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Shakespeare and The Chronicles: The Test Case of *Richard