbury's death also marks the decline of England's chivalric era.[24] England's

[22] (I.iv.16-17), *1 Henry VI.*
[23] (I.iv.20-21), *1 Henry VI*
[24] Talbot's eulogy to Salisbury helps to explains his part in the myth of Henry V as a military prodigy, "Henry the Fifth he first trained to the wars." (I.iv.78), *1 Henry VI.*

losses are compounded as the French army considers the explosion as a signal to attack and retake Orleans.

Though the French attack is briefly successful, it seems the Gunner's Boy likely did not receive the glory he hoped for, as he failed to kill the highest valued English target, Talbot, called "the scourge of France."[25] The sleepiness of the Gunner does give the Boy his chance at glory, but perhaps if the Master Gunner had been awake and himself had made the shot, he could have eliminated Talbot. The effects of long periods of watching during wartime create a situation where the opportunity to kill Talbot strangely falls onto a French child. The Boy's youth and the likelihood that he did not have to join his master in watching for three days makes him the ideal character to fire the cannon; his counterpart is Joan, another young French soldier of low social rank who defies patriarchal order. Though the French win the day, the exhaustion expressed by the Gunner will turn Fortune's wheel again in Act II scene i, as the French will be asleep and unready when the English recapture Orleans. From this perspective, the war between France and England goes beyond territorial claims, it is a war of age versus youth, high social rank versus low, and chivalric versus underhanded tactics.[26]

[25] (II.iii.14), *1 Henry VI*.
[26] Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin. *Engendering a Nation: A Feminist Account of Shakespeare's English Histories*, Taylor & Francis Group, 1997. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, p. 54.

1.3 Joan's Watch

Act II scene i continues to pay careful attention to wakefulness with the nighttime surprise attack on Orleans by Talbot and the English army. Despite the presence of the Sentinel and Sergeant in the first lines of the scene, the French watch utterly fails to maintain the vigilance required to survive in this war. As Talbot surveys the scene and prepares to scale the town walls, he also comments on how the lackadaisical behavior of the French has created this easy opportunity for the English. "This happy night the Frenchmen are secure, | Having all day caroused and banqueted" is Talbot's condemnation of the Frenchmen's eagerness to celebrate a small victory by drinking and eating the day away.[27] In Talbot's use of "secure," he means they are overconfident, with the sense of smug satisfaction from their recent acquisition of Orleans—a brief success that originated from the sleeping Gunner leaving the Boy alone with the cannon.[28]

When the English lords enter the scene, the stage directions specify that the French, *"Enter…half ready, and half unready,"* that is to say, all of them are incompletely dressed in only half an outfit and must rapidly finish dressing and arm themselves.[29] The rough and panicked awakening from sleep is described by French commander Reignier, "'Twas time, I trow, to wake and leave our beds | Hearing alarums at our chamber-doors." The tone of near disbelief is echoed in the Duke of Alençon's reply, "Of all exploits since first I followed arms, | Ne'er heard I of a

[27] (II.i.11-12), *1 Henry VI.*
[28] SD, (II.i.38-39). The more common use of "secure" to mean safe is intended later, in the Dauphin's line, "we'll sleep secure in Rouen." (III.ii.18), *1 Henry VI.*
[29] Burns, p. 165

warlike enterprise | more venturous or desperate than this."[30] Alençon's lines invoke the elder generation's fading memory of chivalric warfare, a time when no commander would have risked his men or his reputation to undertake such a dangerous attack under minimal visibility. The era of gentlemanly warfare is taking its last breaths in this play, as both the English and the French use the cover of night as an unheroic, but effective, tactic to torment the opposing side in a cycle of paranoid waking and exhausted watching.

The failed French watch in this scene is immediately blamed on Joan, as Charles the Dauphin accuses her of lying— "thou deceitful dame"— about her divine power that was meant to keep them safe.[31] Joan insists that her power remains intact as she fiercely defends herself to the French lords, "Or will you blame and lay the fault on me? | Improvident soldiers, had your watch been good, | This sudden mischief never could have fallen" presenting herself as hyper-vigilant, while the men are improvident and lack the intuition to anticipate the English army's next attack.[32] The tone of disgust and disappointment in Joan's accusation— "had your watch been good"— is insubordinate, disregarding the vast difference in social status between her and the Dauphin.[33] It seems as though acting aggressively like the men is the only way Joan can keep her position stable in this male-dominated martial world.

[30] (II.i.41-45), *1 Henry VI*.
[31] (II.i.50), *1 Henry VI*.
[32] "improvident, adj., sense 3". *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP. The *OED* cites Joan's line as the example. (II.i.57-59), *1 Henry VI*.
[33] Burns, p. 166, footnote 58, Here Joan is "deliberately ignoring their status in a way prepared for by the Sentinel's speech at the beginning of the scene (5-7)."

Act II scene i captures an atmosphere obsessed with victory, and especially concerned with whose fault it would be if victory proved elusive.[34] The feeling of win at all costs envelops the play, and each key figure is exposed to the questioning of others, making conversation itself a contest for the wittiest tongue.[35] Joan's apprehension in this scene— "Question, my lords, no further of the case | 'How, or which way?'"—suggests that the majority of the blame would surely fall onto her were the French army to be ultimately unsuccessful and lose the war.[36] Here Joan attempts to smooth things over and divert attention away from wondering aloud who might be to blame. In such a situation, her death would allow the French collective consciousness to reassert its masculine military and political identity.[37] It is the stress of this unsustainable situation, in which Joan is only safe to be a female soldier when she is winning, that would explain how an excess of melancholy black bile causes a dream sequence in which she sees spirits.

In the aftermath of nighttime attack, the Bastard of Orleans calls Talbot a "fiend of hell" for surprising them by night, but no one in the play truly believes that Talbot, who represents the masculine might of England, is associated with demons, sorcery, or the devil.[38] But earlier in the same scene, Bedford—who holds the title Lord Regent of France, substitute to the king— mocks the Dauphin who "wrongs his fame"

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[34] Charles the Dauphin continues to lay blame on others, when he fiercely turns on Alençon in this scene for his unit's poor night watch, "Duke of Alençon, this was your default," (II.i.60), *1 Henry VI*.
[35] Emrys Jones. *The Origins of Shakespeare.* Oxford UP, 1977. p. 14.
[36] (II.i.72-3), *1 Henry VI*.
[37] Nancy A. Gutierrez "Gender and Value in '1 Henry VI': The Role of Joan de Pucelle," *Theatre Journal*, Johns Hopkins UP, vol. 42, no. 2 (1990). pp. 183–93. p. 193.
[38] (II.i.46), *1 Henry VI*. The image of fiend(s) from hell will return to describe Joan's dream figures in Act V, scene ii.

by consorting with Joan and consenting "To join with witches and the help of hell."[39] When Talbot refers to Joan in Act III scene iii as, "Puzel, that witch, that damned sorceress," he utilizes the patriarchal privilege embedded in his language to give more authority and credibility to the statement.[40] Talbot and Bedford's words as Englishmen hold more weight and believability, while Joan's position as a French peasant woman wearing men's clothes subordinates her, and casts all of her motivations and pledges into suspicion.

Joan la Pucelle is confined to a strict binary position in the play as the French construct a narrative of her character as somehow simultaneously a saintly figure and a cross-dresser of loose morals, while the English construct her as a witch communing with hellish devils.[41] A rejection of these two archetypes allows for the far more fascinating claim that Joan's character signifies a massive threat to the patriarchal order, vertical class structure, and customs of gender and dress—and *this*, rather than the summoning scene, is why she is labeled a witch.[42]

An exploration of what heroism is and the intricacies of human relations to it, are concepts all placed in precarious positions when the possibility of magic is introduced into this history play. *1 Henry VI* is a play that almost overextends itself in its effort to demonstrate the harsh limits of heroism—for both the English and the French causes. Joan la Pucelle is unable to accept the reality of a French military defeat, and thus

[39] (II.i.16, 18), *1 Henry VI*.
[40] (III.ii.37), *1 Henry VI*.
[41] Gutierrez, p. 192. See also Howard and Rackin, *Engendering a Nation*, p. 54, for an explanation of Joan's binary oppositions versus Talbot.
[42] Phyllis Rackin. *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicle*. Cornell UP, 1990. p. 156.

experiences a rapid psychological deterioration that could be explained in early modern medical terms as resulting from an excess of the melancholic humour.[43] Her deterioration from a surplus of melancholy results in a vivid dream vision in which she has ceremoniously roused spirits from hell called "fiends" to come to her aid against the approaching English army. [44] Dream interpretation in early modern England leaned on translations of classical authors like Aristotle, who described dreams as being closer to material objects that can be seen and should be studied further.[45] An early modern audience attending the play would expect a character like Joan to perform the type of passionate displays they were used to, allowing the audience "to consider when those extremes became excesses" and what such excesses meant.[46]

Hill notes in his pamphlet that to study only dreams, without considering the importance of sleeping and waking, would result in inaccurate dream interpretation. Instead, Hill is interested in interpreting dreams using his knowledge of "the workings both wakyng and a slepe" of the human body.[47] Using Aristotle as an authority, Hill explains the connection between strange dreams and sleep, stating, "a man sometimes dreameth of those thinges, whiche in all his lyfe he neuer possessed nor saw" due to

[43] Burns, p. 33. Citing Michael Hattaway and A.W. Schlegel.
[44] SD (V.ii.28-29), *1 Henry VI*. "Enter Fiends."
[45] David Gallop. *Aristotle on Sleep and Dreams: A Text and Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary*. Aris & Phillips, 1996. p. 8.
[46] Bridget Escolme. "Introduction." *Emotional Excess on the Shakespearean Stage: Passion's Slaves*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013. p. xvi.
[47] Hill, Bv6.

the state of sleep constructing dreams as "a certayne compositiōn of fantasies" or episodes originating from the imagination's daydreams.[48]

Hill's influential text, *The moste pleasante arte*, is a historically relevant theoretical textual supplement to understand Joan's summoning as a dream sequence, rather than a scene of witchcraft. Hill establishes the belief that interpreting a dream is much like peering "as it were into loking Glasses of the body placed, it might so beholde and shewe al matters imminent."[49] Hill's text was incredibly popular in early modern England, (first printed in 1571, and reprinted in 1576), as it offered the interpretation of hundreds of dreams as a mirror, a looking glass peering into an individual's physical and mental wellbeing. Hill's theories align with commonly accepted beliefs described in Robert Burton's popular text *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), which holds that sleep is "for the preservation of body and soul."[50] Burton's text uses a sympathetic tone when describing the visions of melancholics that were mocked by other writers.[51] In accordance with Galenic thought, Burton also describes the notion of "virgins' melancholy" as a humoral imbalance that results in terrible dreams for the afflicted, perhaps such as Joan.[52]

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[48] Hill, Cr2.
[49] Hill, "The Epistle," unnumbered page.
[50] Robert Burton. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). ed. Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith. New York, 1948. p. 140.
[51] Stephanie Shirilan. *Robert Burton and the Transformative Powers of Melancholy.* London: Routledge, 2015.
p. 100.
[52] Gail Kern Paster. *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage*, University of Chicago Press, 2004. p. 29.

1.4 Sleep and the Terror of Night

After the failure to hold Orleans in Act II scene i, Joan must counterattack quickly to continue maintaining her reputation as a divine prophetess and keep her place in the French army as a commander secure. Despite their victory in Orleans, the English regroup somberly in the immediate aftermath of the battle, as they organize a dawn funeral for the Earl of Salisbury, (who died from the Boy's cannon fire in Act I scene iv). But as the sun rises and light begins to appear, the terror and uncertainty of the night battle fades, and the Duke of Bedford comments, "The day begins to break, and night is fled, | Whose pitchy mantle over-veil'd the earth."[53] The all-enveloping darkness that Bedford describes creates a reenactment of his opening line to the play, "Hung be the heavens with black. Yield day to night" spoken during Henry V's funeral.[54]

This second funeral also repeats the key subject of Act I scene i, which is that England has been dealt a major blow and now must try to recover. Despite their victory in retaking Orleans, the loss of Salisbury is significant enough to reintroduce the metaphor of decaying male bodies representing the deterioration of England.[55] Talbot's order to "Bring forth the body of old Salisbury," recognizes the aged male body and foreshadows additional loss for the English army (Bedford declines and dies in Act III).[56] Here, Bedford makes an effort to cheer up the gathered lords by reminding them of their recent success in using the cover of night as a military tactic,

[53] (II.ii.1-3), *1 Henry VI.*
[54] (I.i.1), *1 Henry VI.*
[55] Burns, p. 168, footnote 2.2.
[56] (II.ii.4), *1 Henry VI.*

'Tis thought, Lord Talbot, when the fight began,
Roused on the sudden from their drowsy beds,
They did, amongst the troops of armed men,
Leap o'er the walls for refuge in the field.[57]

The story Bedford tells in these lines specifically accuses Joan and Charles of cowardice and of being poor leaders who ran to save themselves. The lines suggest it was sleep in their "drowsy beds" which contributed to making them cowardly. The Bastard affirms this story, though admits in truth that the "[…] smoke and dusky vapours of the night," caused by the battle obscured his vision.[58] These lines build context to the story, explaining that the startled waking from sleep, the smoke in the air, and the terrifying darkness were all strategies that forced the French to retreat in fear. The "drowsy beds" comment helps the English lords to feel corporally superior to the French, who need more sleep and in fact, they sleep during times when they ought to be awake and alert. Bedford's lines foreshadow a reversal of fortune for the English with their own sleepy and laidback watchmen.

Joan counters the loss of Orleans and of her reputation by next capturing Rouen, winning back the trust of the French lords. She begins this scene, Act II scene ii with full confidence the English watch will let them pass, "If we have entrance, as I hope we shall, | And that we find the slothful watch but weak, | I'll by a sign give notice to our friends."[59] Accompanied by soldiers in disguise as "Poor market folks that come to sell their corn," Joan enters English-held Rouen in the early hours of the

[57] (II.ii.22-25), *1 Henry VI*.
[58] (III.ii.27), *1 Henry VI*.
[59] (III.ii.6-8), *1 Henry VI*.

morning, just as dawn breaks.[60] The English watchman controlling the city gates tells Joan that the market bell has already rung, a system in place to warn merchants of their last chance to pass through the gates before they were shut and locked again. The English are already disadvantaged in this scene by the sleepiness of the guards, making them easy to fool or overcome. Joan uses "slothful" as the defining trait that allowed her to sneak into Rouen, suggesting an intentional laziness or apathy on the part of the English watch that cannot be left unresolved. If the market bell was rung, the watchman was meant to refuse any further entrance, but instead, Burns notes that "the good-natured leniency of the English watch allows the French into the town when strictly he should not, and then they kill him."[61] Upon the scheme's success, Reignier indeed orders his soldiers to "do execution on the watch" for his lack of vigilance.[62] The slothful English watcher mirrors the cold French Sentinel (who also failed in his watch in Act II), but this English watchman is deliberately put to death by the French rather than being left to face punishment from his own English superiors. The unspoken rules of chivalric warfare have broken down completely by this scene, though perhaps recalls another moment when such rules were discarded, when Henry V executed the French soldiers taken prisoner at the Battle of Agincourt.

Despite having clearly let their sentry grow lax, the English curse Joan and place the blame conveniently on her alleged mystical powers. Talbot rages against Joan, "Puzel, that witch, that damned sorceress, | Hath wrought this hellish mischief

[60] (III.ii.14), *1 Henry VI.*
[61] Burns, p. 206, footnote 15.
[62] (III.ii.33-34), *1 Henry VI.*

unawares, | That hardly we escaped the pride of France."[63] The fear of such a close scrape with death leaves Talbot focused on Joan's trickery in slipping through the city gates in the early hours of the morning. This strategy was much like Talbot's own attack on the enemy late at night to reclaim Orleans. Mirroring the retaking of Orleans, the English recapture Rouen, leaving Joan again in a position of uncertainty. Talbot gloats over the victory, asking, "But where is Pucelle now? | I think her old familiar is asleep."[64] Talbot's taunting words imply that a witch like Joan would receive help and protection from familiar spirits. This performs the play's design that once again, "sleeping neglection" of some type has caused a monumental or tragic loss, the French army flees Rouen shortly after gaining control of it.

1.5 Joan's Dream Vision

The play's deliberate gendering of Joan as either a saint or a sexualized witch represents the patriarchal need to extinguish her as a threat to masculine martial power.[65] Her status in the play as a witch is unquestionable because the English male authorities have deemed it so. But in replacing the reading of Joan's summoning scene as a dreaming scene her character now becomes open to dream interpretation, like the work done by classical writers Artemidorus, Aristotle, and Macrobius, who provided a reference point for early modern dream writer Thomas Hill.

[63] (III.ii.37-39), *1 Henry VI*.
[64] (III.ii.119-120), *1 Henry VI*.
[65] Gutierrez, p. 185.

Hill's work *The moste pleasuante arte* is heavily indebted to Artemidorus's dream text *Oneirocritica,* as seen in the Stationer's Register's description of it as a pamphlet "of sertayne Dreames made by Artemidorus."[66] Like Artemidorus before him, Hill classifies dreams as either natural "vain dreames" that come from within body or supernatural "true" dreams that come from outside the body, but Hill's writing is unclear in defining the real difference between natural and supernatural dreams.[67] What is clear is the early modern understanding that a bodily or natural dream generally comes from an imbalance of the humors.[68] An abundance of melancholy might cause a dream of a black beast or a black devil approaching the dreamer, although the vague nature of the term melancholy leaves many possible options open for a melancholic reading.[69] Melancholy excess could be diagnosed based on "malaise, displays of aggression, or hallucinations of phantasms."[70] Working through Hill's lens, *1 Henry VI* could point to Joan's melancholy excess as a medical issue rather than make a moral judgment about her as a character who will go to any infernal lengths to win. To rework Joan's summoning as a natural bodily dream, it is necessary to appreciate early modern understandings of sleep.

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[66] Fretz. p. 9; Edward Arber, ed. 1875. *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London 1554–1640 A.D.* 5 vols. London. 1:33.
[67] Hill, A2v; Janine Rivière. "'Visions of the Night': The Reform of Popular Dream Beliefs in Early Modern England," *Parergon*, 20 (2003). p. 113.
[68] Peter Holland. "'The Interpretation of Dreams' in the Renaissance," from Peter Brown (ed.), *Reading Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams from Chaucer to Shakespeare*. Oxford UP, 1999. p. 144.
[69] D. G. Hale. "Dreams, Stress, and Interpretation in Chaucer and his Contemporaries," *JRMMRA 9* (1988), p. 51.
[70] Drew Daniel. *The Melancholy Assemblage: Affect and Epistemology in the English Renaissance*. Fordham UP, 2013. p. 146.

Melancholy is a complex idea with a long history; in the medieval medical world, it is a humour that often stimulated the imagination into producing frightening images. Thomas Nashe said in *Terrors* that "melancholy was the mother of dreams" and the idea became commonplace, that all bad dreams originated from melancholy.[71] While nightmares were a symptom of melancholy, a firm definition of melancholy itself is elusive. Drew Daniel describes melancholy as "at once a form of madness, a sign of genius, a symptom of sickness, and a fleeting mood of sadness,"—a set of descriptions that are all true at once.[72] The use of the term throughout this dissertation will refer to melancholy as the medical condition produced by the humour.

In contrast to traditional critical interpretations of this scene, I contend that comprehending the summoning scene in Act V, scene ii, of *1 Henry VI* depends entirely on identifying Joan as a melancholic figure awash in shame over her military defeat, rather than a witch conversing with spirits. The argument that the summoning was either a dream or a mad hallucination depends on rejecting the customary critical interpretation of Joan la Pucelle as a witch.[73] Scholars have justifiably been frustrated by the summoning of Act V scene ii, as it demystifies the source of Joan's military genius and power, and worse, it makes Talbot's accusations correct—her strength is confirmed to come from demonic energy rather than from a celestial gift. Richard Hardin notes that Shakespeare goes out of his way to degrade Joan in this play and transform her into a scapegoat, making her "that 'other' whom people choose to attack

[71] Nashe, Terrors, Ciiii.
[72] Daniel, p. 5.
[73] "The name Jeanne d' Arc, Joan of Arc, is an invention. Joan never used it." Maria Warner. *Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism* (1981). p. 198.

when they themselves cannot resolve conflict."[74] On the summoning scene, Edward Burns expresses that "this moment of the play has disappointed critics by seeming to make too unambiguous an identification of Joan's powers with the forces of darkness" and notes that the play's presentation of her leaves a modern audience embarrassed at the treatment of such an admired female historic persona.[75] In addition to her accusation of witchcraft, *1 Henry VI* develops the theme of Joan's villainy against the English army that is not pulled from Hall or Holinshed's chronicle histories.[76] While Joan is the most powerful usurper of masculine privilege in the play's world, this position means she moves about "always at the risk of stigmatization" and in constant danger of losing her positive associations.[77]

Though Joan is presented as a maid who offers her military service to the Dauphin "Which by a vision sent to her from heaven" she does not claim any superhuman power that avoids the needs of the physical body such as sleep.[78] It is unclear how much time has passed in the play's world since the French were roughly awakened in the middle of the night to a surprise attack in Act II to Joan's summoning scene in Act V. With some decent passage of time assumed, Joan's continued experience of poor or disordered sleep may be responsible for the vision of the fiends.

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[74] Richard F. Hardin. "Chronicles and mythmaking in Shakespeare's Joan of Arc," *SS42* (1990). p. 32.
[75] Burns, p. 259, footnote 25.
[76] Hardin, p. 30; Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol III. London, Routledge, 1957. p. 41; Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*, vol III. London, Routledge, 1957. p. 41.
[77] Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin. *Engendering a Nation: A Feminist Account of Shakespeare's English Histories*, Taylor & Francis Group, 1997. *ProQuest Ebook Central*. p. 44.
[78] (I.ii.52), *1 Henry VI*.

When Joan enters in Act V scene ii of the play, the scene is chaotic, the stage directions reveal, "*Alarum. Excursions*," and "*Thunder*" when a retreat is sounded as "The regent [York] conquers and the Frenchmen fly."[79] The language Joan displays in the following speech implies increasing desperation,

Now help, ye charming spells and periapts,
And ye, choice spirits that admonish me
And give me signs of future accidents.
You speedy helpers, that are substitutes
Under the lordly monarch of the north,
Appear, and aid me in this enterprise.[80]

Joan's identification of the fiends as "choice spirits" in the passage reflects her own sense of impending decline in worthiness. The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites the First Folio (1623) and uses Joan's line as the first example for "choice" here, as in, "worthy of being chosen, select, exquisite, of picked quality, of special excellence."[81] Joan strives for worthiness, her selfhood and her presence in the play depend on being chosen by God to lead the French to victory against the English. It would follow then that Joan would request only the choicest spirits and the strongest periapts (protective amulets). Hill uses the same word when describing the "cleare visible spirites" that appear to excessively melancholic individuals in dreams. The despairing language Joan uses in this scene, combined with Joan's stress and anxiety produces the "visible spirites" that represent Joan's progressive psychological deterioration during the summoning dream. When her hallucinated fiends fail to offer comfort, Joan

[79] (V.ii.22), *1 Henry VI*.
[80] (V.ii.23-28), *1 Henry VI*.
[81] "choice, adj., sense 1.b". *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.

repeatedly asks the fiends if further sacrifices would be a sufficient exchange for immediate demonic prowess in battle. The fiends are mute, they cannot or will not speak to her, and the stage directions tell only their general movements— *"They shake their heads"* at Joan when she offers up her body as "[…] recompense if you will grant my suit."[82] In desperation, Joan offers up her soul to the fiends— "Then take my soul— my body, soul, and all—" only to be rebuffed by the fiends again.[83] The muteness of the fiends indicates that the experience is concocted in Joan's own mind, that there is no answer or solution to her dire situation. As Hill's *Moste pleasante arte* pamphlet explains, "when the melancholie humoure […] doth purge & cause cleare visible spirites […] yet is the cause euill in it selfe, beecause it declareth the dominion of that humour."[84] Hill promotes the belief that the domination of the melancholy humor results in visions of spirits and dream-like trance states.

The private nature of the summoning—Joan is alone on stage during her invocation until the entrance of the "fiends"—provides further evidence that the scene is dream-like.[85] The regenerative and private time of sleeping and dreaming parallels the secretive and solitary moment of the summoning. Edward Burns astutely notes in the Arden Shakespeare's Introduction to *1 Henry VI,* "Puzel's invocation of [the fiends] is private, observed only by us, the audience […] That she has no witnesses but the audience keeps open the possibility of staging the scene as a psychological

[82] (V.ii.40), *1 Henry VI.*
[83] (V.ii.43), *1 Henry VI.*
[84] Hill, Bv8.
[85] The private and secure nature of good sleep is noted by Charles, "Saint Denis bless this happy stratagem, │ And once again we'll sleep secure in Rouen." (III.ii.17-8), *1 Henry VI.*

allegory."[86] Joan's language in the summoning scene presents the possibility of past communications with the fiends, as Joan notices they are not offering their usual rapid assistance ("[…] your accustomed diligence to me"), and takes their rejection to mean her military mission is a complete failure.[87] Her offer to the fiends to take her physical body and soul suggests not only a frantic plea, but also an impending psychological breakdown and preparation for death. Joan's forlorn comment, "See, they forsake me […] My ancient incantations are too weak, | And hell too strong for me to buckle with" shows her finally accepting that the fiends represent desertion, like the disappearance of the French army commanders that had previously held court around Joan and the Dauphin.[88] Though Joan is willing to yield her body up for power, she is immediately denied that power by the fiends in her vision and comes to an understanding of how future events will unfold following this defeat.[89] The summoning is a solitary moment that shows the transformation of Joan as the most formidable opponent the English forces confront into a woman who is fighting a war that is ultimately against women, against her as the feminine outlaw figure.[90]

Though Joan is denied her place in honorable warfare due to her gender, she has really gendered herself more like a man in this play, and her fixed concern with military victory and slighted honor is more masculine leaning. Before the summoning

[86] Burns, p. 34.
[87] (V.ii.30), *1 Henry VI*.
[88] (V.ii.45-49), *1 Henry VI*.
[89] David M. Bevington. "The domineering female in *1 Henry VI*," SSt, 2 (1966), p. 53.
[90] Rackin, Phyllis. "Women's roles in the Elizabethan history plays." *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's History Plays*. ed. Michael Hattaway. Cambridge UP, 2002. p. 71; Marilyn French. *Shakespeare's Division of Experience*. United Kingdom, Cape, 1982. p. 47.

scene of Act V takes place, the last time the audience sees Joan in action happens in Act IV scene iv, in which she narrates an encounter with Young Talbot on the battlefield. After exchanging insults, Young Talbot rejects her as an unworthy foe—Joan reports that "He answered thus: 'Young Talbot was not born | To be the pillage of a giglot wench."[91] Joan recounts to her companions, "He left me proudly, as unworthy fight" explaining Talbot's refusal of her offer of one-on-one combat.[92] The play is deeply concerned with properly interpreting the structures of gender consciousness, while also maintaining the gender status quo.[93] The First Tetralogy consistently associates magical knowledge with women – such as Margery Jordan in *2 Henry VI*, who is depicted as a fraudulent witch, and later Queen Margaret's witch-like curses and prophecies in *Richard III* – and so Joan is made into a witch to ensure she is correctly classified as female and to downplay her masculine role as a soldier. Joan's mid-battle dismissal from Young Talbot parallels her rejection from the fiends— "Cannot my body nor blood sacrifice | Entreat you to your wonted furtherance?"— in both cases, her female body is deemed not good enough to complete her appointed task.[94]

When her body is determined insufficient in the summoning of Act V scene ii, Joan then offers up her soul; in an offer reminiscent of the overly ambitious Dr.

[91] Talbot Sr. has no problem with Joan's gender on the battlefield, however. Talbot: "Here, here she comes. I'll have a bout with thee—" (I.v.4), *1 Henry VI*; Young Talbot's lines, (IV.iv.152-3), *1 Henry VI*.
[92] (IV.iv.155), *1 Henry VI*.
[93] James J. Paxson. "Shakespeare's Medieval Devils and Joan La Pucelle in *1 Henry VI*," *Henry VI: Critical Essays*. ed. Thomas A. Pendleton. Routledge, 1994. p. 149.
[94] (V.ii.41-42), *1 Henry VI*.

Faustus, Joan's desire to win at any cost introduces a Machiavellian side to the character, a side which insists that winning and *appearing* honorable is more important than real honor, honestly achieved. Like Faustus's remorse for making a deal with "*Lucifer* and *Mephistopheles*" he laments to his fellow scholars, "Ah Gentlemen! I gave them my soul for my cunning."[95] When the fiends exit the scene, Joan gives in utterly to despair, saying, "Now the time is come | That France must vail her lofty-plumed crest, | And let her head fall into England's lap […] Now, France, thy glory droopeth to the dust."[96] Above all else, Joan post-summoning remains fixedly concerned with keeping up French military appearances, honor, and glory, and not with her own impending capture and humiliating death at the hands of the English forces. One of the major concerns of *1 Henry VI* especially is the performance of heroic deeds and character's complex responses to the nature of the heroic—and Joan's demonic assistance in battle is not honorable.[97] From the viewpoint of an early modern English audience, Joan's summoning is a very unheroic dramatic moment, a confirmation of French villainy. It would not be far-fetched to think that an audience might connect Joan's high-pressure military misfortunes to dreams or hallucinations rather than magic; early modern magic was a psychologically equivalent, but socially unacceptable, parallel to religion because their function was helping mankind overcome problems and to account for disaster

[95] Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*. Folger Shakespeare Library, A Digital Anthology of Early Modern English Drama. Printed by V. S. for Thomas Bushell. 1604. F1v, lines 1424-1425.
[96] (V.ii.45-50), *1 Henry VI*.
[97] Burns, p. 6.

when it struck.[98] Since the "magic" of the fiends does not actually provide any direct help for the French army in the play, magic does not offer a satisfying answer to Joan's peculiar situation in the way a dream does.

In his 1594 pamphlet, *The terrors of the night or, A discourse of apparitions,* Thomas Nashe offers many sensible insights to the true nature of most dreams, but he also readily admits belief in the claim of his title that "the terrors of the night [are] more than of the day, because the sins of the night surmount the sins of the day."[99] In describing the frightening and ambiguous nature of night, Nashe pinpoints the uncanniness of tragic events that happen at night, for that is the time when spirits will hunt for melancholic victims, "for they feeding on foggie-braind melancholly, engender thereof many vncouth terrible monsters."[100] The early modern understanding that spirits are wont to feed on those struck with "foggie-braind" melancholy was a widespread notion that also appears in *Hamlet*, and is possibly working to redeem Joan's character as one made victim to her body's humours.[101]

The early modern period saw confusion and overlapping belief involving the discourses of mental health and demonology. The connection between insanity and demons appears in *Macbeth*, when Banquo doubts if the witches they encounter are real, or if they have "eaten on the insane root that takes the reason prisoner."[102]

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[98] Keith Thomas. *Religion and the Decline of Magic*. Scribner, 1971. p. 636.
[99] Nashe, Hv3.
[100] Nashe, Cv3.
[101] "The spirit that I have seen | May be a devil […] and perhaps | Out of my weakness and my melancholy | […] abuses me to damn me." (III.i.600-605), *Hamlet*. William Shakespeare and Harold Jenkins. The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works, 2001.
[102] (I.iii.84-5), *Macbeth*.

Taking a new approach to Joan's summoning scene is exceedingly important because it radically changes the understanding of what dreams and magic are doing in this history play and in the wider First Tetralogy. The dream Joan has is not filling stage time in a history play, it is a major plot point that Shakespeare uses to guide the unfolding story. After the events of the play in which Joan faces and escapes from countless dangers, "Joan of Arc is not only condemned to death but also cursed by her own father, the Shepherd, who wishes she had never outlived babyhood."[103] Despite her sham trial, disownment by her family, and death in disgrace, Joan benefits from her social position as a divinely-chosen recipient of dream visions; this, combined with her provincial origin story morphs her into a figure of mythical status.[104] Although *1 Henry VI* lacks a narrated dream sequence (such as Clarence's rich dream retelling in *Richard III*), Joan's mythical status, added to the popularity of dream vision stories in the period, fashions the dream as an allegory of transformation.[105] If choosing to stage the scene as such a psychological allegory, the role of the fiends can change from literal demons to "demons [that] can be presented as graphic expressions of Joan's emotions of anger and fear."[106] Realizing she will not be able to continue as an army commander, the summoning vision allows Joan a moment to grieve that her part in the story is over.

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[103] R. J. C. Watt. "The siege of Orleans and the cursing of Joan: corruptions in the text of *Henry VI Part I*," *ELN*, 33:3 (1996). p. 5.
[104] W. O. Scott. "Chaucer, Shakespeare, and the Paradoxes of Dream and Fable," CEA*Crit* 49 (1986-7). p. 31.
[105] Marjorie Garber, *Dreams in Shakespeare: From Metaphor to Metamorphosis*. New Haven, CT, Yale UP, 1974. p. 4; C. B. Hieatt. *The Realism of Dream Visions: The Poetic Exploitation of the Dream-Experience in Chaucer and his Contemporaries*, De Propreitatibus Litterarum, series practica 2 (The Hauge, 1967). p. 13.
[106] Burns, p. 34.

Instead of relying on the supernatural as the source for Joan's vision, this chapter argues that seeing the supernatural is a humoral side-effect of existence in the world of the First Tetralogy, a world in which there are mental disorders and excessive humours, but no divine plan. Presenting the demonic summoning as a dream offers Shakespeare a useful way out of the dilemma of presenting demons that take no action.[107] In setting out to rethink the traditional representation of Shakespeare's Joan La Pucelle, contemporary dream theory texts may help shape a feminist and cultural inquiry that offers a new take on Joan's story.

In acknowledging the possibility of the summoning as a dream vision induced by excessive melancholic humours, Joan becomes a more humanized figure—one that is susceptible to commonly held theories about bodily functions in late 16th century England. Hill's pamphlet confirms this belief, "Yet say they, that when sleapynge men see blacke visions […] these they and such like do forshewe customed sickenesses to be caused of the melancholy humoure."[108] In beginning his statement by writing "yet they say," Hill advertises the popular collective belief of the theory of the four humours, while also displaying a healthy skepticism of the exact causes of "black visions." Hill repeats conventional wisdom found in many other contemporary works, such as writer Thomas Wright's 1604 work *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* that expounds, "if blood, fleugme, choller, or melancholy exceede" what the body can proportionately hold, then one's health is put at serious risk to contracting

[107] A. C. Spearing. Medieval Dream Poetry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). p. 74.
[108] Hill, Dv3.

disease.[109] Wright believed that moderating one's passions was the key to achieving a content soul and a healthy body.

The text of *1 Henry VI* offers further connection to the nature of melancholy in Joan's speech in the Act V scene ii lines, "Now, ye familiar spirits, that are culled | Out of the powerful regions under earth, | Help me this once, that France may get the field."[110] The spatial focus of these lines is both "under earth" and on "the field" of battle; Hill takes note in his own text of the symbolic relation between melancholy and earth: "Melancholye causeth to appeare in sleepe claye, myer, or dirte, Burialles, graues, imprisonmente, and feare."[111] Joan's language during the summoning begins by invoking the "powerful regions under earth," the clay, mire, and dirt in Hill's text, and ends when France's "[…] glory droopeth to the dust."[112] The summoning scene presumably takes place at night, enhancing the imagery of earth and chthonic spirits with darkness and obscurity.

The private nature of the summoning, witnessed only by the audience, makes the scene even more dreamlike and allows for reading and staging it as allegory, signifying Joan's innermost thoughts and fears.[113] It is essential to note that most early modern dream books drew knowledge on dream interpretation from Aristotle and other ancient sources. Dreams, from Aristotle's view, should be considered objects, especially if a person or figure— "a mental apparition, a ghost in

[109] Wright, Cr17.
[110] (V.ii.31-33), *1 Henry VI.*
[111] Hill, Dv7- Dr7.
[112] (V.ii.50), *1 Henry VI.*
[113] Burns, p. 34.

consciousness, a phantom"—appears to the dreamer.[114] The fiends in Joan's dream are such objects, appearing only to refuse aid and leave.

As soon as the fiends depart and end the dream sequence, Joan is captured and taken prisoner by the Duke of York, who taunts her by reintroducing her perceived sexual relationship with Charles the Dauphin. This reminder of the widespread rumor among the English lords enrages Joan, and she responds by cursing York *and* Charles, "A plaguing mischief light on Charles and thee, |And may ye both be suddenly surprised | By bloody hands, in sleeping on your beds."[115] This sleep-specific curse again invokes the pervasive fear of sleeping peacefully only to be suddenly woken to extreme danger. But why address the curse to her ally Charles? The Dauphin's authority in the French army makes him the character who is most standing in Joan's way, far more than the English Talbot or York. Charles' presence and unreliable moods makes her own participation less serious, less respectable; the rumor of their relationship turns her into a sexual object, an easy target for the English lords to mock. The Dauphin is likewise compromised by the need for Joan's assistance, his masculinity compromised from his dependence on Joan as a military leader and as the living symbol of France.[116]

In the play's final act, Joan is interrogated by York and Warwick in mockery of a trial, as they have already decided she will burn at the stake. Joan, captured and

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[114]Aristotle, and David Gallop. *Aristotle on Sleep and Dreams: A Text and Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary*. Aris & Phillips, 1996. p. 8.
[115] (V.ii.60-62), *1 Henry VI.*
[116] Rackin, p. 78.

awaiting execution, defends herself against the accusation of witchcraft, "I never had to do with wicked spirits; […] Because you want the grace that others have, | You judge it straight a thing impossible | To compass wonders but by help of devils" shaming the English as too corrupt to ever have faith in miracles.[117] Joan receives the dream visions in this play, her character is richly and carefully crafted to make her a captivating subject as a dreamer.[118] She departs Act V scene iii with a curse upon England as well as the play's final invocation of night and darkness,

Then lead me hence—with whom I leave my curse.
May never glorious sun reflex his beams
Upon the country where you make abode,
But darkness and the gloomy shade of death
Environ you, till mischief and despair
Drive you to break your necks, or hang yourselves.[119]

The curse describes the absence of all sunlight, a bleak and terrible punishment that will only end with suicide. But like Joan's sleep curse on Charles and York in the previous scene, the language of darkness and death truly marks the end of Joan's powers of persuasion.[120] Joan's memory will live on in *2 Henry VI* through Dame Eleanor's association with sorcery and dreaming.

[117] (V.iii.42-48), *1 Henry VI*.
[118] Phyllis Rackin. "Women's roles in the Elizabethan history plays." *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's History Plays*. ed. Michael Hattaway. Cambridge UP, 2002. p. 71.
[119] (V.iii.86-91), *1 Henry VI*.
[120] Burns, p. 277, footnote 81-91.

Chapter 2

"Stay we no longer, dreaming of renown": Ambitious Dreaming and the *Rex Exsomnis* in *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI*

Turning towards the middle plays of the tetralogy is an opportunity to consider, what are the dream references that Shakespeare concentrates on and heightens into a dramatic moment? Unlike the cast of both English and French in *1 Henry VI*, the characters in *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI* are all English, and so the dreams they experience all reflect the violence and turmoil of the coming usurpation of England's monarch. The previous play established that Henry VI succeeded the throne as an infant king under a Protectorate, which is now threatened by the aristocratic rivalries amongst several courtiers, particularly the bitter struggle for the true control of England between Gloucester and Cardinal Winchester.[1]

Early modern dreams and their interpretations, however, are not reliable sources of knowledge for current or future events. Some of the dreams in these four plays are from historical accounts, but some are created as an attempt to counterbalance the pressure that "historical facts" put on Shakespeare's play. As a playwright constructing a history play, Shakespeare needed some way to create a world in which the inevitable conclusions do not feel obvious to his audience once the ambiguity of dream analysis is introduced. The misinterpretation of dreams is what leads the character Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, to her shameful public downfall and banishment in this play. Eleanor's husband, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, also

[1] Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare: The Histories*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. p. 109.

dreams of the swiftly approaching skirmish for the throne in *2 Henry VI*, but any warning that his dream may have imparted to him about the coming danger is unheeded. Despite Eleanor's ambitious dream, the Good Duke Humphrey is, in the end, too mild; he is afraid to seize power at this crucial moment and is entirely unwilling to depose his nephew Henry VI, which leads Humphrey to misinterpret both dreams that the couple have in Act I scene ii.

2.1 Duke Humphrey's and Eleanor's Dreams

In the previous play, *1 Henry VI*, the young King Henry tries to diffuse an argument at court and addresses Humphrey and Winchester, "Uncles of Gloucester and of Winchester, | The special watchmen of our English weal," beginning a speech where the child king is put in an embarrassing position in which he must beg his two adult subjects to please get along.[2] Though Henry VI calls Duke Humphrey and Cardinal Winchester the "special watchmen" over England, they are plainly not doing their duty of watching over the commonwealth, as both are too embroiled in their own personal war against each other to watch over England with the vigilance required. The two men have also been charged with watching over and protecting Henry VI after his ascension to king as a nine-month-old baby. Chronicler Edward Hall makes this point early in his third chapter "Kyng Henry the sixt" from his text, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1548). As the chapter opens, Hall describes Henry VI's coronation and the guardianship

[2] (III.i.65-66), *1 Henry VI*.

agreement between four men, "the custody of this younge Prince was appointed to Thomas Duke of Exeter, and to Henry Beaufford bishoppe of Wynchester: the Duke of Bedford was deputed to be Regent of France, and the Duke of Gloucester was assigned Protector of England."[3] Shakespeare's Bedford is dead by this point in the story, and Exeter, though present in *1 Henry VI*, does not reappear in *Part 2*. This leaves only Winchester and Humphrey, bitterest of enemies, watching over the incredibly young king in Shakespeare's version.

Despite Humphrey's attempts to stabilize the court in *2 Henry VI* his efforts are overshadowed by this private conflict between himself and Winchester; their clash results in their servants brawling in the streets, an event that casts Henry VI's control over the kingdom into serious doubt. The watch over England is neglected again in the first scene of this play, at the announcement that Henry VI's marriage to Margaret of Anjou will cost the English some of their territories in France. The memory of Henry V's victories, the soldiers lost, and the battles fought in the Hundred Years war with France have culminated in the Duke of York's lines, "Anjou and Maine are given to the French; | Paris is lost; the state of Normandy | Stands on a tickle point now they are gone."[4] These lines in York's soliloquy confirm the feelings of most of the English peers concerning the lands in France lost; it is a shattering blow that is reminiscent of the events in Act I scene i of *1 Henry VI,* which began with Henry V's funeral and the news of England's loss of many French territories.

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[3] Edward Hall. *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1548). Ar1.
[4] (I.i.211-213), *2 Henry VI*. William Shakespeare. *2 Henry VI*. Arden Shakespeare, third series. 2004.

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and uncle to King Henry VI, is the Lord Protector of England and so addresses the gathered court in a bitterly disappointed tone, "Shall Henry's [Henry V] conquest, Bedford's vigilance, | Your deeds of war and all our council die?"[5] As the Regent of France and substitute for the king while there, Bedford's death in *1 Henry VI* already signaled the end of Henry V's era and of England's hegemony in France. With Bedford's vigil ended, there is no one left to continue the watch over these disputed lands, and hardly any remaining French territory held to even watch over. Although Humphrey recalls the past attentive watching done by Bedford, his watch over his own domestic space falls flat; the moment that Humphrey and Eleanor narrate their dreams to each other is the catalyst of their downfall. Eleanor believes her dream to be a predictive dream showing her true future events, and takes action based on the images she dreamed. Such actions will be exposed and bring her social shame and exile, which reflects poorly on Gloucester at a critical moment; his distraction over Eleanor's public disgrace prevents Gloucester from realizing his immediate and life-threatening situation.

In Act I scene ii, when Humphrey confesses to his wife, "My troublous dreams this night doth make me sad" Shakespeare creates an exciting opening for early modern dream interpretation to work itself into the events play.[6] The far more ambitious Duchess Eleanor hopes that Humphrey will take the chance to seize "King Henry's diadem" for their own advancement, and encourages Humphrey to reveal his

[5] (I. i.92-94), *2 Henry VI.*
[6] (I.ii.22), *2 Henry VI.*

dream in hopes that whatever the dream may be, she might be able to spin it as a means to push him in the direction of the crown.[7] Her tone begins "sweet" and casual, "What dream'd my lord? Tell me, and I'll requite it | With sweet rehearsal of my morning's dream."[8] It is intriguing that Eleanor specifies she had a morning dream, but Humphrey had his dream at night. Not only is night associated with terror and darkness, but for early modern people it is the time when a sleeping human is the most vulnerable to demons or other supernatural visitors entering their defenseless bodies. Dreams in the nighttime were then considered more likely to be false dreams, while a dream experienced in the morning was considered a true dream.[9]

Humphrey relates the essence of his dream to Eleanor, "Methought this staff, mine office-badge in court, | Was broke in twain; by whom I have forgot | But, as I think, it was by th' Cardinal."[10] Humphrey's staff of office is the physical sign of his authority as Lord Protector of England and of Henry VI, making the dream all the more nightmarish when the staff is broken by others, not by Humphrey himself to signal the end of his duties to the monarch.[11] Traditionally, Gloucester is supposed to break the staff himself to symbolize that his watch over Henry has ended. The dream that Humphrey describes of a broken staff is a common enough subject that Thomas Hill comments on the image of a staff in *The moste pleasuante arte…dreames*:

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[7] (I.ii.7), *2 Henry VI.*
[8] (I.ii.23-24), *2 Henry VI.*
[9] Knowles, footnote 20, "Dreams in the morning are said to tell the truth (citing H. C. Hart, 1909)." p. 167.
[10] (I.ii.25-27), *2 Henry VI.*
[11] Knowles, footnote 25-6, 'staff…broke': "Part of the nightmarish aspect here is that the staff is broken by *others*, not the holder of office. Cf. Worcester's resignation of office and breaking of his staff in *R2* 2.2.59 and *1H4* 5.1.34."

> A certayne man dreamed that he hearde one say to hym, thy staffe is broken, who after fell sicke, and was brought to a palseye. For fyrmenes of the bodye is declared by the staff that is to say the strength and good health therof. And the same man being long vexed and troubled with the palsey, thoughte in his dreame that his staffe was broken, who very shortlye after recouered his health.[12]

As Hill explains, he knew of a certain man who dreamt of a broken staff and confirms that it is certainly a bad sign and could even cause illness. For Hill, the staff is a representation of the human body— unbroken, the staff is a symbol of a firm and healthy body, a display of strength. But, as Hill goes on to imply, a broken staff in a dream may actually recover poor health, allegedly hearing this anecdote from "the same man" who's dream first caused ill health. This passage from Hill is an example of the many contradictions within early modern dream theory, in which broken staffs can cause illness, but also can heal one from illness. Hill is careful in his writing here, trying to lend a sense of realism to the interpretation by describing the effect dreams had on the human body, but he also leaves room for error by framing it as just one man's story.

Humphrey finishes telling Eleanor his dream about the broken staff, including the detail, "And on the pieces of the broken wand | Were placed the heads of Edmund, Duke of Somerset, | And William de la Pole, first duke of Suffolk. | This was my dream; what it doth bode, God knows."[13] Though Humphrey is unsure how to interpret this dream, or perhaps does not want to, the appearance of Cardinal Winchester in the dream as the staff breaker does reveal Humphrey's deep anxiety

[12] Hill, Gr1.
[13] (I.ii.28-31), *2 Henry VI.*

about Winchester's power to disrupt or destroy the delicate institution of Henry VI's monarchy. Much like what will happen to Clarence in *Richard III*, any warning that Humphrey may have taken from the dream comes too late or is too vague for the dreamer to understand once awake. In an ideal world, Humphrey would realize from the dream's images that his position as Lord Protector over the young Henry VI is in immediate danger, represented by the staff being broken by the Cardinal. The loss of the title Lord Protector would, ironically, remove all the protection Humphrey has enjoyed from his political enemies thus far. The dream strongly urges an audience to realize that unless Humphrey takes swift and forceful action, the dukes who are beheaded in his dream (Suffolk and Somerset) will make a move to murder him, a choice that will prove fatal for them in the latter half of the play. Humphrey does suspect the Cardinal is trying to cut off his influence over Henry, but he does not recognize that it is not only his office, but his very life that is in danger. Humphrey's interpretation of his own dream is fixed on the presence of his nemesis the Cardinal as the staff-breaker, but he ignores the warning implied by the grisly decapitated heads. Shakespeare's audience would likely see the symbols of the broken staff and human heads that Humphrey overlooks as a forewarning signaling Gloucester's approaching death.

The beheaded lords appearing speared on the two broken pieces of the wooden staff is much like another dream that is referenced through Thomas More in *Richard III* via Lord Stanley's dream. The dream came to Shakespeare's play through More's *Life of Richard III*, which includes a key detail that Shakespeare leaves out. In

More's version of Stanley's dream, he writes that Stanley dreamed that himself and Lord Hastings had their heads impaled on the two tusks of a great boar. It seems likely that by the time Shakespeare wrote *Richard III,* he no longer felt the need to use images of shock or gore to effectively deliver a message of warning. Shakespeare's version of Stanley's dream has no impaled heads, but it does concern two potential victims and an upsetting image of destruction. Stanley's messenger reports, "He dreamt the boar had razed off his helm" which would demolish the family crest that displayed on the helmet. Humphrey's dream is one of even more alarming violence and foreshadows the image of several decapitated heads produced by the mob during Cade's Rebellion in Act IV scene vii. For an early modern audience, dreams are typically associated with a confirmation of life, a sign of vivacity. As Philip Goodwin describes in *The mystery of dreames, historically discoursed* (1658), "Dreaming 'tis one of those life-evidencing acts." Goodwin acknowledges that "Though sleep be a plain *Image* of death, yet Dreames in sleep are a clear *Index* of life. Men while alive are the *Centers* of Dreames, and Dreames are the *signes* of men alive."[14] This understanding of sleep as a concept that is deeply fused with death makes Humphrey's dream of the heads of two dukes a dream narration that an early modern audience would infer points to this duke's own impending death.

Eleanor is not alarmed by Humphrey's dream narration, treating the image of the broken staff as proof of his social superiority, "Tut! This was nothing but an

[14] Philip Goodwin. *The mystery of dreames, historically discoursed;* London: 1658. p. 8-9.

argument | That he that breaks a stick of Gloucester's grove | Shall lose his head for his presumption."[15] Played onstage, Shakespeare's audience would recognize Eleanor's incorrect and dismissive reading of the dream and predict that her misinterpretation will cause trouble. The misreading is either on purpose, an attempt to manipulate Humphrey's hesitance for her own gain, or incredibly hopeful that her ambitions will soon be achieved. This response dismisses Humphrey's fears and also has the tone Thomas Nashe uses writing that, "A dreame is nothing els but a bubling scum or froath of the fancie," in *Terrors of the Night*. In a corporeal metaphor, Nashe writes that dreams can become backed up in the body, much like food, "which the day hath left vndigested; or an after feast made of the fragments of idle imaginations."[16] Eleanor wants Humphrey to dismiss his dream as yesterday's undigested thoughts, and instead pay attention to her dream as the more accurate and important source of information. For Eleanor, her husband's dream is potential evidence that Humphrey's enemies in court will soon be out of the way, and encourages her to share her own dream,

But list to me, my Humphrey, my sweet Duke:
Methought I sat in seat of majesty
In the cathedral church of Westminster,
And in that chair where kings and queens are crowned,
Where Henry and Dame Margaret kneeled to me,
And on my head did set the diadem.[17]

[15] (I.ii.32-34), *2 Henry VI.*
[16] Nashe, Cv4.
[17] (I.ii.35-40), *2 Henry VI.*

Eleanor's enthusiasm for her perceived interpretation behind both dreams is the point where Humphrey quite loses control of his own dream narrative, and tries to regain some of that control.[18] Humphrey scolds his wife for her dream's suggestion of treason, that they both usurp King Henry VI and sit on the coronation throne, "Presumptuous Dame, ill-nurtured Eleanor!" in a response that emphasizes both his fear of public disgrace and that Henry VI, left in Humphrey's charge, was perhaps also ill-nurtured.[19] Eleanor must diffuse the situation, and so quickly dismisses both of their attempts at dream interpretation, "What, what, my lord! Are you so choleric | With Eleanor, for telling but her dream? | Next time I'll keep my dreams unto myself, | And not be checked."[20]

This "just a dream" argument protects Eleanor for the moment and was a valid interpretation for some dreams according to Hill, who writes that dreams that seem prophetic do not always show matters to come (unless they are sent from heaven or caused by unbalanced humours). Despite this premise, Hill reaches the conclusion that "truth also may be found in al the kindes," or, every dream has a little truth to it.[21] The argument that dreams derive from inward causes in your body and soul complements Hill's theory that every dream holds some truth about the dreamer's

[18] D. G. Hale, "Dreams, Stress, and Interpretation in Chaucer and his Contemporaries," *JRMMRA 9* (1988), p. 53.
[19] (I.ii.42), *2 Henry VI.*
[20] (I.ii.51-54), *2 Henry VI.* This scene featuring a marital dream talk is very different from the scene between Julius Caesar and Calpurnia that Shakespeare will write a few years after this play. Shakespeare may have been thinking ahead to *Julius Caesar* and the omens before his death in Plutarch's *Lives*. Hill also uses this story as a point of comparison, "And the terrour or feare of thinges mouynge a man oute of bedde do often follow true as the lyke happened to *Caesar,* the daye before he was slayne." Hill, Er1.
[21] Hill, Dr7.

life. But Hill also repeats many pithy sayings and common assumptions about dream interpretation in his pamphlet, writing, "to haue or see a diadem, signifyeth gayn" which is certainly not the case for Eleanor. Eleanor's dream showed her future, sitting alone and apart from the rest of the kingdom, but her reality is being arrested and found guilty of witchcraft targeted at the king, and banished to the Isle of Man in Act II scene ii.[22]

Eleanor's dream of sitting crowned in the coronation chair could be classified as a somnium animale dream, also originating inwardly, from the thoughts and preoccupations of the dreamer while awake.[23] This idea fits with Queen Margaret's allegation of Eleanor, "As that proud dame, the Lord Protector's wife" who conducts herself in such an ostentatious way that "Strangers in court do take her for the queen."[24] The dream may also be considered a forewarning that Eleanor will soon be associated with Joan's witchcraft accusations, both women who imagined overthrowing Henry VI.[25] The association of Eleanor's dream with the supernatural occurs in Act I Scene iv, during a ceremony in which she has hired alleged practitioners of witchcraft (really sent by the Duke of Suffolk) to hear the future, but strangely "the devil himself ('Asnath') puts in an appearance."[26] In her attempt to bring her dream of the crown to life, Eleanor meets her downfall in a world that

[22] Hill, unnumbered page.
[23] Knowles, footnote 36-40, "For Eleanor's dream as the somnium animale—dream deriving from preoccupations of the waking mind—rather than the prophecy she believes, see Presson." p. 168. For Chaucer's and Shakespeare's respective versions of the trope somnium animale, see *The Parlement of Foulys*, ed. D. S. Brewer (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1972), lines 99–105.
[24] (I.iii.77-80), *2 Henry VI.*
[25] Knowles, p. 73.
[26] Burns, p. 79.

Shakespeare built as having "an active and real demonology" in which human affairs are the battleground for supernatural forces.[27]

There is also the possibility that Shakespeare intended his audience to question whether Eleanor actually had this dream, or perhaps she made it up on the spot to persuade Gloucester that her reading of his dream as a good sign is a correct interpretation. In this scene, the boundary between dreaming and rhetoric is very thin; Humphrey's dream is "nothing but an argument," but Eleanor's dream is deserving of more attention and a bit of flattery, "But list to me, my Humphrey, my sweet Duke." There is little reason to doubt that Humphrey truly dreamt his staff-breaking dream, but there are many reasons to think that Eleanor did not experience a dream and created a fictional dream as a rhetorical tool instead.

2.2 The False Dream at St. Albans

The false dream narrative presented to King Henry VI and company in Act II scene i is both an alarming display of Henry's credulity and an example of early modern dream theory being used specifically to trick the gullible into giving their money. This point is acknowledged in *The mystery of dreames*, in which Goodwin aims "To *oppose* the practice of men" who used fictional dream narratives as a key part of their swindle. Goodwin specifies that false dreams about messages from saints were also common among those who "pretended divers things from *God* in Dreams

[27] Knowles, p. 30. Cites, *The Plantagenets*, xii. Cf. Hibbard, *The Making of Shakespeare's Dramatic Poetry*, 24-32.

full of fallacies and falsities; therein many were Deluders, and many deluded."[28] Just such a falsity is presented by a beggar to Henry VI and his courtiers while hawking near the shrine of St. Albans.

A townsman explains that "Forsooth, a blind man at Saint Albans shrine | Within this half-hour hath received his sight— |A man that ne'er saw in his life before."[29] The formerly blind man, Simpcox, is brought to the king along with his wife, the mayor of Saint Albans, and a whole crowd of the townspeople. Shakespeare often writes plots involving the commoners so as to mirror the plots following nobility, and this scam shows that the dreams at the top of the social ladder are performed to unveil the selfish corruption of the court. With this audience present, Simpcox answers all the court's questions about the circumstances of this alleged miracle. Although Nashe's dream interpretation held "commonly that which is portentiue in a King is but a friuolous fancie in a beggar," Henry is keenly interested in Simpcox and his newly restored eyesight.[30] But the dubious tale prompts Queen Margaret to inquire if Simpcox and his wife came to St. Albans by chance or with pious intent, to which Simpcox answers, "God knows, of pure devotion; being called | A hundred times and oft'ner, in my sleep, | By good Saint Alban, who said, 'Simon, come; | Come offer at my shrine, and I will help thee.'"[31] Saint Alban is considered to be the first English martyr, and Simpcox gives voice to the saint here in a description

[28] Goodwin, unnumbered page
[29] (II.i.62-64), *2 Henry VI*; Knowles, footnote 2.1 "The St Albans miracle is not found in Hall or Holinshed, but it is in Grafton [*A Chronicle at Large* (1569)] (1.630), where the source, Sir Thomas More, is acknowledged." p. 195.
[30] Nashe, Dr4.
[31] (II.i.86-89), *2 Henry VI.*

that sounds like Simpcox borrowed it directly from a popular dreambook or dream literature of the period.

The story Simpcox gives describes a divine vision, crafted in hopes that Henry will believe in the miracle and will give them some money, as a kind of reward for being selected by a saint and healed. But any seriousness in the scene falls apart when "blind" Simpcox is questioned closer and is revealed to all as a fraud when he correctly identifies every color of the court's aristocratic clothing, making his story of gaining his vision just moments ago impossible. The beggar's dream then becomes a joke, something for Queen Margaret, the courtiers, and the audience to laugh about.

The Simpcox miracle and exposure in Act II, scene i, of *2 Henry* VI is undoubtedly parodic, and critically pairs well with the issues of human ambition and supernatural suggestion in Eleanor's previous demon "summoning" episode.[32] The Simpcox miracle story is not found in either Hall or Holinshed, but its source is from Sir Thomas More's 1529 work *Dialogue of the Veneration and Worship of Images*, in which an unnamed beggar "had come to St. Albans, prompted by a dream, hoping to be cured of his blindness"[33] Shakespeare embellishes the story by creating the fraud Simon Simpcox (the name Simpcox being a contraction of simpleton and coxcomb), who echoes the motive from More that he had allegedly come to the shrine after "being called | A hundred times and oft'ner, in my sleep, | By good Saint Alban […]."[34]

[32] Knowles, p. 200. Citing Michael Hattaway, *Elizabethan Popular Theater*, 1982.
[33] Emrys Jones. The Origins of Shakespeare. Oxford University Press, 1977. pp. 173.
[34] (II.i.86-89), *2 Henry VI.*

St. Alban appears as a figure from the dream world in this scene to display the incredible power of magical thinking pulled from out of the era of ancient Roman Britain; according to Bede, the story says that Alban was whipped and executed by the Romans for sheltering a Christian priest. Simpcox is similarly whipped for his "dream" of hearing St. Alban call to him, in a case of magical thinking's deep link to moral thinking in the Renaissance.

The story Simpcox weaves to the court is already far-fetched when he implies he experienced the same dream "A hundred times and oft'ner, in my sleep."[35] In *Terrors of the Night*, Nashe warns about such fraudulent and fantastical stories, "let him dreame of Angels, Eagles, Lyons, Griffons, Dragons neuer so, all the augurie vnder heauen will not allot him so much as a good almes."[36] But Nashe also acknowledges "the certainety of Dreames," that despite the many exaggerated or pretend dreams narratives, true dream accounts do exist. Here, Nashe cites some of history's most famous dreams, "the Dreames of *Cyrus, Cambyses, Pompey, Caesar, Darius, & Alexander*," as examples of dreams that Nashe believed told the truth of future events.[37] The distinction claimed in *Terrors* is "that they were rather visions than Dreames," and that while dreams tend to show the everyday preoccupations of human life, visions can be "sent from heauen to *foreshew the translation of Monarchies."*[38] It is these moments of "translation," the transfer of a

[35] (II.i.87), *2 Henry VI.*
[36] Nashe, Dr4.
[37] Nashe, Dr4.
[38] Nashe, Dr4.

title from monarch to monarch, are the scenes that Shakespeare pays careful attention to crafting.[39]

2.3 Cardinal Winchester's Dreams

The plays of the First Tetralogy are each imbued with magic and the belief in magic in some way. Shakespeare tends to save performances of magic and associations of witchcraft with female characters that hold some authority—Joan la Pucelle, Eleanor the Duchess of Gloucester, and Queen Margaret. After the demise of Joan la Pucelle, the next play *2 Henry VI* quickly presents the clear candidate in Lady Eleanor, Gloucester's wife, who now replaces Joan as the female character who is allied with witchcraft.[40] The summoning scene in this play occurs shortly after Eleanor narrates her dream, which parallels Joan's summoning scene as they both contain the added anxiety of whether the events are real or fake.[41] The performance conducted by the charlatans Bolingbroke and Margery Jourdain seems as though it could be phony, but the appearance of the devil suddenly makes the materiality of the ritual become ambiguous. Asnath provides riddling prophecies as answers to Eleanor's human inquiries, confirming that these plays show the human world as

[39] "translation, n., sense 2.8". *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.
[40] However, note that *2 Henry VI* was believed to have been written before *Part 1*, making *1 Henry VI* akin to prequel episode responding to the success of *Part 2* and *Part 3*. With this in mind, it becomes likely then that a good audience response to Lady Eleanor's ceremony in Act I, scene iv of *2 Henry VI* served as inspiration for the scene of Joan's summoning in the final act of *1 Henry VI*. See Burns, "Introduction," p. 3.
[41] Neither Hall nor Holinshed specify a location, but the Quarto includes the line, "on the back-side of my Orchard heere." Knowles, p. 189.

merely a demonic playground.[42] But when the ritual ends, Suffolk and York reveal that the magic was only a performance. The emphasis of demonic uncertainty in this scene considerably changes the "sorcery" of the ritual that involved melting a wax image "of the King to waste away his life," by instead increasing the severity of the crimes Eleanor commits, i.e., the "satanic and criminal acts of conjuration and prophecy."[43]

It is essential to note that this fake summoning scene is a direct result of Eleanor's coronation dream. That dream is the catalyst for all of the other major events in *Part 2,* specifically Eleanor's own social deterioration. The summoning is also a spectacle, an opportunity to engage the audience while also showing an example of how pageantry is a political phenomenon. I argue that the connection between Eleanor's dream with witchcraft and the supernatural is used in the play to represent the progressive psychological deterioration that parallels the rest of the dreams in the tetralogy. This deterioration can be associated with the somnium animale, a dream that occurs because of great inner anxiety or agitation.[44]

The central image in Eleanor's dream is straightforward, she sees herself triumphantly perched on the English throne, "[…] sat in seat of majesty | In the cathedral church of Westminster," at the very moment of her coronation.[45] However, Eleanor's dream clearly excludes Humphrey, he is not in the dream being crowned as

[42] Knowles, p. 30.
[43] Knowles, p. 189.
[44] Robert Presson. "Two Types of Dreams in Elizabethan Drama, and their Heritage: Somnium Animale and the Prick-of-Conscience," *Studies in English Literature*, 7:2 (1967): p. 240.
[45] (I.ii.36-37), *2 Henry VI.*

king beside her. Dreams such as these, which primarily feature the dreamer's own self succeeded at a task, are discussed in *The moste pleasante arte*. Hill makes the distinction between such "vain" dreams and truly prophetic dreams; vain dreams, Hill contends, have no prophetic substance whatsoever, but true dreams do indeed tell of future matters to come.[46] In the case of Lady Eleanor, the dream is a vain one that displays her jealousy of Henry VI's position as monarch, but is perhaps also slightly prophetic. Eleanor ends up with a twisted version of King Henry's life through the extreme isolation of exile, sitting entirely alone and removed from everyday society. Like Henry, Eleanor's griefs are then compounded with religious guilt for the severity of her actions; in dreaming of herself in Westminster Abbey as a queen ordained by God, Eleanor's dream is treason against her monarch Henry VI.

The dream's direct and singular narrative sets it apart from other dreams in the First Tetralogy, and it is worth considering the interpretation that Eleanor did not really have a dream and just needed a method of explaining her ambitious scheme to Humphrey. Like the Simpcox episode at St. Albans, characters can use invented or figurative dreams as a vehicle for telling a story about themselves that they want society to believe. After being caught in the act, Lady Eleanor is arrested for the practice of witchcraft, specifically witchcraft with ill intent towards King Henry (who is represented by a wax doll during the ceremony, find that line). Eleanor must undergo trial and sentencing for her unholy summoning in Act I, scene iv, but the

[46] Hill, The Preface, unnumbered page.

dream she has is also placed on trial, in a way, by the audience who finds her guilty of treasonous actions.

Eleanor's final appearance in the play is her emotional goodbye to her husband, Gloucester, though the ambition invoked by her dream and the image of sitting in the king's throne reoccurs in *3 Henry VI*. Eleanor's parting words to her husband are words of caution, begging him to address the impending danger being plotted by members of the king's court.

She predicts that Humphrey will not be stirred by anything "[…] till the axe of death" that is metaphorically hanging over Gloucester's neck drops, her tone says that she already knows her husband will not act in time to save his own life.[47] The final piece of advice Eleanor gives Gloucester also warns him about three specific individuals, "[…] Suffolk […] | And York and impious Beaufort, that false priest, | Have all limed bushes to betray thy wings; | And, fly thou how thou canst, they'll tangle thee" in order to get Gloucester out of their way.[48] The warning from Eleanor rapidly becomes more like a prophecy, as she correctly predicts that a temporary alliance consisting of Queen Margaret, Suffolk, York, and Cardinal Beaufort has formed with the specific purpose to kill Duke Humphrey. The image Eleanor describes of a bird trapped in a bush coated with sticky and adhesive lime signals a betrayal of the natural order, a theme that Eleanor emphasizes again with the lines, "dark shall be my light and night my day; | To think upon my pomp shall be my

[47] (II.iv.49), *2 Henry VI.*
[48] (II.iv.51-55), *2 Henry VI.*

hell."[49] This reversal of night and day suggests the topsy turvy world usually found in a comedy play, in which the natural order is temporarily turned on its head. But this upturning does not seem temporary, it looks like foreshadowing for more betrayal.

The prediction that Gloucester's death approaches and that day has turned into night are familiar matters from *1 Henry VI*, reminiscent of the sentinels keeping watch over their armies in utter darkness. The fear of death is always figuratively looming over the night scenes in the First Tetralogy, a persistent reminder of human mortality. The terror associated with night and darkness is compounded by the tragedy of Humphrey and Eleanor's last words to each other; Eleanor's statement that "dark shall be my light" creates an image of a voracious darkness that consumes the light of day.

The farewell between Gloucester and Eleanor is followed immediately by the scene of Gloucester's own arrest at court. The Duke of Suffolk indeed seizes the opportunity by claiming that it was Gloucester who directed Eleanor to perform the ritual and attempt to foretell Henry VI's end. The statement Suffolk makes, "The Duchess by his subordination, | Upon my life, began her devilish practices" is an open accusation of treason spoken in King Henry's presence.[50] Gloucester is absent at this critical moment, busy saying goodbye to Eleanor, and is unable to defend himself against these grave allegations. This meeting creates space for rumor and dissention, especially by Gloucester's enemies who think he is too close to his nephew the king.

[49] (II.iv.41-42), *2 Henry VI.*
[50] (III.i.45-46), *2 Henry VI.*

The Yorkist faction, in particular, need a way to get rid of him, as the Lord Protector, Gloucester is the last authority figure blocking the path towards the English crown.

The false accusations continue to strengthen the conspiracy that Eleanor was the scapegoat in this plan, while Gloucester was the mastermind. Suffolk continues his diatribe, insisting that Gloucester "Did instigate the bedlam brainsick Duchess | By wicked means to frame our sovereign's fall."[51] Suffolk's description of Eleanor as "the bedlam brainsick Duchess" makes it seem like Eleanor is suffering from an extreme mental illness with little to no autonomy.[52] The word "brainsick" suggests she was not aware enough to defy Humphrey's order to host a summoning.[53] The rest of the assembled court, the king and queen, York, Buckingham, and the Cardinal, all support Suffolk's accusations of treason against Gloucester and confirm the opinion that he plans to overthrow Henry VI. Here Suffolk and the other courtiers rewrite the story by making Eleanor only an accessory to the crime, and hoping to convince Henry that his uncle Duke Humphrey was the true mastermind.

Though the conspirators happily agree with each other, Henry is not persuaded that Gloucester has any ill intent towards him. Henry defends his uncle, but fails at recognizing the precarious position both he and Gloucester are now in.

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[51] (III.1.51-52), *2 Henry VI.*
[52] The Hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem, or Bedlam, was founded as a convent in 1247. The term "bedlam" was used to refer to a person who had been discharged from St Mary of Bethlehem without a means to fend for themselves and was therefore licensed to beg. The term expanded in the 16th century to refer to anyone with a mental illness or displaying irrational behavior. "bedlam, n. & adj." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.
[53] "brainsick, adj., sense 2." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.

Henry's own dream-like and incurious nature leads him to believe that everyone has some good in them and that he is a good judge of character,

Our kinsman Gloucester is as innocent
From meaning treason to our royal person
As is the sucking lamb or harmless dove.
The Duke is virtuous, mild and too well given
To dream on evil or to work my downfall.[54]

Henry's summary of Gloucester's nature as "well given" is a tactical attempt to highlight his uncle's positive and good-natured disposition, one he tries to submit as hard evidence that Gloucester truly is a trustworthy and morally good person.[55] In some ways, Henry is right, Gloucester's dreams are not evil—his dream of Cardinal Winchester breaking the Lord Protector's staff of office seems like a forewarning to defend oneself *against* impending evil acts by certain individuals. But there are allusions in this reply that sound more like Henry is talking about himself as the person who is "virtuous, mild and too well given | To dream on evil […]."[56] The phrase "dream on" indicates it would be impossible for Gloucester to have any conception or ideas about harming Henry.[57]

Henry's perception of Gloucester is completely biased not only by virtue of their relationship as nephew and uncle, but also as former child King Henry and adult Lord Protector. The exaggeration of Gloucester's personality traits makes him like the animals of biblical significance in Henry's eyes. But it sounds as though the king

[54] (III.i.69-73), *2 Henry VI.*
[55] "well-given, adj., sense 1," *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.
[56] (III.i.72-73), *2 Henry VI.*
[57] "dream on, v.^{2} 5" *Oxford English Dictionary,* Oxford UP.

may be talking about a version of Gloucester as Henry wants him to be—his spiritual equal, one who is physically incapable of bad thoughts.

Though Gloucester does have a good reputation and "[…] the common people favour him" the qualities that Henry lists— "virtuous," "mild," and "well given"— are not convincing enough, or perhaps not Machiavellian enough for his audience.[58] It may also be that this very "goodness" Gloucester possesses may be further reason for his enemies to have him killed, if a civil war does begin, Gloucester could become a rallying point to make up for Henry's lack of charisma.

In the first scene of the play, Gloucester exits the stage and gives Cardinal Beaufort the chance to scornfully announce that the common people of England love Gloucester, "Calling him 'Humphrey, the good Duke of Gloucester,'" expressing his disdain for both Gloucester's mass popularity and the epithet "the good Duke."[59] It seems that it is this good reputation that Henry is relying on in his insistence that Gloucester is simply " […] too well given | To dream on evil […]." Rhetorically, this defense of Gloucester is not a particularly strong one, because Henry uses biblical images he is familiar with, an innocent lamb and a dove, which represents peace.[60] But that is not entirely true, like almost all the other characters in the First Tetralogy, Gloucester has moments of anger and cruelty.[61] Furthermore, the audience at court

[58] (I.i.155), *2 Henry VI.*
[59] (I.i.156), *2 Henry VI.*
[60] Knowles, footnote 69-71, "the proverb 'as innocent as a lamb' is from Dent. L34.1 harmless dove is proverbial too (Dent, D572) from Matthew." p. 235.
[61] After hearing how expensive it was to transport and feed Queen Margaret on her journey to England, Gloucester says,
"That Suffolk should demand a whole fifteenth | For costs and charges in transporting her! | She should have stayed in France, and starved in France," *2 Henry VI*. (I.i.130-132).

listening to Henry's argument do not care about Gloucester's goodness, he is a physical obstacle in their way to usurpation. The very people Henry attempts to convince are the plotters who are secretly working on their advancement and his downfall.

The earlier dream of the broken staff forewarns that Gloucester cannot navigate political maneuvers as well as the other courtiers like York, Suffolk, and Cardinal Beaufort can. Both Henry and Gloucester are too mild "to dream on evil" and as a consequence, they are unable to recognize evil when it is right in front of them. To dream on a topic, in Henry's sense, is to be comfortable in one's thinking and understanding of the topic, generally, it is the ability to formulate a specific idea. To "dream on evil" is what Richard will do in *3 Henry VI* when he obtains the title Duke of Gloucester and begins planning his future as King Richard III.

But Humphrey is still the Duke of Gloucester now, in his final scene in the play, Act III scene i. Though Henry makes a small effort to support Gloucester's good name, the scene shifts into disarray when the Duke of Somerset enters and announces that the few remaining English-controlled territories in France are lost. What little remained of the French territories discussed in the first scene of *1 Henry VI* is now entirely gone, meaning the time for the nostalgic legacy of Henry V is over. The news is a shocking blow to the English—the Hundred Years' War has just ended, and England undoubtedly lost. Henry V's successes on the battlefield once gave England

a place among the strongest military powers in Europe, but that status has severely declined now, due to the "sleeping neglection" by those tasked to run the country.[62]

Using the moment of astonishment and leaning on the nationalism that Henry V's memory inspired, Suffolk seizes the opportunity to formally charge Gloucester with treason against the crown. Gloucester is infuriated by the charge, citing his many nights going without sleep during his watch over England as Lord Protector. Whether true or not, Gloucester states he kept himself awake for many long nights to research ways to improve governance, stating, "So help me God, as I have watched the night, | Ay, night by night, in studying good for England!"[63] The continuous watch over England that Gloucester describes, "night by night," echoes the sentinel on watch duty in *1 Henry VI*, acknowledging he is a "poor servitor" doomed to an interminable night watch for the good of France. However, Gloucester's lines suggest that he considers his watch over England a noble sacrifice, not a required service, but an honor. While watching night after night should, in theory, grant Humphrey some sympathy, it is too late for him to win any arguments by pointing out that his personal sacrifice avoiding sleep was all for the greater good. Humphrey, like Henry VI, is too slow to act in this play, too "virtuous" and too "mild" in his self-defense to adequately convince anyone in the court that he is indispensable to the current governance of England. Much like his dream of helplessly watching Cardinal

[62] (IV.iii.49), *1 Henry VI.*
[63] (III.i.110-111), *2 Henry VI.*

Beaufort snap his staff of office in half, Gloucester looks on at the unjust proceedings, but is paralyzed from acting during a crucial moment.

Gloucester's lines introduce a recurring theme in the First Tetralogy of the *rex exsomnis,* the sleepless king whose watch never ends. The *rex exsomnis* motif shows the king denying himself sleep lest danger approaches the slumbering kingdom unchecked. The king's watch ends when he dies, and then is immediately taken up by the next monarch—and so the king is allowed a guiltless sleep only in death.

The death of Gloucester—who performed many of the young king's duties—follows rapidly after his arrest and is performed by two murderers hired by the Duke of Suffolk. The plan is for Suffolk to hire murderers to kill Gloucester by whatever means necessary, and not to waste time arguing about the method,

And do not stand on quillets how to slay him;
Be it by gins, by snares, by subtlety,
Sleeping or waking, 'tis no matter how,
So he be dead;[64]

Whether death comes while the victim is awake or asleep matters not for Suffolk; Gloucester's murder is treated like the death of an animal, it can be done by traps or snares or while the creature is "sleeping or waking." The phrase is a strange instruction, would it not be better to murder Gloucester while he is sleeping, to limit the noise and commotion he might raise in the struggle? One answer comes in the following scene, Act III scene ii, when Suffolk confirms with his two hired murderers that Gloucester is now truly dead. After his arrest in Act III scene i, Gloucester was

[64] (III.i.261-264), *2 Henry VI.*

locked in the Tower of London, making it likely that the guards on watch were either paid to keep quiet, or were unable to hear any screams in such a large fortress. Suffolk is sure to ask the murderers in what state they left the corpse, "Have you laid fair the bed? Is all things well, | According as I gave directions?" and is anxious to hear that the body was placed back in the bed neatly.[65] The plot of the story Suffolk is trying to weave depends on Gloucester's death looking like a natural one, that he died in his sleep and no one is at fault.

In trying to cover up the scene of the crime by making the bed coverings appear undisturbed, Suffolk sets the audience's attention on the bed. Although Gloucester's murder happens off-stage, the bed with Gloucester's body is brought forward in the same scene for King Henry to view. The location of the murder is doubly disturbing because of the association of beds with safety and rest. Though early modern dreamers were considered vulnerable to outside or demonic influences in their sleep, the bed and bedroom are nonetheless the location the sleeper has chosen to lower their guard and close their eyes. In Act III scene ii, the bed is playing a double role of the place where humans rest and sleep, but also the place where the boundary between sleep and death is weakened. Suffolk uses this to his advantage and points out the bed as the specific place of death when giving the news to King Henry, saying, "Dead in his bed, my lord; Gloucester is dead."[66]

[65] (III.ii.11-12), *2 Henry VI.*
[66] (III.ii.29), *2 Henry VI.*

In Edward Hall's chronicle history, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1584), he states that the historical figure the Duke of Gloucester met the same end as his theatrical counterpart: dying in bed under suspicious circumstances at an inopportune moment for England's governance. Hall's chronicle points out that if the good Duke Humphrey—King Henry's uncle and substitute father figure—is not safe, then no one is safe anywhere. The anxiety of Hall's comments are fixed on locations, saying, "[…] no place no not the courte the chief refuge of all, nor the dwellying house, nor yet a mannes priuate Castle, or his bed ordained for this quietness, is out of daungier of deathes dart."[67] The space of the king's court, as Hall notes, was previously a place for shelter and sanctuary, but now is no longer safe. If the king's lodging is unsafe, Hall's logic follows that the king's entire realm is in jeopardy. Hall includes a "bed ordained for this quietness" in the list of once safe places that are now mere target boards for "death's dart" to strike.[68] This description in *The Union* shows Hall's awareness that the location of a murder matters. Suffolk's announcement that Gloucester is "dead in his bed" is chilling, but the moment is also the dramatic highlight of *2 Henry VI*. The original title to *2 Henry VI* includes the subtitle, "*With the Tragicall ends of the good Duke Humfrey, Richard Duke of Yorke, and King Henrie the sixt*" showing that Gloucester's death was a selling point for Shakespeare's audience.[69]

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[67] Hall, p. 209.
[68] Hall, p. 209.
[69] The full title published in 1594 is *The Whole Contention between the two famous houses, Lancaster and Yorke: With the Tragicall ends of the good Duke Humfrey, Richard Duke of Yorke, and King Henrie the sixt.*

Gloucester's murder is swiftly followed by the fall of his great enemy, Henry Beaufort, Cardinal Winchester. Act III scene ii draws the attention away from Henry's troubled court into a more domestic space, a bedchamber in the Cardinal's house.[70] Winchester seems to be overcome with guilt for his role in the murder, possibly from the close family relationship; Cardinal Winchester is Humphrey's uncle, so it is his own nephew's death that the Cardinal approved in advance. Now in Act III scene iii, the stage direction establishes that he is lying in bed, and Arden editor Ronald Knowles includes the contextual note that the Cardinal should also be "[*raving and staring as if he were mad*]."[71] Winchester lies dying and trapped in a hallucinatory dream-like state that is feeding off his guilty conscience, one that is stuck on Gloucester's murder and its consequences.

The Cardinal is unable to recognize King Henry VI at his bedside, mistaking him for Death coming to collect his soul. Winchester narrates some of this waking dream, describing a nightmare in which he is on trial and under questioning for his role in Gloucester's murder.

Bring me unto my trial when you will.
Died he not in his bed? Where should he die?
Can I make men live, whe'er they will or no?
O, torture me no more! I will confess.[72]

The Cardinal recalls the image of Gloucester's deathbed, the bed which is serving as the alibi for the claim that Gloucester died in his sleep of natural causes. But in this

[70] Footnote: "location: a room in the Cardinal's house, Bury St. Edmunds." *2 Henry VI.* Knowles, p. 255.
[71] SD (III.iii.0), *2 Henry VI.*
[72] (III.iii.8-11), *2 Henry VI.*

passage, the tone of the Cardinal's language suggests his acknowledgment that this is a weak cover story— "died he not in his bed?"—and his answer is to continue asking deflective questions that seem to further confirm his guiltiness.[73] The allusion to the bed that Gloucester was murdered in has reappeared in this scene, and now it is the Cardinal's deathbed that the play directs our attention to. Though Gloucester's murder happens offstage, Act III scene iii seems to do the double work of showing us what the image of Gloucester dead in his bed might have looked like, as well as the Cardinal's guilt-ridden final moments as the play's means of punishment for a sinful life. There is a sense of irony in the two enemies dying in the same domestic space of the bed.

The statement that Winchester has a confession to make regarding the Duke of Gloucester's death anticipates an acknowledgement of his crimes, but the confession never comes. As Shakespeare's audience would have likely known, committing a mortal sin would prevent a soul from entering heaven, unless they have confessed. After Winchester dies in the scene without a last confession, the Earl of Warwick states that, "So bad a death argues a monstrous life."[74] This monstrous life is described in Act I scene i, by the Duke of Somerset addressing a group of lords, he says, "Yet let us watch the haughty Cardinal; | His insolence is more intolerable | Than all the princes' in the land beside."[75] Insolence here carries the sense of overbearing pride, an arrogance that is almost unbearable to be around. The historical

[73] (III.iii.9), *2 Henry VI.*
[74] (III.iii.30), *2 Henry VI.*
[75] (I.i.171-173), *2 Henry VI.*

Cardinal Beaufort was one of the richest individuals in England at the time, and his immense wealth made him effectively Henry VI's private banker.[76] In the delirium of his final bedridden moments, Shakespeare's Cardinal believes that Gloucester is brought back to life, "Alive again? then show me where he is, | I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him."[77] His mind is still on the material world, offering to King Henry—who the Cardinal's vision has transformed into Death— "I'll give thee England's treasure, | Enough to purchase such another island | So thou wilt let me live and feel no pain."[78] Again, this is not the Cardinal talking to God or praying for forgiveness, it is a conversation between himself and Death. Previously lambasted by other characters for his excessive wealth, the Cardinal is now willing to give it all away in exchange for a few more moments of life. Henry VI instructs those in attendance to "Close up his eyes and draw the curtain close" to hide body from view. The Cardinal dies in a four-poster bed with curtains that can be drawn shut—a mark of his aristocratic status.[79]

Upon hearing the details of Gloucester's death made public, the Cardinal reacts by saying, "God's secret judgment: I did dream to-night | The duke was dumb and could not speak a word."[80] The statement is clearer upon reading "to-night" as last night, but what is "God's secret judgment" here? Is God judging and punishing a dream figure of Gloucester with muteness because of his failure to use language and

[76] Knowles, p. 159, footnote 172-4:
[77] (III.iii.12-13), *2 Henry VI.*
[78] (III.iii.2-4). *2 Henry VI.*
[79] Charles Nicholl. *The Lodger Shakespeare: His Life on Silver Street*. Penguin, London: 2008. p. 76.
[80] (III.ii.31-32), *2 Henry VI.*

communication to resolve the conflicts and rivalries in the English court? Or does the judgment refer to the Cardinal himself?[81] Ronald Knowles notes that "The Cardinal dies in 3.3 as if he, not Suffolk, was responsible for Gloucester's murder."[82] Although Suffolk planned the murder, he did so with the knowledge that he had the support of Queen Margaret, the Duke of York, and Cardinal Winchester. But it is his statement about his dream of Gloucester unable to speak which points to death via a guilty conscience.

It is curious that the Cardinal not only has a disturbing dream about Gloucester before he too dies in bed, but that he decides to say it out loud during a moment when it seems he would do best to stay quiet. In the Cardinal's brief narration of the dream, "The Duke was dumb and could not speak a word," whereas in this bedroom scene, the half-awake Cardinal has spoken too many words.[83] Thomas Hill interprets dreams on this subject by saying, "But to dreame that he cannot speake, or to haue the tongue, bound or tyed in the mouth: doth portēd the impedimente of actions or doinges, and also pouerty."[84] According to Hill, if the sleeper dreams of muteness, it signifies the obstruction of the future goals and could also foretell poverty. The Cardinal dies incredibly wealthy but is spiritually impoverished in his death scene; he is ridden with shame, and in his hallucinatory

[81] The Protestant history chronicle Foxe's Book of Martyrs on the Cardinal's death, "…it was Foxe who directly accused the Cardinal of complicity in Gloucester's murder and saw his death, although a year later, as God's judgement: 'The next year following, it followed also that the cardinal, who was the principal artificer and ringleader of all this mischief, was suffered of God no longer to live' (3.716)." Knowles, p. 159.
[82] Knowles, p. 255, footnote 1-2.
[83] (III.ii.32), *2 Henry VI.*
[84] Hill, unnumbered page.

dream state, he cannot recognize or acknowledge King Henry VI or the lords attending him—dying in a sense, alone. Citing Aristotle, Hill explains that dreams are often shaped by the mind's waking preoccupations, "[…] euen so is bee moued to dreame those thinges whiche were a good whyles together thought vpon in the day tyme, in that they soner come to mynde."[85] Being a key conspirator in the planning of Gloucester's murder, it seems the Cardinal's waking thoughts were so engrossed with the circumstances of the murder, that the worries continued into this secondary dream. As the Cardinal dies, he narrates a second dream, he sees both Death and the shade of Gloucester with dust blinding his eyes, possibly from being smothered with a mattress made of finely chopped straw.[86] Thinking of Gloucester's shade and his appearance in two dreams—he cannot speak, he cannot see—the Cardinal may feel as though he has stripped away Gloucester's life sense by sense.[87]

The weak defense that Gloucester died in bed naturally does not work to satisfy the English citizens who held him in high esteem; once the word is spread that Gloucester is murdered in Act III, scene ii, the Commons become a mob demanding that Suffolk be punished. The Earl of Salisbury[88] enters the scene to describe the uproar and raise the issues the Commons are expounding:

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[85] Hill, Cr1-Cv2.
[86] Knowles, p. 282, footnote 14: "Cairncross has an extensive note from Vaughan on 'dust-beds' (no entry in the *OED*), apparently made up with finely chopped straw which if used to smother Gloucester, as Hall suggests, might well have left this *dust*."
[87] Another description of losing one's senses while dying is given by Jaques, "Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything." (II.vii.166), *As You Like It*. The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works, 2001.
[88] This is not the Earl of Salisbury who dies in *1 Henry 6*, this is his son the 5th Earl of Salisbury, Richard Neville. He is the father to the Earl of Warwick, the "Kingmaker," also named Richard Neville.

They say, in care of your most royal person,
That if your highness should intend to sleep
And charge that no man should disturb your rest,
In pain of your dislike, or pain of death,
Yet notwithstanding such a strait edict,
Were there a serpent seen, with forked tongue,
That slily glided towards your majesty,
It were but necessary you were waked,
Lest, being suffered in that harmful slumber,
The mortal worm might make the sleep eternal.[89]

The metaphor of interrupted sleep illuminates the dangerous situation Henry finds himself in without the protection and authority of Gloucester to protect him. Salisbury narrates a hypothetical story in which Henry makes a proclamation that he needs to sleep and absolutely no one should wake him. But if there is a serpent (Suffolk) slyly creeping towards the sleeping Henry with ill intent, then the members of the Commons are morally obligated to wake the king and warn him of the imminent danger, even on pain of their own death for disobeying his command. The conditional phrase, "That if your highness should intend to sleep" strongly suggests a neglectful kind of rest—for a king's sleep is particularly vulnerable.[90] If the king feels that he *must* be "asleep" during such turbulent times, then it is their duty to wake him when the threat has reached the foot of his bed, lest the serpent's venomous sting kill him and "make the sleep eternal."[91] This definition of sleep as something both necessary and dangerous is a concern for Thomas Nashe, who writes in *Terrors*, "The rest we take in our beds is such another kinde of rest, as the wearie traueller taketh

[89] (III.ii.254-263), *2 Henry VI.*
[90] King Hamlet killed when he was "sleeping within mine orchard, | my custom always of the afternoon, | Upon my secure hour […]" (I. v. 59-61), *Hamlet*.
[91] (III.ii.255), *2 Henry VI.*

in the coole soft grasse in summer; who thinking there to lye at ease, and refresh his tyred limmes, layeth his fainting head vnawares on a loathsome neast of snakes."[92] The image of snakes coming into one's bed is an unnerving allegory for Henry VI's reign, another reminder of what happens in this world when one thinks they are safe and foolishly let their guard down.

Salisbury's extended metaphor calls Henry's sleep a "harmful slumber," one that destroys and wounds the sleeper more than it heals and restores them.[93] This "harmful slumber" is the same "sleeping neglection" that Sir William Lucy described in *1 Henry VI*, a sleep that has severely weakened the English position in France. It seems the death of Henry V sets off a chain reaction of terrible events, the most serious being the sleepy apathy to the deterioration of the English war effort in France—the conflict that defined the rule of Henry V.

Salisbury's speech explains that the Commons feel that they are in a situation where the neglectful "bad" sleep has reached a breaking point, and "It were but necessary [Henry] were waked," before further disaster occurs.[94] As Benjamin Parris writes, the king's body politic relies on "the presumption of the sovereign's devotion to continual vigilance,"—but Salisbury's words show that Henry VI is not keeping his end of the bargain, he is not devoted to keeping vigil.[95] It looks as though this speech is Salisbury's last desperate attempt to make King Henry acknowledge and act on the advancing unrest in England. By the final act of *Part 2*, the Earl of Salisbury

[92] Nashe, Bv2.
[93] (III.ii.262), *2 Henry VI.*
[94] (III.ii.261), *2 Henry VI.*
[95] Parris, p. 137.

and his son the Earl of Warwick have abandoned their allegiance to the king and have defected to the Yorkist cause. Henry reproachfully addresses the father and son in Act V scene i:

Why, Warwick, hath thy knee forgot to bow?
Old Salisbury, shame to thy silver hair,
Thou mad misleader of thy brainsick son!
What, wilt thou on thy deathbed play the ruffian,
And seek for sorrow with thy spectacles?[96]

The image of the deathbed returns for a third time in this play, when Henry addresses Salisbury to specifically remark that in his old age, he ought to know better than to challenge the natural order by abandoning the reigning monarch. As an old man so close to his deathbed, Salisbury should not "play the ruffian," or to act like a common criminal by starting violent skirmishes.[97] Henry also accuses Salisbury of being a "mad misleader" to his "brainsick son" Warwick, by pushing the younger towards joining the Yorkist cause.[98] The term brainsick reappears as well; Suffolk called Eleanor brainsick, the Cardinal was also brainsick and confused lying in his deathbed, and in *Part 1* Henry calls his courtiers brainsick.[99] Calling Warwick brainsick implies that he did not have enough awareness or mental willpower to even contemplate resisting whatever his father told him to do. In pairing the image of Salisbury's future deathbed with the concepts of brainsickness, mental weakness, and madness, Henry's lines reinforce that the bed and the domestic space of the bedchamber are locations of

[96] (V.i.161-165), *2 Henry VI.*
[97] (V.i.164), *2 Henry VI.*
[98] (V.i.163), *2 Henry VI.*
[99] Upon witnessing the unrest in his court, the young king Henry exclaims, "Good Lord, what madness rules in brainsick men, | When for so slight and frivolous a cause | Such factious emulations shall arise?" (IV.i.111-113), *1 Henry VI.*

helplessness. Henry reminds the audience of the body's exposure when in bed to spirits, demons, murderers, ill humours, and ultimately death.

2.4 — *Rex exsomnis*, The Sleepless King

In *3 Henry VI*, the motif of *rex exsomnis* returns in full force as watching and the lack of sleep is what defines this installment of the First Tetralogy. This section will inquire, what does watching say about social responsibility for kings in the early modern period? From Latin, *rex exsomnis* translates to vigilant king or king without sleep, a king who is obligated to keep a constant watch over their realm and its subjects. In medieval theology, King Henry VI must stay awake lest his authority and power cease while he is slumbers; if Henry is sleeping, he is not exercising his power as king. The king must then have two bodies, explains Ernst Kantorowicz, one body that can be mortal and feel exhaustion, hunger, and death, while the other constantly maintains authority.[100] The king's body politic metaphor provides an answer to the problem created by the belief that spirits or demons exercised their powers at night upon unsuspecting sleepers. As Ludwig Lavater explained in 1596, "For albeit the diuel take no rest, but is alwayes in readinesse to destroy vs, yet can he not hurt vs, so long as God kéepeth watche and defendeth vs."[101] In this sense, the king is God's representative on earth, the sole person who should not sleep under any circumstances.

[100] Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*: *A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, 1957.
[101] Lavater, Aa1-Aa2, p.186-187.

Although sleep means an interruption of a monarch's conscious life, the significance of the king's watch was important enough to King James I to advise his son Charles that the king must always be "a great watchman and shepheard [. . .] and his eye must neuer slumber nor sleepe for the care of his flocke, euer remembring that his office, beeing duely executed, will prooue as much *onus* as *honos* unto him."[102] Honor and virtue will be granted to a king who takes this duty seriously and watches vigilantly for the duration of his reign. Rebecca Totaro and Benjamin Parris both engage with the elusive concept of the sovereign sleeper's (corporate) body politic and consider the *rex exsomnis* role in Shakespeare's plays.[103] In *Vital Strife*, Parris discusses sleep as a method for communicating vital information, and examines how "Shakespeare takes up the key biopolitical conundrum that […] to sleep is to care for the bodily life that sustains waking attention" but to attain this waking attention, the sleeper must abandon the wakefulness that "promotes ethical and spiritual care."[104] Henry VI contemplates this enigma in Act II scene v, in a confessional speech in which he wrestles with maintaining his spiritual duty as king and his strong desire to withdraw from the world of court and rest unperturbed. As the war rages on, Henry VI seems to receive the violent events only passively; he retreats away from the Battle of Towton to speak a soliloquy lamenting the idyllic life he might have led if born a shepherd, "So many hours must I tend my flock, | So many hours must I take

[102] Parris, p. 97, quoting *A Paterne for A Kings Inavgvration*, by James I of England, 1619.
[103] Rebecca Totaro. "Securing Sleep in *Hamlet*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 50, no. 2 (Spring 2010): p. 407–426.
[104] Parris, p. 137.

my rest, | So many hours must I contemplate."[105]

As Ronald Knowles writes, in this soliloquy "Henry longs for pastoral retirement," but also specifically for the repetitive order of a simple life. In his fantasy of being a shepherd, resting and sleep are well-organized activities and in proportion to the other duties and experiences he "must" complete. The Shepherd Henry "must" take rest to be able to "tend [his] flock," which is another absolute order.[106] There is no reason for this version of Henry to stay up watching anxiously about maintaining the kingdom. By using "must I" in repetition, each condition reaffirms Henry's longing for a commoner's life, for the comfort of repetition and routines. He imagines a fantasy life, stating "O God! Methinks it were a happy life | To be no better than a homely swain,"; in Henry's dream life, waking, sleeping, working, and other activities are consistently regulated for a certain number of hours each day.[107]

Henry's speech continues with comparisons that make the shepherd's life seem more idealized and desirable. Rather than losing sleep as the *rex exsomnis,* Shepherd Henry would gain more hours by taking a daily nap "under a fresh tree's shade," and would sustain his body by consuming only simple and plain foods,

And to conclude, the shepherd's homely curds,
His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,
All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,
Is far beyond a prince's delicates;
His viands sparkling in a golden cup,
His body couched in a curious bed,
When care, mistrust and treason waits on him.[108]

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[105] (II.v.31-33), *3 Henry VI.*
[106] (II.v.31), *3 Henry VI.*
[107] (II.v.21-22), *3 Henry VI.*
[108] (II.v.47-54), *3 Henry VI.*

The shepherd life that Henry describes is romanticizing the image of sleeping outdoors under a tree shading him from the sunlight; this kind of rest is presented as far superior to any rest gotten in an elegant princely bed. The wholesome food and the habitual midday naps are enjoyed "secure and sweetly"— Henry is safe and far away from the noises of battle, much more secure than if "His body [was] couched in a curious bed." Couched in this line could mean lying down, or it can describe a person lying hidden or concealed.[109] The image is of Henry in own royal bed, a "curious," beautiful, and elaborately crafted piece of furniture that serves as a hiding place from his enemies, a childlike attempt at concealment. Henry's "dream" of pastoral life is his rejection of the demands placed on him as king, and as *rex exsomnis*. The sovereign's vigilance is the opposite of the shepherd's relaxation; Henry laments that "care, mistrust, and treason waits on him" and gives him a life where there is no pleasure in eating fine food if the food might be poisoned, and there is no pleasure in sleeping in a luxurious bed if you may be murdered in your bed, like Duke Humphrey.

Henry VI is anticipating his own death, like Richard II's lines "For God's sake let us sit upon the ground | And tell sad stories of the death of kings: | How some have been deposed […] some sleeping kill'd | All murthered—," in which Richard wonders which method of execution will be used for his death.[110] Benjamin Parris discusses how Shakespeare "[…] introduces this problem to the early modern synthesis of

[109] "Couched (a)." *OED*; "Curious (II.7a)." *OED*.
[110] (III.ii.155-160), *Richard II*.

sovereign vigilance and pastoral watch […]"[111] There is no retirement for medieval kings, the monarch reins until their death. Henry understands it is a lifelong position, however long or short his life may be. In his dream of a simple life, Henry is free from the burden of his status; he does not desire a bed that is better than anyone else's, he would rather have no bed and sleep on the ground. This is what Edward IV will imitate in *3 Henry VI*, as he truly wants to be king, but wants to sleep outside for different reasons. Henry imagines it, but Edward actually does it when he camps out in a tent with minimal guard. Henry's watch over his kingdom is mimicked by his usurper, Edward IV, who sets his own watch, signaling that he is mentally and physically prepared to be England's king.

The word "watch" did not apply only to staying awake, it could also mean staying awake with a *purpose*. At this stage in the story, the eldest son of the slain Duke of York, Edward, has named himself as king of England. Henry VI is still alive, meaning now there are two kings both claiming the English crown is their right. As the new contender for king, Edward IV naturally desires to make a name for himself as a strong, authoritative figure, and as a warrior. The chivalric era is mostly over, ending with the generation before Edward. However, there are still some fading leftover concepts from the chivalric era that Edwards is taking advantage of in *3 Henry VI*. Edward wants to prove his courage and so refuses to stay lodged in the nearby town with the rest of his army. This information is provided through a dialogue between the three watchmen who are tasked with guarding the king's lone

[111] Parris, p. 137.

tent. Their conversation elucidates that King Edward has decided to camp in this open field and forgo any sleep, as a measure of his courage and strength. The three watchmen in Act IV, scene iii describe the odd choice for the king to disturb his "natural rest" schedule.

First Watchman
Come on, my masters, each man take his stand.
The King by this is set him down to sleep.

Second Watchman
What, will he not to bed?

First Watchman
Why, no, for he hath made a solemn vow
Never to lie and take his natural rest
Till Warwick or himself be quite suppressed.[112]

The Second Watchman asks why Edward will not sleep, queries his decision to watch all night in his tent. The refusal to sleep and the refusal to accept *secure* sleep in a more reasonable location is met with disaster. Edward's opponent, Warwick, sees that his enemy is a sitting duck and takes the opportunity to capture him. Why does the play provide this information through the watchmen? There is no dialogue of Edward directly saying he will not sleep until Warwick is defeated. It is interesting to note that it is not Henry VI that Edward dreams of defeating. Henry is not involved in the battles and scenes of violence, does not lead, or encourage the army as Henry V would have done, but instead he allows himself to become a non-entity at this point in the First Tetralogy. Warwick is the commander of the Lancastrians. Arden editors Cox and Rasmussen point out that this excessive

[112] (IV.iii.1-6), *3 Henry VI.*

watching is not in the chronicle histories and seems to be an invention of Shakespeare's. Why would Shakespeare include it? Perhaps to show that Edward's first act as "king" is to be careless with the king's body. But Edward also seems to understand the importance of maintaining a continuous vigilance for a medieval king.

Edward falls in line with the concept of *rex exsomnis*, the need for this type of vigilance is something Henry VI could not understand during his rule. Henry assumes he will remain the king by virtue of his spiritual innocence and birthright. The Second Watchman says that Edward is camping alone because it is the more dangerous choice. Edward hopes that others, such as these watchers will talk about his bravery, and once the word spreads the story earns him honor and makes him seem kinglier in comparison to Henry.

Third Watchman
O, is it so? But why commands the King
That his chief followers lodge in towns about him,
While he himself keeps in the cold field?

Second Watchman
'Tis the more honour, because more dangerous.[113]

The Third Watchman is skeptical of Edward's plan, and wonders why his king "keeps," or watches in the chilly night air when his soldiers are housed indoors.[114] The question that Third Watchman asks prompts an unspoken follow-up question: why does Edward IV feel the need to prove his courage and honor to the Yorkists? The Second Watchman is more confident, thinking that if Edward's enemy Warwick

[113] (IV.iii.12-15), *3 Henry VI.*
[114] Cox and Rasmussen, footnote 14: keeps=watches, citing (*OED* v. 4b). p. 308

were to attack them now, their halberds would block his way, stating "Ay, wherefore else guard we his royal tent | But to defend his person from night-foes?"[115]
Still uncertain, Third Watchmen points out that "If Warwick knew in what estate he stands, | 'Tis to be doubted he would waken him."[116] This watchman fears Warwick's advance and communicates that dread in another image of someone waking a sleeping king, much like Salisbury's metaphor of sleeping Henry and the approaching serpent.

Warwick's coming attack will not wake Edward, as he is already awake and watching. But Edward IV has put himself in a strategically disastrous position that Warwick indeed takes advantage of. Though the risk was taken "because more dangerous," Warwick points out the conditions Edward has set up are in the Lancastrian's favor,

Warwick [speaking to Clarence]
And now what rests but in night's coverture,
Thy brother [Edward] being carelessly encamped,
His soldiers lurking in the towns about,
And but attended by a simple guard,
We may surprise and take him at our pleasure?[117]

Warwick redefines Edward's overconfidence as foolishness, as the king's body is now "carelessly encamped" in the dark with minimal guard. The watchmen are dangerously overconfident that the three of them alone can defend Edward from an unknown number of "night foes." The only other moments in the First Tetralogy that

[115] (IV.iii.21-22), *3 Henry VI.*
[116] (IV.iii.18-19), *3 Henry VI.*
[117] (IV.ii.13-17), *3 Henry VI.*

features dialogue from common watchmen is in *1 Henry VI*, when the French Sentinel and Gunner described their grueling experiences with watching. What can be inferred by these watchmen scenes? There is some sympathy for the French watchers, then we are shown English watchers. The conversation the three English watchmen have is an unusually long piece of dialogue for non-aristocratic characters. In a synecdoche, the Sentinel in *Part 1* speaks his complaint on behalf of all the common French soldiers. But, the three English watchmen are more individualized here, they have their own opinions about Edward IV's choices. Ludwig Lavater notes that guards were also vulnerable to spirits that show themselves to watchmen, "Yet it may not be denied but that there appeare many more vnto some, than vnto other some, as vnto trauellers, watch-men, hunters, carters, and marriners, who leade all their life not only in the day time, but also in night, in iourneying, in the water, woods, hills and vallies."[118]

Like the King's Two Bodies or the body politic, *rex exsomnis* is a metaphor; for Edward to take the concept literally only weakens the king's body, exhausts it, and unbalances the humours. It seems as though it would be difficult for Edward to watch over his sleeping army at night if the soldiers are in the town, and Edward is camped in a field outside of town.[119] Edward's body is also exposed, as Lavater explains, because excessive watching can make one quite ill, "By meanes whereof, those that inhabited the house, by reason of their feare, watched many heauie and pittifull nights: after their watching folowed sicknesse, and soone after, as feare

[118] Lavater, Chapter XIX. Pv1. p. 88.
[119] The location of this scene is near Banbury, where the battle of Edgcote was fought in 1469. Cox and Rasmussen, footnote 4.2, p. 305.

increased, ensued death."[120] Lavater's pamphlet, *Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Night*, frames extreme cases of watching as negligence to one's body for the average person; but the king is not average, and paradoxically must be seen as always watching over his subjects in order to be a worthy sovereign. This dialectic of requiring secure sleep while also attentively watching is particular to early modern culture; Totaro proposes that this very conflict is what creates and balances "civil, bodily, and spiritual health."[121]

2.5 —Richard Dreams on Sovereignty

Note: At this point in the First Tetralogy, Richard, the youngest brother to King Edward IV, has become the Duke of Gloucester. All further mentions of "Gloucester" will be referring to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, later King Richard III.

The First Tetralogy is described by Jane Howell "as a descent from chivalric values to bleak slaughter."[122] This decline in gallantry is emphasized by Edward IV's attempt to follow a knightly code of chivalrous conduct, and Warwick's choice to abandon chivalry and to attack the poorly guarded king at night. As a character, Richard represents this latter theme quite well, telling the audience that he dreams of the crown and plans to kill his brothers and their future sons in order to have it.

[120] Lavater, Chapter XII. Hv2. p. 58.
[121] Totaro, p. 409; Sasha Handley. *Sleep in Early Modern England*. New Haven Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016. p. 108.
[122] Knowles, p. 23.

As Act III scene ii draws to an end, Richard speaks his plans to become king in a soliloquy, using the word "dream" twice to describe his desires— the only usages of the word "dream" in *3 Henry VI*.

Why then, I do but dream on sovereignty
Like one that stands upon a promontory
And spies a far-off shore where he would tread,
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye,
And chides the sea that sunders him from thence,
Saying, he'll lade it dry to have his way:
So do I wish the crown, being so far off,[123]

Richard dreams of the crown but detests that it is a mere dream and that the path forward seems impossible; as the youngest York brother, Richard would need to be the only male member of the York family left living to become king. In Elizabethan plays, the dream of ambition—whether figurative or not—was a common trope to describe a character's innermost aspirations. For Richard, he aspires to reach the biggest seat of power possible and warns of the violent methods he will use. In his speech, he recognizes that the power and domination he desires are still a dream, and that he is quite far away from reaching the crown. But Richard also insists that he is up for the job, however difficult it is to get there. If he must ladle all the water out of the sea to reach his dream, then he will do it. As his speech continues, Richard's confidence in himself suddenly flourishes.

I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown
And whiles I live t'account this world but hell,
Until my misshaped trunk that bears this head
Be round impaled with a glorious crown.[124]

[123] (III.ii.134-140), *3 Henry VI.*
[124] (III.ii.168-171), *3 Henry VI.*

Richard of Gloucester now imagines himself as the future King Richard III that the audience knows he will become, in a moment of precognition correlated to the metaphor of dreaming and the mind-body connection—the "misshaped" trunk of his body *will* actually bear the crown. The same spirit inspires Warwick in *3 Henry VI*, when he urges his companions to go onwards, "stay we no longer, dreaming of renown."[125] It is action, not dreams and hopes that win a kingdom. The ambitious dream's primary relationship then is to heroic achievement—ascending a throne or winning a battle—and to personal fame and reward. Though Duke Humphrey was considered by Henry to be too virtuous "to dream on evil," this is exactly what Richard, the new Duke of Gloucester does.

In dreaming on the crown, Richard is clearly also dreaming on the murder of his brothers and nephews, stating he will be so wily, so deceptive, and such a convincing actor as to "set the murderous Machiavel to school."[126] Richard is well acquainted with the Machiavellian dictum to act only when it seems politically advantageous to do so, but the stage Machiavel is a different figure, a stock character who often ends up making their social position too vulnerable as a result of their scheming. Richard hopes to be the former type, but of course becomes the latter instead. But Richard begins his journey to the crown much like his father, the Duke of York, made his plans to usurp Henry VI. In a soliloquy at the start of *Part 2*, York tells himself to be patient for the opportune moment to strike, "Then, York, be still

[125] (II.i.198), *3 Henry VI.*
[126] (III.ii.193), *3 Henry VI.*

awhile, till time do serve. | Watch thou and wake when others be asleep."[127] Richard emulates his father in both the scale of his ambition and in the confidence in his own cunning.

By invoking dreams in his speech, Richard has now entered the First Tetralogy's world of dream and prophecy. Shakespeare takes the opportunity with the tetralogy's middle plays to feature characters who appear to be the authors of their dreams, but some who, as Hill might suggest, had a dream due to certain circumstances in the waking combined with images and thoughts from your day. Richard's first dream is a thought he is certainly the author and source of, but he is the only character in the First Tetralogy who will dream again. Although his dream is not a literal dream that comes while he is asleep, Richard's dream of the crown emanates from his dissatisfaction that the War of the Roses is coming to an end. This sort of mourning period for the ending of a war and the heroic past, truly frames the tetralogy; in *1 Henry VI*, the key dramatic moment is Talbot's death and the anxiety over the end of the chivalric era of military warfare.[128]

In the last scene of *3 Henry VI*, the victorious King Edward IV addresses his newborn son Prince Edward in the company of his brothers.

Young Ned, for thee, thine uncles and myself
Have in our armours watched the winter's night,
Went all afoot in summer's scalding heat,
That thou mightst repossess the crown in peace,[129]

[127] (I.i.259-260), *2 Henry VI.*
[128] Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare: The Histories. p. 81.*
[129] (V.vii.16-19), *3 Henry VI.*

King Edward's message is clear, the war between York and Lancaster was the dark winter's night that the York brothers watched over. Now the watch is over, the cold night is turned into a sunny day, a metaphor that Richard will open with in *Richard III,* "Now is the winter of our discontent | Made glorious summer by this son of York."[130] The first lines of *Richard III* not only lament that the glory days of battle are over, but show Richard's resentment that he is not the bright and shining "sun" of York, and that he does not have the sunny disposition to ever be so. Instead, Richard is couched in darkness, waiting, rejecting "[…] this weak piping time of peace," by making his own plans, waiting for the opportunity to live his dream.[131]

[130] (I.i.1-2), *Richard III*.
[131] (I.i.24), *Richard III*.

Chapter 3

"No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine": Nightmares and Bad Sleep in *Richard III*

Richard III is an exemplary play to argue that the essence of each dream is Shakespeare's engagement with dream discourse as a method for the repetition and remembering of moral failings. The central argument is that early modern dream theorists were concerned with defining logical explanations for interpreting dreams, and while Shakespeare is using concepts and ideas from the dream text genre, he is not imitating the goals of these theorists and provides no guide for interpreting the dreams in the First Tetralogy. Instead, Shakespeare uses the dreams as a technique of recapitulation, judgment, and shame in *Richard III*. Clarence's dream illustrates this beautifully, for if the dream were merely an omen of death or warning, it falls dramatically flat by coming far too late in the action to do Clarence any good. In essence, the play *Richard III* is framed by dream sequences, beginning with Clarence's dream, and ending in the dual dream of Richmond and Richard. This framing hints that the play's world will treat dreams and sleep differently than the *Henry VI* plays did, a structure that shows Shakespeare's intent to highlight the conflicting interpretations of history. The characters in *Richard III* debate the source and nature of their dreams as part of a wider conversation in the First Tetralogy to define English history as either a man-made disaster or a providential punishment.

Beginning with Clarence's dream narrative, this chapter will describe both dream theory texts as explaining dreams in an ordered and logical world, while showing the dreams of Shakespeare's First Tetralogy do not do so, and instead fuel a

world of suspicion, backstabbing, spying, and disorder. There will be an opportunity in this chapter to further discuss earlier dream texts that proved influential to early modern dream theory; the chapter will then turn to Richard and Richmond's dream in Act V of Richard *III*.

Richard Duke of Gloucester opens the play by making his loyalties and intentions clear, he says, "Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous, | By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams, | To set my brother Clarence and the king | In deadly hate, the one against the other."[1] Taking the utmost advantage of Edward IV's bad dreams and political fears, Richard tips-off the audience that he has spread the rumor about a prophecy of "G" that predicts the fast approaching end of Edward's line due to someone with a name beginning with the letter G. The prophecy of "G" is found in the chronicle histories of Edward Hall, Raphael Holinshed, and is also cited in *The Mirror for Magistrates*.[2] In the first scene of *Richard III*, Clarence repeats the rhyming prophecy to Richard, but he is disgusted that such "toys" and trifles as this have convinced his elder brother King Edward IV to imprison Clarence to the Tower of London.[3] But it is also George, Duke of Clarence who is woefully naïve in this scene, lamenting his circumstances to Richard:

He hearkens after prophecies and dreams,
And from the crossrow plucks the letter G;
And says a wizard told him that by 'G'
His issue disinherited should be.
And for my name of George begins with G,
It follows in his thought that I am he.[4]

[1] (I.i.32-35), *Richard III*.
[2] Hammond, p. 86.
[3] (I.i.60), *Richard III.*
[4] (I.i.54-59), *Richard III.*

Both brothers, Gloucester and Clarence, refer to prophecies and dreams as symptoms or side-effects resulting from their elder brother King Edward IV's ill health, but the language in the text is vague as to whether the prophecy is really from a dream Edward IV had, or merely a rumor started by Richard that his paranoid imaginings and daydreams have convinced him is real. The great irony of Act I is that Edward chooses to interpret the "G" of the prophecy as "G" for George of Clarence, overlooking his other brother Richard of Gloucester as the true "G" who would disinherit Edward's sons and end his line. The prophecy of "G" and its anxious issue of inheritance recalls King Henry VI's "true" prophecy of young Richmond as "England's hope" in *Henry VI Part 3*.[5] This is an intriguing case of a false prophecy ("G") proving equally as effective and reactionary as what the play's world would consider a "true" prophecy (Richmond's ascension). Despite the prophecy of "G" being a trifle, or example of a false dream, the power of King Edward's belief in it ultimately leads to the circumstances of Clarence's death. As Marjorie Garber expertly describes in *Dreams in Shakespeare*, "the only false dreams in [Shakespeare's] plays are not really dreams at all, but rather inventions on the part of the characters bent on manipulating others, as in the case of the prophecy about "G" in *Richard III*."[6] It is important as an example of Richard's use of widespread belief in magical thinking as one of the tools in his arsenal of tricks and manipulations.

[5] Hammond, p. 86. (IV.vi.68), *3 Henry VI*.
[6] Marjorie Garber, *Dreams*, p. 3.

3.1 Clarence's Dream

The two central dreams highlighted in this chapter will be Clarence's dream in Act I and Richard and Richmond's shared dream in Act V of *Richard III*. Beginning with Clarence's dream-turned-nightmare, this dream is unique for three reasons; first, in that the dreamer is imprisoned; second, the dream references events and characters from another Shakespeare play; third, the dream offers both a recapitulation and a culmination of the dreamer's deeds in life. The dream will remind Clarence and Shakespeare's audience of his bad behavior from the previous two plays in the first tetralogy series. The nightmare comes as a kind of reckoning for Clarence, who has betrayed both his brothers and his father-in-law in *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI* respectively, as well as his role in murdering a royal prince. The chaotic and erratic nature of Clarence's personal choices in the *Henry VI* series is paralleled in the description of this dream, marking it as peculiar for its narrative structure and its literary allusions.

This dream is of major significance as it is perhaps Shakespeare's most moving and rich narrated dream sequence. The lens of dreams can be used as a device to give characters a fresh perspective on complex concepts like ambition and power across this tetralogy. This is the case with Clarence's recitation of his maritime nightmare, spoken while he is being held in the Tower of London, moments before his murder in Act I of *Richard III*. While both pro- and anti-supernatural dream theory texts of the early modern era represent an ordered and logical world, this dream indicates more so than any other that the dreams of the First Tetralogy do not

do so. Instead, the dreams in the First Tetralogy fuel a courtly world of suspicion, backstabbing, and disorder. Though Hall and Holinshed were the primary sources for some of the First Tetralogy's dream material, there is no clear source for Clarence's famous drowning dream, and the invention of it by Shakespeare alone remains speculation.[7] Before recounting the contents of the dream to the Keeper of the Tower, Clarence pauses to build up the anticipation and explain the heavy look of turmoil on his face to open scene iv:

O, I have passed a miserable night,
So full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights,
That, as I am a Christian faithful man,
I would not spend another such a night
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days,
So full of dismal terror was the time.[8]

This appears to be the first instance in the play in which genuine Christian faith is invoked in a manner that is not dissembling, cursing, or sarcastic. An audience might be inclined to believe Clarence's statement of faith as honest based on the conviction Richard has displayed earlier in the first act that "Clarence hath not another day to live" and is "cast in darkness."[9] In repeatedly alleging that Clarence's life is soon to end, Richard has also cast his middle brother in sympathy. Now the repentant victim and "Christian faithful man," Clarence becomes a target to Richard's remorselessness. But this image of a mild-tempered and regretful Clarence is

[7] Hammond, p. 254. See also Fretz, *Dreams, Sleep and Shakespeare's Genres*, quoting John Jowett: "a richly intertextual passage; despite echoes of Virgil, Seneca, Ovid, Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), and Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590-6), amongst others, no single or direct source for this episode has been identified." p. 95.
[8] (I.iv.2-7), *Richard III.*
[9] (I.i.150) & (I.iii.327), *Richard III.*

constructed in the first act of *Richard III* and is not really the same Clarence who appears in *2 Henry VI* and *3 Henry VI*. As the dream passage will illuminate, this current Clarence is deeply haunted by guilt over his duplicitous actions during the wars of York and Lancaster. Specifically, Clarence's defection away from his brothers Edward and Richard to join his father-in-law Warwick's side, and the subsequent double-crossing of Warwick to return to his brother Edward IV's cause.

The dream sequence also makes Clarence forcibly recall his part in the violent death of King Henry VI's son and heir, Prince Edward, after the battle of Tewksbury in Act V, scene v of *3 Henry VI*. Considering this duplicitous background, it is evident why Clarence's dream contains so much disorder and malice, in which he sees himself unable to escape an eternally painful punishment. Though the deceased Prince Edward enters the dream as a figure "like an angel," Claude Fretz notices that the dream does not include any other blatant Christian imagery, but instead consists of pagan themes, including the descent into the underworld and crossing of the river Acheron. This fusion of pagan faith combined with "the look of a Christian prick-of-conscience dream" is a rich allusion to England's cultural history and will help to guide understanding of the play's courtly world of both skeptics and magical believers.[10]

The dream Clarence has is typically classified as a prick-of-conscience dream, one that mirrors the dreamer's suppressed waking thoughts and anxieties, those topics

[10] Fretz, p. 96.

which one strives *not* to think about during daylight hours.[11] But as both the dream and the two murderers sent by Richard of Gloucester reveal, Clarence's violent past has finally caught up to him. In opening this lengthy and richly elaborate dream narrative, Clarence starts his narration to the Keeper of the Tower:

Methoughts that I had broken from the Tower,
And was embarked to cross to Burgundy;
And in my company my brother Gloucester,
Who from my cabin tempted me to walk
Upon the hatches. There we looked toward England,
And cited up a thousand heavy times,
During the wars of York and Lancaster,
That had befall'n us. As we paced along
Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,[12]

The dream begins *in medias res,* with no images of Clarence seeing his dream-self completing a dangerous and daring escape from his imprisonment, but instead already a free man boarded on a ship bound to France. The first two lines of this monologue suggest not only freedom from political courtly woes, but also a permanent exile. With his brother Richard of Gloucester as his only companion and seeming fellow in exile, Clarence looks backwards toward the fading English coast. This backwards glance to England is a recapitulation of the Plantagenet brothers' shared murderous history during the events of the *Henry VI* plays. But rather than the parting from English soil being a moment of agony in the dream's world, the tone Clarence recalls is one of utter relief that they have escaped England and left behind the brutal memories of "a thousand heavy times" during the Wars of the Roses.

[11] Presson, p. 249.
[12] (I.iv.9-17), *Richard III*

Clarence's narration sets up his coming fall overboard by referring to "the giddy footing of the hatches" that he and his brother paced across. The hatches are the uneven planking of the ship's deck around an opening that leads below deck, and the formations of which are prone to causing unsure footing and dizziness.[13] The key term "hatches" focuses this section of the narration to the ship's structure—Clarence came up from his cabin below deck, and is now above, but soon will be descending again. The word also links the passage to Golding's 1567 translation of Ovid, specifically the sea journey of Acetis.[14] Golding translates Acetis' speech, "I will not suffer sacriledge within this shippe to go. | For I have here the most to doe. And with that worde I stept | Upon the Hatches, all the rest from entrance to have kept."[15] Acetis then receives "a churlish blow… That over boord he had me sent," but recovers from the purposeful push by catching hold of the tackling at the last moment.[16] Clarence, however, is sent tumbling overboard when trying to catch his brother Gloucester after an accidental stumble and thus begins his descent. The supposed unintentional nature of Gloucester's untimely tripping combined with the setting of the "giddy footing" leaving Clarence dizzy and his head swimming, all point to Clarence "communicating to us something that he himself does not know" as Marjorie Garber explains in *Dreams in Shakespeare*.[17] Unable to acknowledge Gloucester's murderous intentions while awake, Clarence instead ignores his

[13] "hatch, n.[1], sense 5.a" and "giddy, adj., sense 2.a, 2.c,". *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.
[14] Hammond, p. 80.
[15] Arthur Golding, *Shakespeare's Ovid*. Centaur Press Ltd., 1961. Book III. lines 792-4. p. 78.
[16] Golding, lines 798-9, p. 78.
[17] Garber, *Dreams*, p. 22.

suspicions and, in the dream, imagines the metaphor of accidentally falling overboard.[18]

Methought that Gloucester stumbled, and in falling
Struck me (that thought to stay him) overboard
Into the tumbling billows of the main.
O Lord, methought what pain it was to drown,
What dreadful noise of water in mine ears,
What sights of ugly death within mine eyes.
Methoughts I saw a thousand fearful wracks,
A thousand men that fishes gnawed upon,
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
All scattered in the bottom of the sea.
Some lay in dead men's skulls, and in the holes
Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept—
As 'twere in scorn of eyes—reflecting gems,
That wooed the slimy bottom of the deep
And mocked the dead bones that lay scattered by.[19]

Clarence vividly recounts the dream's transformation into nightmare when he describes the agony of drowning beneath the waves.[20] Scholarship tends to agree that the dream's narrative has a three-part structure—the allegory of falling off the ship, the drowning amongst the skulls and jewels, and the third part when Clarence meets the dead in the classical underworld.[21] In the second part of the dream during the

[18] Garber, *Dreams*, p. 23.
[19] (I.iv.18-33), *Richard III*
[20] The dream's narration contains imagery of shipwrecks and jewels-as-eyes is a precursor to Ariel's song:
Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made,
Those are pearls that were his eyes,
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell. (I.ii.396-403), *The Tempest*.
[21] For further reading on the dream's three-part structure, see Aerol Arnold, "The Recapitulation Dream," p. 53; and Garber, *Dreams in Shakespeare*, p. 21.

terrifying moments of his drowning, Clarence sees the ocean floor littered with vast, innumerable treasures that are lying by the dead and their wrecked ships. The colossal number of decaying bodies—the "ten thousand men that fishes gnawed upon"—recalls the aftermath of a battlefield littered with the corpses of the dead and parallels the destruction caused "during the wars of York and Lancaster." This image of a thousand dead sailors can easily be reimagined as dead soldiers and follows Thomas Hill's rationale in *The Moste Pleasuante Arte* that "dreames for the more parte are caused of those matters, whiche bee knowen to the dreamer" and thus contain patterns and scenes that the dreamer is familiar with from their life experience.[22] This conflicts with Garber's Freudian argument that the dream is actually Clarence's unconscious communicating danger to him; Hill's early modern text echoes classical beliefs of the dream experience that relied on intuitive knowledge about people and places to interpret dreams.

The contrast is most apparent in the practice of maintaining a healthy skepticism, as most early moderners authors advise their readership to do. Hill reminds his readers in the Preface to *The Moste Pleasuante Arte*, "I craue at thy handes gentle Reader to vse good descretion, to beleeue nothing rashlye, nor to pronounce anye thinge without good iudgment."[23] Ludwig Lavater also cautioned his readership to be wary of the things dream figures say to you, "the vaine dreames as it were of men deceased, that haue bin shewed to men in sléepe, haue deceiued,

[22] Hill, Bv3.
[23] Hill, unnumbered page. Image 8 on ProQuest.

peruerted & distroied many"[24] Both authors think it is critical to use good judgement and intuition to tell if a dream figure or the message they might bring is authentic, failure to do so is a guarantee that the individual will be severely harmed, or may even die.

The dream's transition from life to death, and other clues such as the image of the priceless stones as mocking eyes in the "dead men's skulls" to ridicule the bones of the drowned, show that the dream itself is mocking Clarence's lived experiences—a life spent in pursuit of war, riches, and power.

No, no, my dream was lengthened after life.
O, then began the tempest to my soul.
I passed, methought, the melancholy flood,
With that sour ferryman which poets write of,
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.
The first that there did greet my stranger-soul
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick,
Who spake aloud: 'What scourge for perjury
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?'
And so he vanished. Then came wandering by
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair
Dabbled in blood, and he shrieked out aloud:
'Clarence is come, false, fleeting, perjured Clarence,
That stabbed me in the field by Tewksbury.
Seize on him, furies! Take him unto torment!'[25]

The narration Clarence provides here fits all the elements of the travel-to-hell tale of classical antiquity, and it is during this third structural part of the dream when the meeting of the dead occurs. Before this happens, Clarence's soul passes across the river Acheron guided by Charon, "that sour ferryman which poets write of," a

[24] Lavater, p. 122
[25] (I.iv.43-57), *Richard III.*

conception of Charon indebted to Seneca's influence.[26] The most notable poets who write of Charon are Virgil and Dante, but more recently for Shakespeare, Thomas Sackville also alludes to "grisly Charon" in his Induction to Buckingham's story in *The Mirror for Magistrates:* "We passed on so far furth tyl we sawe Rude Acheron, a loathsome lake to tell […] Where grisly Charon at theyr fixed tide stil ferreies ghostes vnto the farder side."[27] Once the dream's second watery crossing is made, Clarence is immediately faced with the spirit of the Earl of Warwick, his "great father-in-law," a man still considered "renowned" many years after his death. Warwick appears as a dream figure of the Senecan tradition to deliver judgment and punishment, rhetorically asking, "What scourge for perjury can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?" to anticipate the lashing and torture that Clarence is due to receive from the Furies.[28] [29]

Warwick then vanishes and is replaced by the spirit of Prince Edward, heir to Henry VI, who appears shining and angelic one moment, but the next a horrifying figure "dabbled in blood" and shrieking for revenge. Both spirits arrive to reintroduce Clarence's past crimes and accuse him of being false and perjured— "Clarence is come: false fleeting perjured Clarence,"—the latter term being the very word that

[26] Hammond, on Senecan influence, p. 80: "[Harold] Brooks had added a large number of suggestive parallels from Seneca's plays; especially *Hercules Furens*, but also the *Hippolytus*, the *Medea*, the *Hercules Oetaeus*, the *Agamemnon*, and the *Thyestes*." Hammond on common depictions of Charon as sour, grim, etc., p. 173, footnote 46. See also Harold F. Brooks, "'Richard III': Antecedents of Clarence's Dream," *Shakespeare Survey* 32 (1979). pp. 145–150.
[27] William Baldwin and Lily Bess Campbell. Sackville's "Induction," *The Mirror for Magistrates*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1960. p. 315, lines 479-483.
[28] (I.iv.50-1), *Richard III*.
[29] "scourge, n., sense 3.a". *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.

sparked Clarence's murderous intent at the battle of Tewksbury.[30] The shame of being confronted with his own oath-breaking ignites another shameful memory: the stabbing of Prince Edward in *3 Henry VI*. The power of this memory recapitulation infuriates the shade of Prince Edward, who then commands a legion of furies to capture and torture Clarence— "Seize on him, furies!"[31]

It is crucial to emphasize here that in *3 Henry VI*, it is Clarence's betrayal of Warwick and the Lancastrians that ultimately led to their defeat and Warwick's death at the hands of the Yorkists.[32] The torments inflicted on him by the Furies are then a direct punishment for Clarence's past deeds in the *Henry VI* plays, which is being delivered now as forewarning about his death through the prophetic nature of the dream.

The intertextual significance of this scene is amplified due to its debt to the travel-to-hell journey as told in Don Andrea's prologue to *The Spanish Tragedy* by Thomas Kyd. First performed in 1587, Kyd's prologue features a voyage like Clarence's descent, in which Don Andrea explains, "when I was slain, my soul descended straight to pass the flowing stream of Acheron; but churlish Charon, only boatman there, said that, my rite of burial not performed."[33] Andrea continues in describing the deepest realms of hell as a horrifying place "where bloudie Furies

[30] Though his brothers begin the assault, Clarence delivers the final wound to Prince Edward, "And there's for twitting me with perjury!" [*Clarence stabs him*]. (V.v.40), *3 Henry IV*.
[31] For more on the two spirits delivering historical recapitulation, see Garber, *Dreams*, p. 25.
[32] Aerol Arnold, "The Recapitulation Dream in *Richard III* and *Macbeth*." *Shakespeare Quarterly*. p. 53.
[33] (I.i.18-20). Thomas Kyd. *The Spanish Tragedy*. London: 1558-1594. See also Hammond, p. 254.

shake their whips of steele" to torment the spirits of the dead.[34] The allusions to Charon, the rites of the dead, and the presence of the vengeful Furies carrying whips all foreshadow the approaching transition from life to death for Clarence. The rich narrative passage concludes with Clarence waking, not necessarily relieved to be alive after dreaming of a watery grave, but trembling and convinced he is still in hell because the dream has followed him into the waking world:

With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends
Environed me, and howled in mine ears
Such hideous cries, that with the very noise
I, trembling, waked, and for a season after
Could not believe but that I was in hell,
Such terrible impression made my dream.[35]

Clarence startles awake, shaking and frightened, and imagines an extension of the dream into real life. To find himself back in prison in the Tower is not such a far stretch from waking up in hell— it is as if the dream world of hell has crossed over into the waking world of the prison. The blurred lines between Clarence dreaming in hell and waking in prison is reflected in *The Moste Pleasuante Arte,* in which Hill connects dreams, the space of prison, and betrayal, explaining that there are dreams in which one may "see hymselfe in prison or imprisoned, signifyeth som false or crafty accusation agaynst hym."[36] Clarence is indeed a victim to the false and crafty accusations from Richard which have landed him in the Tower. Clarence's past

[34] (I.i.64). *The Spanish Tragedy*.
[35] (I.iv.58-63), *Richard III*.
[36] Hill, Ov8.

backstabbing of his family member Warwick and the Lancastrians results in Clarence himself also being backstabbed by a close relative.

Clarence's dream narration seems to foretell his approaching violent death carried out by Richard's hired murderers in the play, in which the murderers stab and then drown Clarence in a nearby wine casket. The dream's narration is fixated on two locations, underwater and then in the underworld; the former space raises an intriguing connection between Clarence's drowning in liquid (the wine barrel) and his placement in the Tower of London, geographically situated on the bank of the river Thames. Clarence will sorrowfully recapitulate the nature of his watery death as a dream figure in Richard's Act V dream, telling his sleeping brother, "Let me sit heavy on thy soul tomorrow, | I, that was washed to death with fulsome wine."[37] In being washed to death in wine that is a fulsome, physically disgusting liquid, Clarence's dream figure reminds the audience that the dreamer is placed in the loathsome, dark, and damp space of the famed river-side prison. The dream's fluidity between underwater to underworld then becomes an additional medium for considering Shakespeare's connection to early modern dream interpretation.

The visceral response that Clarence has to his nightmare echoes the foundational belief of most early modern dream theory, which defines a dream as a reflection of one's complete inner self—both the body and the soul. If the body and soul are tainted through committing murder or perjury, then one's dreams will show the consequences of those actions. However, early modern dream theory hosted some

[37] (V.iii.133), *Richard III*.

conflicting opinions, with many valuing skepticism over the inconsistencies of magical thinking. Writer Thomas Nashe held the skeptical view in *The Terrors of the Night* (1594), in which he writes to debunk nightmares and frightening dreams as mostly products of superstition and an over-active imagination. Nashe offers many materialist insights to the true nature of most bad dreams, attributing dreams about war and terror to some noise in the real world near the sleeper's outside environment, a "rumbling, knocking, or disturbaunce neere vs" that is heard by the sleeper and interpreted by the brain into dream events.[38] It follows then for Nashe, that "if a dogge howle, we suppose we are transported into hell, where we heare the complaint of damned ghosts," mistaking the dog's howls for demonic wails.[39] The difference between Nashe's beliefs and Clarence's dream is that Clarence holds immense guilt for his duplicitous and vicious actions during the wars of York and Lancaster.

Though Clarence is locked in the Tower of London, a location which may indeed include strange noises at night, the key variance is that Clarence is awash in remorse and knows that he deserves punishment. When the two hired murderers enter to kill him, Clarence uses religious doctrine to buy himself more time, saying, "[…] the great King of kings | Hath in the tables of his law commanded | That thou shalt do no murder, and wilt thou, then, | Spurn at his edict and fulfil a man's?"[40] But it is meaningful for interpretating the play that both murderers do not believe in his

[38] Nashe, Dv1.
[39] Nashe, Dv1.
[40] (I.iv.201-204), *Richard III.*

hypocrisy; the Second Murderer is quick to counter this argument, saying Clarence is the one who's soul is in more danger, "| For false forswearing and for murder too."[41] Invoking God does not help, as the First Murderer notes that Clarence is "[…] like a traitor to the name of God," after his crimes during the wars, when the Second Murderer scolds Clarence on his past betrayals, when he "Didst break that vow [to the Lancastrians] and with thy treacherous blade | Unrip'dst the bowels of thy sovereign's son."[42] Clarence perhaps deserves this recapitulation of his evil deeds, but he expected it to come in the form of an enemy attack in the material world, and not from the supernatural dream figures who ferry him to the underworld and speak to him.

Not all rejected the supernatural like Thomas Nashe, as is the case for Clarence, who is rapidly ensnared in the play's world of supernatural belief in courtly politics. For Clarence, the fiends and devils he dreamed of were real— beliefs echoed in textual sources like Thomas Hill's pamphlet, in which he acknowledges that of a dream of devils, "sometymes those bee trewe deuilles, whiche shewe themselues sodeinlye, beefore the soule departethe out of the mans bodye vnto a greater payne."[43] Hill describes the commonplace belief that real supernatural beings may appear before death, or more specifically, before the soul leaves the body.[44] Clarence alludes to this in his narration—"[…] often did I strive to yield the ghost, but still the envious

[41] (I.iv.207-208), *Richard III*.
[42] (I.iv.211-214), *Richard III*.
[43] Hill, Dr2.
[44] Hammond referencing Marlowe, p.173. Cf. 2 *Tamburlaine*, iv.ii.115: "Making a passage for my troubled soule, | Which beates against this prison to get out."

flood | Stopped in my soul and would not let it forth"—explaining to the Keeper of the Tower that his soul painfully struggled to depart from his body as he made his descent into the third structural section of the dream monologue.[45] In Clarence's mind, the realities of these dream events are on equal ground with the realities of being locked in the dismal Tower of London with no protection.

When Clarence wakes, the desperation of his situation becomes clear and leads him to quickly pray, asking God to spare his innocent wife and children. Then the two hired murderers enter, and Clarence pleads for his life by using arguments grounded first in law, then in Christian doctrine— "the deed you undertake is damnable."[46] The emphasis placed on language concerning God's law shows Clarence attempting to return to the Christian world of repentance and forgiveness. Though the dream sequence covers both pagan and Christian imagery, there is no forgiveness for Clarence from either spiritual realm, and as his murderers point out, Clarence has also committed the sin of murder.[47] Even the ever-practical author Nashe admits that no dreams are quite as frightening or as telling "as to those whose accusing priuate guilt expects mischief."[48] The most basic function of the dream then, is the reaction it causes in Clarence when he re-enters the waking world; the panic he feels and the existential weight of the dream leads Clarence to an alarming realization of the deadly situation he has awoken to. Using the lens of the dream, Clarence gains

[45] (I.iv.36-37), *Richard III*.
[46] (I.iv.191), *Richard III*.
[47] Fretz says there is no Christian imagery in the dream, he does not count the appearance of Prince Edward as a "shadow like an angel." p. 96.
[48] Nashe, Dr1.

the insight about his predicament he lacked at the opening of Act I and prepares himself for death.

Anthony Hammond describes the play through a series of rituals of shared guilt that are performed to excise the demonic Richard, and while the play heavily relies on scenes of "ritual expiation of collective guilt […] Clarence's dream is the most extended of these."[49] Clarence's guilt, fear, his pleading, and finally his death makes the first act of play immediately engaging and thrusts the reader into the brutal atmosphere of the play's world, whether we are ready or not. Garber uses a Freudian argument to explain the dream as an instance where "imagination and the creative unconscious begin to replace the mechanism of witchcraft and omen as the proper architects of dream."[50] The dream shows Clarence the worst moments of his life replayed before him— his brother Richard in some way responsible for his own terrifying death— the remembrance of his betrayal to Warwick and Prince Edward— torturous punishment from both the Christian and pagan afterlives. The dream theory texts try to explain the phenomenon of dreams as part of an ordered world—either a world in which dreams may be expected to come from the supernatural or a world in which dreams come from lived experience and memories. Shakespeare wrote Clarence's dream as ultimately a hybrid of both worlds: as the rejection of absolution by both the Christian and pagan worlds that stems from Clarence's own fantasy, memory, and guilt.

[49] Hammond, p. 99.
[50] Garber, p. 21.

3.2 Lord Stanley's Warning

The tale of Lord Stanley's dream narrated to Lord Hastings to warn him of the danger to his life is sourced from Thomas More's *History of King Richard III* and the story reproduced in Edward Hall's *Union of the Two Noble and Illustrate Famelies of Lancastre and Yorke.*[51] In Richard III, the disagreement between Stanley and Hasting about the meaning of the dream is another instance of Shakespeare's interest in the complexity behind early modern dream interpretation.

This dream appears in Act III, scene ii, as a messenger arrives from Lord Stanley at the home of Lord Hastings, at four o'clock in the morning. The messenger relates the story of his master's dream to a sleepy Lord Hastings. Hastings himself has just woken from slumber to the messenger's knocks at the door (the stage direction is in the Folio), and asks with some annoyance, "Cannot my Lord Stanley sleep these tedious nights?"[52] The knock at his door during the late hour is an ironic death knell, perhaps signaling ahead that Stanley's messenger will not be heeded. It mirrors Hastings' own guilty act of knocking at the city gates of York on behalf of King Edward VI and the Yorkists. Here, Hastings committed perjury in falsely swearing there was no plot of harm for King Henry VI.[53] Lord Stanley's worrying dream which seems to predict Hastings' subsequent demise at the hands of Richard is

[51] Fretz, p. 102
[52] (III.ii.5), *Richard III.*
[53] James R. Siemon. "Introduction" to *King Richard III*. Arden Shakespeare, Third Series. London: 2009. On "perjury." p. 261; Hastings falsely says to the mayor of York, "Why, master mayor, why stand you in a doubt? | Open the gates, we are King Henry's friends." (IV.vii.27-28), *3 Henry VI.*

the recapitulation and punishment for the perjury Hastings had a hand in against the hereditary king Henry VI. The messenger from Stanley narrates:

He dreamt the boar had razed off his helm.
Besides, he says there are two councils kept,
And that may be determined at the one
Which may make you and him to rue at th'other.
Therefore he sends to know your lordship's pleasure,
If you will presently take horse with him
And with all speed post with him toward the north,
To shun the danger that his soul divines.[54]

In sending this message, Stanley includes information that is not from his dream, that of his anxieties concerning two meetings that are scheduled for the next day "One concerning the coronation, one in private consultation with Richard (at Crosby House according to Hall) about making him king."[55] It is not entirely clear then, if Stanley's message is truly about a real dream, or is a coded political warning that something truly outrageous is being plotted underneath their noses—that the meeting for Prince Edward's coronation day is taking place on the same day as the plot to overthrow him and install Richard as king. This information is revealed to the audience in the previous scene by Buckingham, so it is unclear how Stanley could have received the news so quickly, but he nevertheless attaches it as a crucial piece of information in the message about the boar dream.[56] Stanley sets up the events of Act III, scene iv, by saying that something terrible will happen at the first meeting that would make both Stanley and Hastings lament the second meeting, namely, that it

[54] (III.ii.10-17), *Richard III*.
[55] Siemon, on "divided councils." p. 259.
[56] Buckingham: "For we tomorrow hold divided councils." (III.i.179), *Richard III*.

shall be confirmed that Richard will usurp his nephew at the first meeting—subverting the second meeting's intended purpose of preparing a coronation for Prince Edward into making a public space to arrest Hastings for treason. The urgency of the message perhaps becomes diluted due to the conflicting natural and supernatural interpretations at odds with each other; the gory dream about the boar attacking Stanley versus the real-world meetings scheduled to take place. Stanley asks Hastings to take a giant leap of faith and believe both in the danger of the meetings set to take place, but also to recognize that the images in his dream—the boar, the helm—are metaphors that represent Richard and Stanley himself.[57] The boar is Richard's personal heraldic emblem, while the helm is the headpiece of Stanley's armor, where the Stanley family crest would sit. To dream of a boar "razing" or scraping off the crest shows that Stanley's primary worry is not saving Hastings' life or warning him of his impending arrest but preventing the erasure of his own family line.[58]

All of this consideration of the symbolic workings of the dream world informing and being informed by real events is rapidly dismissed by Hastings; utilizing the skepticism that was the trend of skeptical thinkers in the early modern period, Hastings answers the messenger saying, "Tell him his fears are shallow,

[57] Artemidorus argues that to dream of "animals that are violent, savage, and intractable as, for example, the wild boar and the bear, indicate men of this kind." Artemidorus, p. 207. The historical King Richard's white boar standard is then quite fitting to his fictional self's temperament.
[58] Hammond, "But he [Stanley] expects Hastings (and us) to perceive that the emblems have a realistic connotation. To raze off is to scrape, or cut off, but is also to rub out, erase; Stanley fears not only his death but the obliteration of his line." p. 222, footnote 10.

without instance."[59] He rejects the warning for the twofold reason that insisting on the truth of a dream is a mark of the uneducated and simple—"And for his dreams, I wonder he's so simple | To trust the mockery of unquiet slumbers"— and because Hastings thinks it would put them both in a politically weak position to flee—"to fly the boar before the boar pursues | Were to incense the boar to follow us."[60] To flee from Richard would only alert Richard and his cronies that Stanley and Hastings are untrustworthy, disloyal, and worthy of further investigation or even pursual. Hastings plays along with the boar metaphor to better express his fear of being chased by Richard and eventually caught. In presenting this possible outcome as far more terrifying than complacently staying put, Hastings tells the messenger that Stanley should meet him, and they can go together to the Tower where, Hastings believes, Richard will treat them "kindly" and with courtesy if they stand by him now and prove their loyalty.[61] When experiencing the play *Richard III*, however, the audience knows that Richard, Buckingham, and Catesby have privately decided to test Hastings' and Stanley's loyalty at the end of Act III, scene i. If Hastings refuses to support Richard's claim for the crown, then Richard will "Chop off his head;" which is indeed how Hastings meets his end.[62]

[59] (III.ii.24), *Richard III*.
[60] (III.ii.25-8), *Richard III*.
[61] Hammond, p. 223. On "kindly": "the audience knows that he will use them kindly in another sense, i.e. after his boarish nature or kind" (Thompson).
[62] (III.i.193), *Richard III*.

Shakespeare's source for the dream comes from Thomas More, who writes an account of this specific nightmare in his book *Life of Richard III*, written between 1513 and 1518, and published after his death in 1557.[63] More says of the dream:

> For the self night next before Hastings' death, the lord Stanley […] had so fearful a dreame, in which he thought that a boar with his tusks, so razed them both by the heads, that the blood ran about both their shoulders […] this dreame made so fearful an impression in his heart, that he was thoroughly determined no longer to tarry, but had his horse ready, if the lord Hastings would go with him to ride so far yet the same night, that they should be out of danger ere day.[64]

This excerpt rather gives away the dramatic power behind the story by beginning with the death of Hastings and working backwards. More's version of the story has both Stanley and Hastings speared through the heads by boar's tusks, the helm and its family crest not present, but the image is far more violent and bloody. It is noteworthy that Shakespeare's version radically simplifies and tidies up More's telling, erasing the image of two decapitations, and having Stanley's messenger give an incredibly short dream narrative in comparison to Clarence's lengthy narration.

In Shakespeare's version, Hastings replies with a mild dismissal, but in More's *Life of Richard III,* his condemnation is markedly harsher, responding to the messenger that "it is playne wichcraft to beleve in such dreames," displaying more staunchly the traits of an Elizabethan materialist, interpreting dreams itself is an act of witchcraft, a mortal's foolish attempt to make something out of nothing.[65] Hastings adopts this stance to Nashe's beliefs in *Terrors of the Night,* who wrote "what sense is

[63] More's source was Polydore Vergil and the Crowland Chronicle. Hammond, p. 78.
[64] Thomas More, *The History of King Richard III*. Ed. J. Rawson Lumby. London, 1883. p. 48-49.
[65] More, p. 49.

there that the yoalke of an egge should signifie gold, or dreaming of Beares, or fire, or water, debate and anger, that euery thing must bee interpreted backward as Witches say their Pater-noster, good being the character of bad, and bad of good."[66] The argument for materialism goes un-rewarded in Shakespeare's play, and instead the dream ushers in the punishment awaiting Hastings for his acts of perjury in *3 Henry VI* that led to the usurpation and murder of Henry VI. But when Hastings refuses to consent to letting the English throne pass over Edward IV's son, Richard swiftly arrests him for treason. Much like in the aftermath of Clarence's dream, Hastings realizes that he has been trapped in the spider's web far too late. Hastings remembers the warning in Stanley's dream and laments, "For I, too fond, might have prevented this. | Stanley did dream the boar did raze his helm, | And I did scorn it and disdain to fly."[67] In recalling the message from Stanley, Hastings bitterly regrets not taking the heraldic imagery and vaguely clairvoyant elements of the dream seriously, an irony of realizing fatal danger too late that is a common occurrence for many of Shakespeare's tragic characters.

3.3 Lady Anne's Interrupted Sleep

The composition of Act IV, scene i, of *Richard III* is unique for bringing together three or more female characters in one scene, which is not something that happens elsewhere in the First Tetralogy. The scene includes Queen Elizabeth (wife

[66] Nashe, Dv4. On the interchangeability of boare/beare, see Siemon, p. 262 "boar": Q1's 'beare' persists until Q6 changed to 'Boare', a remarkable persistence since Hastings's next Qq speech has 'boare' four times."
[67] (III.iv.80-2), *Richard III*.

to the dead king Edward IV), the Duchess of York (mother of Edward, Clarence, and Richard), Lady Anne, and by scholarly identification, Clarence's Daughter appears in an unspeaking part.[68] The women greet each other courteously outside the Tower of London, but upon being denied entrance to see the princes, the tone considerably changes. Lord Stanley enters to deliver a message for the courtly ladies that in one hour's time Anne will "[…] be crowned Richard's royal queen."[69] The news of Anne's ascension is met with horror, as it is merely a formal courtesy meant to reveal Richard's usurpation of his nephew Prince Edward, the eldest son and heir of the late King Edward IV.

Arden editor Hammond asks a key question about scenes such as this, "what are the sources for the episodes in the play which cannot be traced to the chronicle material: Clarence's dream, the wailing Queens, and so on?"[70] Though there is no clear source for this episode in which the "[…] two fair queens" lament their situation, Shakespeare reasonably imagines that Lady Anne is distraught by this news that she is further ensnared under Richard's power.[71] In the lines she speaks shortly after Stanley delivers the message, Anne wishes death (via searing hot crown) for herself rather than to become Richard's queen, but Queen Elizabeth compassionately

[68] Siemon, p. 309, footnote 1. Theobald's identification that the scene's opening line by the Duchess of York, "Who meets us here? my niece Plantagenet | Led in the hand of her kind aunt of Gloucester?" Clarence's Daughter is the "niece Plantagenet," or the Duchess's granddaughter, and Lady Anne is the "aunt of Gloucester" holding the child's hand.
[69] (IV.i.32), *Richard III*.
[70] Hammond, p. 73.
[71] (IV.i.30), *Richard III*.

states, Lady Anne responds in an astounding monologue that reveals her and Richard's meeting, marriage, and sleep health,

No? Why? When he that is my husband now
Came to me, as I followed Henry's corse,
When scarce the blood was well washed from his hands
Which issued from my other angel husband
And that dear saint which then I weeping followed;
O when, I say, I looked on Richard's face,
This was my wish: 'Be thou', quoth I, 'accursed
For making me, so young, so old a widow;
And when thou wed'st, let sorrow haunt thy bed;
And be thy wife, if any be so mad,
More miserable by the life of thee
Than thou hast made me by my dear lord's death.'
Lo, ere I can repeat this curse again,
Within so small a time, my woman's heart
Grossly grew captive to his honey words
And proved the subject of my own soul's curse,
Which hitherto hath held my eyes from rest;
For never yet one hour in his bed
Did I enjoy the golden dew of sleep,
But with his timorous dreams was still awaked.
Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick,
And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.[72]

Anne reexamines the wooing between her and Richard from Act I, scene 2, exclusively from her point of view. The opening lines of her speech recall the frequent association of Richard with a demonic origin; Richard is imagined here as barely having washed the royal blood from his hands before approaching Anne for her hand in marriage. In Anne's eyes, the Lancastrian Prince Edward—an "angel husband"—and King Henry VI—a "dead saint"—represent the Christian ideal of good men, while Richard resembles a devil and is the subject of her curse. But Anne

[72] (IV.i.65-86), *Richard III*.

never actually says these lines about cursing Richard's future marriage bed in I.ii, it was merely her "wish" to speak the curse to Richard and whoever is mad enough to be his wife. In picturing cursing Richard, Anne unknowingly curses herself to poor sleep in the real sorrow-haunted bed she imagined. The speech's closing lines concerning Richard's "timorous dreams" confirm the disturbed and even evil nature of her husband's dream space. The conviction of early modern dream theory concerning the connection between dreams and the dreamer's physical and mental state appears guided by Shakespeare in this passage to introduce the subject of Richard's bad dreams as resulting from Richard's evil acts. Anne's lines about Richard's nightmares not only tease the death of the two princes in the Tower for the play's plot, but the lines also prime the audience for Richard's epic nightmare on the eve of the Battle of Bosworth.

The chronicle sources treat accounts of Richard's dreams as his mind and soul's commentary on its own bad health, the cause of his paranoid nature being guilt over the murder of the two princes. Edward Hall describes and image of a deeply distrustful and fearful Richard, "his hande ever on his dagger, his countenaunce and maner lyke alwaies to stricke againe, he toke euill reste on nightes, lay long wakyng and musying, forweried with care and watche, rather slombred then slept, troubled with fearefull dreames."[73] Hall's historical account drastically differs from how Shakespeare treats Anne's narration of attempting to sleep next to Richard, which is

[73] Hall, on King Richard III, fol. xxviii; cf. Holinshed, who says at the time of the princes' disappearance, Richard had a "strange vision […] it stuffed his head and troubled his mind with manie busie and dreadfull imaginations" (Holinshed, 3.755).

characterizing his evil nature rather than pointing to extreme guilt over ordering the death of the princes.[74] Shakespeare instead presents the news of the bad dreams only after confirmation that Richard is a usurper.

By confirming his role as supplanter of Edward IV's line, Richard becomes subject to the trademarks of the literary usurper: insomnia and terrifying dreams.[75] As usurper who suffers as Hall says, "evil rest," Richard now mirrors Shakespeare's Henry IV in his own attempts to fall asleep in *Henry IV Part 2.* While the kingdom slumbers in Act III, scene I, Henry IV's usurpation of Richard II prevents his conscious from allowing sleep; the king laments, "How many thousand of my poorest subjects | are at this hour asleep! O sleep, O gentle sleep, Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee, | That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down | And steep my senses in forgetfulness?"[76] Though Richard has no such eloquent words for his poor sleep, the narration provided by Lady Anne, her recapitulation of "Henry's corse" and her "dear lord's death" achieve the same effect as King Henry IV's apostrophe to sleep, and his tone of apology to nature itself for disrupting the natural lineage. Recalling Richard's killing of royal family members allows Anne's speech to mirror Henry IV's connection of murderous usurpation with cursed sleep.

The "wailing Queens" scene does not only serve to highlight a moment of female suffering in the First Tetralogy, but also places Anne in a unique position to

[74] Siemon, footnote 84, "But with his timorous dreams was still awaked"— "here treated as characteristic rather than specifically occasioned by the murder of the princes, as in the sources." p. 315.
[75] Hammond, footnote 84, p. 262.
[76] (III.i.4-8), *2 Henry IV*.

state what married life with Richard has been like up to this point in the play. Shakespeare gives Lady Anne the space to expose Richard's one true weakness: Richard is haunted by the past and does have a moral conscience, but one that only surfaces at night. Anne's confession that Richard's nightmares have caused her own lack of restful sleep enhances her tragic condition, which was already quite disastrous as a young widow with no apparent family support to fall back on. [77] The sleeplessness Anne experiences magnifies the suffering she already feels from being married to the person who killed her first husband, her father-in-law, and she suspects soon will kill her as well. As Anne bitterly recalls, Richard holds a grudge against her family for her late father Warwick's defection to the Lancastrian side, an act that prompted Clarence to do the same and temporarily desert the Yorkists. Anne's lack of resources presents the likeliest reason why she would agree to become Richard's wife, though she nonetheless misrepresents the wooing as successful due to her "woman's heart" and Richard's "honey words."

Anne's speech forces the remembrance of these events from *Part 2* and *3 Henry VI,* much like her first conversation with Richard in Act I, when Lady Anne accuses her wooer of having a tremendously violent mindset, "That never dreamt'st on aught but butcheries," based on his reputation from the wars of York and Lancaster.[78] There is truth in those lines, as it becomes clear that Richard metaphorically and literally dreams of battles and death. When Richard dreams of

[77] Fretz, p. 139. "Sleeplessness, in particular, is a physiologically, psychologically, and spiritually tragic condition."
[78] (I.ii.103), *Richard III.*

eleven dream figures of the dead coming to him as messengers in Act V, he finally startles awake and screams as if in mid-battle— "Give me another horse! Bind up my wounds! | Have mercy, Jesu."[79] Richard and Anne then both suffer interrupted sleep from Richard's bad dreams, which in early modern dream belief was the result of the retained evil inside of Richard from his past deeds.

Hill introduces this topic in his *Most Pleasant Arte* pamphlet, asking rhetorically, "Why is yt that the vertuous men and studiouse, haue often plesaunter dreames then the wicked and vicious persons [?]" Hill recites the theory that evil is physically held inside the body, explaining "the euill persons whiche dooe wicked woorkes, the kyndnesse of those euill are reserued, throughe whiche they often dreame, wicked dreames."[80] In his answer, Hill cites Aristotle's belief that deeds like treason or murder are "reserved" or kept inside the person's body, and subsequently expressed through terrible dreams at night.[81] In sourcing a classical writer, Hill gives authority to his own voice and subtle claim that evil held in the body is somehow kept alive or nurtured through dreaming.

With this understanding, the perspective of Lady Anne's monologue allows for her own way of resisting Richard's tyranny. Although Anne will only appear in *Richard III* again as a dream figure—she is announced dead in Act IV, scene iii, exactly as she passively predicted in her speech—in this final speech, she generates

[79] (V.iii.177-178), *Richard III*.
[80] Hill, Cv4.
[81] "reserve, v.¹, sense 2.a.i". *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.

knowledge about Richard's sleeping life and bodily weaknesses to his opponents (the primary listeners being Lord Stanley and Queen Elizabeth).

The dreams that Anne reports torment Richard—which are physically disruptive enough to keep Anne awake— seem to be a combination of the somnium animale (the psychological dream) and the somnium naturale (the bodily dream). The Elizabethan dramatic term somnium animale refers to a dream that occurs as a result of great anxiety and agitation, and is notably distinct from the guilty dream, or, the prick-of-conscience dream.[82] While the prick-of-conscience dream reveals desires that the sleeper's waking mind usually suppresses, the somnium animale is defined by scholar A. C. Spearing as "a distorted reflection of the Dreamer's waking life" in which one's own conscience acts as tormentor.[83] It seems fitting that when there is no one left in the play for Richard to torment, he turns on himself. This is evident in the dream that truly frames the play with Clarence's vivid sea dream, the dual dream of eleven visitations in Act V.

3.4 Richard and Richmond's Dual Dream

The emotional and theatrical highlights of *Richard III* are in the dream sequences of Act I scene iv (Clarence), and Act V, scene iii (Richard and Richmond).[84] The dual dream experienced by the leaders of both armies the night before the battle of Bosworth is perhaps the key example of Shakespeare presenting

[82] Presson. p. 240 & p. 249.
[83] A. C. Spearing, *Medieval Dream Poetry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (1976), p. 107.
[84] Hammond, p. 96

dreams in the First Tetralogy as a method for recapitulating tragic moral failings. Aristotle argues in *On Divination Through Sleep* that two individuals can indeed share dreams, "for example, friends, owing to their mutual concern, are specially receptive to stimuli coming from each other."[85] Richard and Richmond are not friends, but their mutual interest over the rule of England is undeniably a strong connection.

At the opening of Act V, scene iii, King Richard III is in his tent making the final preparations for the morning's battle. Richard refuses a nightly meal— "I will not sup tonight"—and instead calls for ink, paper, and wine to be brought.[86] The irregular eating may be for several reasons, such as fasting to rid himself of a variety of bad feelings, ill humours, or nasty spirits. Common early modern remedies to Richard's symptom of frequent bad dreams would include fasting and watching, which Richard does—but also praying, maintaining sobriety and "upright and godly lyving" as Ludwig Lavater suggests in his 1596 pamphlet *Of Ghostes and Spirites Walking by Night.*[87] Richard certainly does not pray or maintain sobriety in this scene before retreating to bed (onstage), but enemy Richmond enters and dutifully performs his evening prayer, specifically asking God to aid his forces in the coming battle and to protect Richmond's soul as he sleeps.[88] Richmond praying before bed, while

[85] Aristotle, 53. 464a27. p. 115.
[86] (V.iii.49), *Richard III*. Both Richard and Richmond call for ink and paper in Act V scene iii before falling asleep and entering their dreams, as both minds are heavy with the coming battle and eager to transfer their thoughts onto paper and unburden themselves.
[87] Lavater, "It behouveth them whiche are vexed with spirites, to praye especiallie, and to giue themselues to fasting, sobrietie, watching, and upright and godly lyving." Chapter VI. Fol. 193. Bb.i.
[88] Richmond: "Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes: | Sleeping and waking, O, defend me still! " (V.iii.116-7), *Richard III*.

Richard does not, hints to the state of their minds before the dream sequence begins; Richmond, hopeful and willing to receive assistance, Richard, disdainful of help whether it be physical (food) or metaphysical (spiritual aid).

When the setting for the eve of battle is announced as All Souls' Day, the second day in November, the dream is likewise set up as significant vision due to this date, and its form and contents. At the start of Act V, Buckingham emphasizes that he goes to meet his end on All Souls' Day, "This, this All Souls' Day to my fearful soul | Is the determined respite of my wrongs."[89] Buckingham, too, must receive his punishment for ill deeds done before he too becomes one of the dream figures to appear in Richmond's and Richard's dream. The date would have been a relic of pre-Reformation England to an Elizabethan, as All Souls' Day is believed to be the day in which souls in purgatory could appear to those who had wronged them during their life.[90] Popular belief additionally assumed that any dream occurring on days of special significance, such as Christmas or Easter, were always true dreams.[91] Shakespeare takes some liberty with the timeline to utilize the belief in All Souls' Day as a special day; the actual date of Battle of Bosworth Field was August 22, 1485.

The sequence that follows is unique for its many dream figures (the materiality of "dream figure" will be preferred instead of "ghost"), but chiefly that the dream's truth is anticipated by the audience because of these details to create the

[89] (V.i.18-19), *Richard III*.
[90] Siemon on "All Souls' Day" p. 378; Jones, *Origins*. p. 227-8.
[91] Fretz, p. 84. (see Hill 1576, sigs C1v, E2r).

ultimate prick-of-conscience dream. As the two opponents sleep onstage, the dream begins with the figure of Prince Edward (son of Henry VI) speaking directly to Richard— "Let me sit heavy on thy soul tomorrow. | Think how thou stab'st me in my prime of youth | At Tewkesbury; despair therefore and die."— the dream figure then turns to speak comforting words to Richmond, who sleeps on in his own happy version of the dream.[92] This same pattern continues for ten more visitations, in a chronological recapitulation of Richard's murders, starting with Prince Edward and ending with Buckingham. Richard and Richmond are unable to hear or see the other's dream, while asleep they only perceive only their own direct messages spoken by the eleven dream figures.

Holinshed again offers a source for Shakespeare, reporting that Richard's dream included "divers images like terrible devils, which pulled and haled him […] for conscience is so much more charged and aggrieved as the offense is greater and more heinous in degree."[93] Holinshed describes a prick-of conscience dream with additional devilish and demonic elements, likely guessing that Richard's dream of being visited by everyone he has murdered reveals that Richard was consciously suppressing these thoughts during his waking hours. However, Holinshed's account is vague enough to also keep open the possibility that this dream is a true haunting or a message from God.

[92] (V.iii.119-121), *Richard III*.
[93] Hosley, p. 262-3.

The dream figures speak with urgency about remembrance and continually demand that Richard think about them, remember them and their locations of death.[94] The command to think—on former comrades, on family, on the Tower of London—comes to an emotional climax with the appearance of the dream figures of Richard's princely nephews together.

Princes (to Richard)
Dream on thy cousins smothered in the Tower.
Let us be lead within thy bosom, Richard,
And weigh thee down to ruin, shame and death.
Thy nephews' souls bid thee despair and die.

Princes (to Richmond)
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. [95]

The nephews' dream figures repeat the motif "despair and die" that appears ten times throughout the dream sequence and is directed towards Richard. The outrageous performativity of devout religious belief done by Richard in Act III, scene vii, comes back through the theological concept of despair inhabiting a strong role in the final act of the play.[96] The figures of Rivers, Grey, Vaughan, and Hastings also wail the reprimand "despair and die," contrasted with the words and advice spoken to the sleeping Richmond, "Live and beget a happy race of kings […] flourish."

[94] "Harry the Sixth bids thee despair and die" (V.iii.127); "Think on Lord Hastings. Despair and die" (V.iii.156), *Richard III*.
[95] (V.iii.146-153), *Richard III*.
[96] Hammond, p. 93.

The dream figures come into Richard's dream solely to be reminded of and punished for the full extent of his sins, including his false displays of piety. As he tormented others, Richard is tormented by another outrageous performance, this time of a trial. The eleven dream figures are the judge and jury, and they find Richard undeniably guilty. The only fitting punishment is for Richard to "despair and die" after the crimes he has committed; the dream is Richard and the audience being prepared for that death.[97]

Richmond, the counterpart in the dream, is continually bid by the dream figures to return to the living, waking world to fulfill his duty, "awake and win the day."[98] But the dream figures desire that Richard stay asleep and within the confines of the dream world's control. The dream figure of Lady Anne enters to remind Richard of her own lost sleep while married to him— "Richard, thy wife, that wretched Anne, thy wife, | that never slept a quiet hour with thee, | Now fill thy sleep with perturbations"— sleep and vows to fill his current last sleeping hours with unrest and agitation while Richmond is bid to "dream of success and happy victory." [99] [100] In a clearer attempt to prolong the dream, Buckingham's dream figure enters and commands Richard "dream on, dream on, of bloody deeds and death," though the

[97] Fretz, "In all of this, the causality is important: Richard's dream does not preordain or preannounce his defeat in the manner of an oneiros in classical tragedy, but rather foregrounds and recapitulates the wrong doings that are already leading to his demise." p. 100.
[98] (V.iii.145), *Richard III*.
[99] (V.iii.159-162), *Richard III*. Anne is not represented in the play as Queen, but Q3-Q6 do have her ghost enter here as "Queene." Siemon, p. 395.
[100] (V.iii.165), *Richard III*.

dream is clearly coming to an end signaled by his own presence as the most recent victim.[101]

The dream's lineup of murdered royals appearing in the order of their deaths signals the return to the Senecan revenge influence that featured in Clarence's dream. The shades of royalty had specific place in early modern dream theory, as Hill's describes in *The Moste Pleasuante Arte* that "To dreame that hee seeth a Prince long a gone dead, with a mery countenaunce or lokynge merely, signifyeth a vaine hope to follow."[102] Though the dream figures that visit Richard are very unlikely to have a merry countenance when speaking to Richard, Hill's reference to seeing a prince long dead appearing merry could connect to the happy side of the dream, in which three English princes look merrily upon Richmond. The "vain hope to follow" could then be the battle of Bosworth's infamous end for Richard and Richmond's crowning. The difference between Hill and Shakespeare is that Hill makes a connection that dreams of princes are a metaphor for the dreamer's hopes and desires. Shakespeare takes the idea of a dream of princes but presents two dreamers and two vastly different reactions from the dream figures— one that is undeniably positive and echoes Richmond's desire to become king, and another that contrasts with Hill and shows the dream figures of the princes as symbols of the "ruin, shame and death" that is about to befall Richard III.[103]

[101] (V.iii.171), *Richard III*.
[102] Hill, Fr1-Fv2.
[103] (V.iv.148), *Richard III*.

In his pamphlet, Hill also elaborates that seeing a dead person of any kind that appears to be living in one's dream is bad sign and "To dreame that he talketh wyth a dead parson" usually bodes "some deception or wylie deceyt shalbee opened or manifested, vnto hym."[104] Though both dreamers dream of speaking to dead persons, there is no wily deceit visited upon Richmond. Instead, it is Richard who is frustrated and tricked by the doubles dressed like Richmond during the climax of the battle in Act V, scene iv, "I think there be six Richmonds in the field; | Five have I slain today instead of him. | A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!"[105] Being duped by the six Richmonds during the battle also comes at the notorious moment when Richard is unseated and loses his horse, a moment that coalesces the dream's inevitable message: his bloody end in battle and despair for his soul.

At the beginning of this chapter, I discussed Holinshed's opinion on the cause of Richard's nightmare, "But I thinke this was no dreame, but a punction and pricke of his sinfull conscience."[106] If Holinshed believed the famous dream was in fact "no dreame" then what does Holinshed think a dream really is? From Holinshed's point of view, it seems a true dream is some type of communication from beyond or outside the mind, and this is what Holinshed thinks really happened to Richard. Holinshed ultimately sees the dream's value to Richard's sinful conscience as a means for teaching him a moral lesson, but Shakespeare's version of events leaves no opening for Richard's salvation. There is regret from Shakespeare's Richard, but no

[104] Hill, Fv2.
[105] (V.iv.11-13), *Richard III*.
[106] Holinshed, *The third volume of the chronicles*, 1587. p. 755.

repentance. After the procession dream, Richard finally doubts the wisdom of his actions, but his refusal to repent or pray contrasts with Clarence's reaction to his dream in Act I.[107] Instead, he scorns his conscience the moment he realizes it was a dream, "O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!"[108] The apostrophe to his own conscience is Shakespeare showing that Richard still has some sort of moral being left in him which he has not been able to eliminate entirely from his nature.

Most scholarship concludes that the dream sequence suggests that Shakespeare intended it to be read as divine retribution, the ultimate and inevitable conclusion to Richard's crimes of regicide, murder, and perjury.[109] However source material offers the alternate suggestion that the dream was not divinely sent, but rather as "Vergil's account of Richard's demonic visions (not ghosts) is echoed by Grafton, Hall and Holinshed."[110] These chroniclers theorize Richard's dream as visited not by ghosts, but by demons, prompting a reconsideration of Shakespeare's rendition. If the chronicles are to be believed, then Act V scene iii could be read as Richard seeing demons who have, in a sense, dressed up in the appearance of his victims, borrowed their living appearance to torment him further. This possibility could be an answer to what occurs in the third section of Clarence's dream narrative when he encounters the dream figures of Warwick and the Lancastrian Prince Edward who can command an army of furies against the dreamer. But whereas Clarence repents, Richard rejects repentance, rejects pity even for himself— "And wherefore

[107] Siemon, p. 396, footnote 177-206.
[108] (V.iii.179), *Richard III*.
[109] Fretz, p. 92.
[110] Siemon, p. 391, footnote #117.1.

should they, since that I myself | Find in myself no pity to myself?"[111] But after waking and discovering the dream figures were not real, Richard III comes to the realization that he has done evil deeds that his conscience does not entirely agree with, intensifying the dream even more.[112] This trait of the prick of conscience dream is supported in *Terrors of the Night*, in which Nashe explains that "dreames to none are so fearfull, as to those whose accusing priuate guilt expects mischiefe euerie hower for their merit […] as good as an hundred furies to torment."[113] Shakespeare appears to agree most with the philosophies of Aristotle, Nashe, and some of Hill, that for the most part, each dreamer is the author of their dream, in a strategy to produce a kind of theatrical realism that avoids forcing the play to make a claim about the certainty in supernatural or divine justice.

[111] (V.iii.202-203), *Richard III*.
[112] Fretz, p. 100.
[113] Nashe, Dr1.

Conclusion

"A dream of what thou wast, […] a breath, a bubble,": The Ephemeral Nature of Shakespeare's Dreams

In the last dream of the First Tetralogy, Richmond awakes from "The sweetest sleep and fairest-boding dreams | That ever entered in a drowsy head […] I promise you my soul is very jocund | In the remembrance of so fair a dream."[1] He assures his soldiers and the audience that his soul is in a happy and content state after the dream, but Richard swears, "By the Apostle Paul, shadows tonight | Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard | Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers | Armed in proof, and led by shallow Richmond."[2] Richard's version of the dual dream was more frightening and disturbing to him than the forthcoming battle to defend his crown and his life. The final lines of *Richard III* inadvertently ask the audience, why have we been silently cheering Richard on for the course of two plays, and thus, participating this whole time in his wicked plots? As the four-part journey ends, a reader or viewer may realize they have enjoyed certain characters and their scheming, and Richard's charisma especially.

Much of Richard's appeal comes from his verbal devices and linguistic performances. When he scoffs at his slow-moving lackey Catesby, "Look, how thou dreams't!" in Act IV, scene ii, it seems a curious statement; it is as if Richard were asking the audience to "look" closely at the dreams in this play and how they perform

[1] (V.iii.227-233), *Richard III*.
[2] (V.iii.216-219), *Richard III*.

history unfolding.[3] What is Richard really asking us to look at by gesturing to the dreams in his eponymous play? Are we looking for truth in the dreams? Or are they providing a figurative medium meant only to symbolize other dramatic and historical concerns? The First Tetralogy began with the deaths of Henry V and Talbot as an emblem for the collective suffering of England, and the story ends with the deaths of Clarence and Richard as a symbol for the guilty individual.[4] It is this same suffering and guilt that is performed in each of the dreams of the tetralogy, but do those dreams point us towards a discernable philosophy of history?[5] And if that is so, what is that philosophy asking us to dream on?

The title of this dissertation considers the weight behind the phrase "dream on," which comes from Middle English meaning to think on, to remember, or to speculate; it is an expression of the freedom to have any conception of something in one's mind.[6] When we look at dreams in Shakespeare plays and what the characters dream on, it often seems as though we are looking upon the burden of remembrance itself. For the dreaming characters in the First Tetralogy, the problematic nature of remembering means that thoughts of memory and remorse intertwine, and always end in death or severe punishment. The only happy dream that results in no harm to the

[3] (IV.ii.56), *Richard III*.
[4] Hammond, p. 116.
[5] Knowles, p. 46.
[6] "drēmen v." (2), 2b. *Middle English Dictionary*. Ed. Robert E. Lewis, et al. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1952-2001. Online edition in Middle English Compendium. Ed. Frances McSparran, et al. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 2000-2018. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/middle-english-dictionary/>. Accessed 20 March 2024; "Dream, *V.* (2)." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP.

dreamer is Richmond's version of the dual dream; but Richmond is a late edition to the play, and his brief amount of stage time makes it difficult to choose him over Richard, even makes his victory feel a bit tragic. But for Joan, Eleanor, Humphrey, Cardinal Beaufort, Clarence, Anne, Hastings, and Richard himself, dreaming was the activity that brought about the end of their story. One of the major concerns of this tetralogy is the public performance of heroic deeds versus the subtlety of Machiavellian maneuvers. But the story tells us that actually, both of these strategies consistently fail, and the last man standing dies at the hand of an essentially new character.[7] Richard's reign is the shortest-lived of the kings in this tetralogy, after his frightening dream of meeting all of his victims, he seems to evaporate from the page.

In the second half of *Richard III*, Queen Margaret mocks Queen Elizabeth's precarious position after the death of King Edward IV and her sons, "A dream of what thou wast […] a breath, a bubble."[8] Elizabeth's high status as queen is over, and her current station is dangerously uncertain. In the First Tetralogy, power lasts for only a while, and it can be taken away without deserving in an instant. When viewed together, Shakespeare's dreams in these four plays create a transitory tone, in which every dream shows the dreamer an image commenting on the ephemeral condition of human life. In the first chapter, Joan dreamed of fiendish aid that was similar to assistance she says she received before, but that past agreement is over, and the help

[7] Young Henry of Richmond does show up briefly in *3 Henry VI* when Henry VI makes a prophecy, "If secret powers | Suggest but truth to my divining thoughts, | This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss." (IV.vi.68-70), *3 Henry VI.*
[8] (IV.iv.88-90), *Richard III.*

will never come.[9] Chapter 1 also introduced the paradox of *rex exsomnis*, which emphasizes the importance of the king's body as both an immortal and a temporary vessel that is meant to watch over England.

The second chapter described dreams that show inner desires and were the cause for some of the more ambitious grabs for power in the tetralogy. In *3 Henry VI*, King Henry VI and Richard imagine completely opposite "dreams" for a better life; instead of being the king who shepherds his people to safety, Henry would rather be a real shepherd and take daily naps while his flock grazes. He speaks a soliloquy that expresses a longing for a life that is simple, repetitive, and based on the order of time so Henry the shepherd can spend his days contemplating, "How many hours bring about the day, | How many days will finish up the year, | How many years a mortal man may live."[10] Here Henry comments on the fleeting nature of human life, and how happy he would be to live the rest of his life scheduled so that with every hour and minute, he knows exactly what he is meant to be doing. He seems to recognize in this speech that his own time is running out.

Richard, however, wants all the power he can hold on to, and so he rejects an easy life and sneers at his brother King Edward for giving in to sensual pleasures when "He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber | To the lascivious pleasing of a lute."[11] Chapter 3 described the world of *Richard III* as a place where "prophecies and

[9] Another moment of someone calling for help that will never arrive is in Act IV of *1 Henry VI*. The dukes of York and Somerset decline to assist Talbot with reinforcements in the battle at Bordeaux, and Talbot and his son die as a result.
[10] (II.v.27-29), *3 Henry VI*.
[11] (I. ii.12-13), *Richard III*.

dreams" are real and life-threatening as dangerous material objects.[12] Clarence's dream in the Tower of London briefly grants him the foresight to see that his life will soon be over, much like Queen Anne's disrupted sleep gives her a moment of clarity that Richard will "shortly be rid of me."[13]

This connection between human life as momentary and its link to sleep and dreams points Shakespeare's continued reflection on sleep and dreams throughout his career. The idea also appears in *Hamlet* when a discussion of dreams prompts Hamlet's comment to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that "A dream itself is but a shadow," suggesting that the fleeting and evanescent sensation felt after a dream is a condition of all dreams, a passing shadow.[14] In *The Tempest*, Caliban laments that his dream of treasure and "riches | Ready to drop upon me […]" had to end so soon and he delivers the lines, "that when I waked | I cried to dream again."[15]

Some of the key imagery in the First Tetralogy dreams were already commonplace in dream interpretation books and pamphlets, such as Gloucester's dream of a broken staff or the Cardinal's dream that Gloucester was mute. Thomas Hill addresses these specific details in *The moste pleasante arte*, but he also asks his reader, "What hazarde of life: what losse of substaunce? or what daūger of lim cā a dreame put y^{e} dreamer vnto?"[16] For Shakespeare's first audiences, the hazards associated with dreaming include moments of massive upheaval in the social order.

[12] (I.i.54), *Richard III.*
[13] (IV.i.86), *Richard III.*
[14] (II.ii.261), *Hamlet.*
[15] (III.ii.43-44), *The Tempest.*
[16] Hill, The Preface, unnumbered page.

Such catastrophic events were in the Bible, such as Peter quoting from *Joel* in *Acts of the Apostles*, a prophecy gesturing to a world-changing event in which "your old men shall dream dreams."[17] Shakespeare's contemporaries would have heard this story in church and would be familiar with the tale that Peter is announcing a new era of human experience after the Resurrection. Shakespeare's first audiences might have connected the links between the First Tetralogy's dreams and political chaos to passages such as these, which they would have heard many times in church. The fall of Troy is another tale of epic upheaval that theater goers would be accustomed to hearing re-told. Richard of Gloucester is awed by the allusion in *3 Henry VI*, after hearing about the death of his father, the Duke of York, he asks the messenger to "Say how he died, for I will hear it all."[18] The messenger's answer to Richard's question is essentially, just like the epic hero Hector, "Environed he was with many foes | And stood against them, as the hope of Troy | Against the Greeks that would have entered Troy."[19] Eleanor's sham wizard Bolingbroke in *2 Henry VI* also invokes Troy and combines the tale with the fearful and uncanny nature of nighttime, "Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night, | The time of night when Troy was set on fire, | The time when screech-owls cry and ban-dogs howl, | And spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves."[20]

Shakespeare's many allusions to the Fall of Troy signals his fascination with what the results of a large-scale disruption in the world order would look like. The

[17] Acts 2:17. Geneva Bible.
[18] (II.i.49), *3 Henry VI.*
[19] (II.i.50-52), *3 Henry VI.*
[20] (I.iv.16-19), *2 Henry VI.*

story of the Trojan War is also referenced in Hill's pamphlet, in which the author describes his confusion that, "It seemeth a thing against nature, & a thing moste straunge for a woman to be deliuered of a firebrand."[21] Here Hill is referencing Hecuba's ominous dream when pregnant with Paris of giving birth to a torch or burning piece of wood. Hill explains that the dream was a warning to Hecuba of "[…] howe her sonne *Paris* wyth whō she then went, should be the destruction of his owne countrye *Troye.*"[22] Hecuba's dream, much like the dreams in the First Tetralogy, signals the grim ending of an era. The fall of Troy is continually referenced as a foreshadowing device to imply that the same level of destruction and tragedy is being replayed by the events of the First Tetralogy.

During the brief time when Clarence has defected to Henry VI and the Lancastrians, King Henry praises his willingness to share knowledge about his brothers as the trait of an epic hero. "Farewell, my Hector, and my Troy's true hope" are Henry's parting words to Clarence.[23] Henry of course must know that Troy had no hope, it was destined to be destroyed, perhaps like his rule as king. While Henry hopes for his futile cause to salvage his England-as-Troy, his counterpart Richard Duke of Gloucester hopes for the reverse, to "take another Troy" and cause an equal amount of devastation in his pursuit of the English crown.[24]

The dreams of the First Tetralogy might benefit from a re-categorization into dreams that inspire action and those which do not. Of the "active" dreams, Eleanor's

[21] Hill, The Preface, unnumbered page.
[22] Hill, The Preface, unnumbered page.
[23] (IV.viii.25), *3 Henry VI.*
[24] (III.ii.190), *3 Henry VI.*

dream of the crown and Richard's figurative "dream" of the same creates the impetus to move the plot forwards and performs human desires and greed. But the dreams of Humphrey, Clarence, Joan, and Richard's final dream are nonreactive, and all result in death for the dreamers. These dreams—and arguably Queen Anne's bad sleep—perform human anguish and fear of the unknown future. Simpcox and Stanley report fake dreams, designed for some type of action to take place; Simpcox acts and is humiliated, Stanley acts to try and save his friend's life, but the refusal to act on Hastings's part causes his own death anyway. Richard's duo dream is a prick of conscious nightmare that he decides not to act on and he is killed in battle. But Richmond is energized by his uplifting version of the dream in which the dream figures seem to guide him to victory and establish him as the solution to the disrupted divine right of kings.

This dissertation makes an innovative argument that the reflection on the nature of sleep and dreams traces a pivotal arc throughout Shakespeare's writing career. It is not confined to these four plays, but something that he brings into his other plays and helps to establish an answer to the mystery of the cosmos. Why is it that these plays seem to hold a special place for discussion of dreams and sleep? The answer likely lies in the fact that the First Tetralogy is truly *first*; as some of Shakespeare's earliest work, it sounds and feels different from the plays that are more popular in the modern period, as if there was more liberty to explore other interests like dream theory. Shakespeare's later works attest to the fact that dream interpretation was a topic he remained curious about. He finds the precise language

needed to describe dreams and sleep so that the language feels almost dreamlike, such as in *The Tempest* when Sebastian tells Antonio, "It is a sleepy language and thou speak'st | Out of thy sleep."[25] In the late-career history play *Henry VIII*, Katherine of Aragon has a dream vision in Act IV scene ii in which the stage directions describing the dream are elaborate and fantastical. The continual insertion of dreams in Shakespeare's plays essentially asks, are dreams happening privately inside our own minds or are they happening outside of our minds? This leads to the broader question, what does it mean to be a human and have human thoughts and experiences? And further, what do human experiences tell us about the nature and purpose of the world?

A future revision of this study might expand its range and consider why there are no dreams in Second Tetralogy, when the First features about seven or eight. Why did Shakespeare pick this particular story to tell *another* story about sleep, dreams, and watching? Perhaps these four plays have so many dreams and sleep references because they were the earliest written plays in Shakespeare's writing career.[26] Without any previously written plays to live up to or outsell, the First Tetralogy held a special position that allowed for an extended sub-narrative on dreams and sleep to develop. That narrative tells the tale of history as a painful process; when Cardinal Beaufort cries out, "O, torture me no more!" his sleep-talking expresses the

[25] (II.i.12-13), *The Tempest*.
[26] Part *2 and Part 3* of *Henry VI* were written in 1591, *Richard III* was written between 1592-1594. *1 Henry VI* was published in the First Folio in 1623 but it is thought to have been written in 1592. From "Timeline of Shakespeare's Plays." *Royal Shakespeare Company*, www.rsc.org.uk/shakespeares-plays/histories-timeline/timeline.

excruciating reality that the dreams show the sleepers—a realism they did not want to perceive while waking.[27]

The argument of this dissertation could develop by expanding the timeline of dream interpretation to the late 17th century and include writing that appeared later in the period such as Phillip Goodwin's *The Mystery of Dreames* (1658), or author Thomas Tryon's work *A Treatise of Dreams & Visions* (1695). Tryon analyzed nightmares in much the same way Thomas Nashe does, dismissing the notions of any dream figures "which [the dreamers] fancy to be some Ghost, or Hob-Goblin," and instead offers, "the truth is, it proceeds from inward Causes."[28] It would be valuable to research further into these various inward causes during the end of the dominance of the humoral theory and the beginnings of germ theory.

The repeated allusions to sleep and dreams throughout the four plays show that they need to be read as a singular work of art. In doing this, Shakespeare built another story that took place in the dream world. The dreams and sleep in the First Tetralogy paved the way for famous Shakespearean moments like Lady Macbeth's sleep walking scene, the sleepy and dream-like world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or Prospero's powerful line, "we are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."[29] We, the audience, the actors, and the plays themselves, are the stuff dreams are made up of and our life is defined by sleep.

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[27] (III.iii.11), *2 Henry VI.*
[28] Thomas Tryon, *A treatise of dreams & visions*, London, (1695). EEBO Bodleian Library records - unstructured.
[29] (IV.i.156-158), *The Tempest.*

Shakespeare started with *The Contention* (*2 Henry VI)* in 1594 and wrote the above lines from *The Tempest* at the end of his career in 1611, showing his playwriting career is truly framed by the dream world.

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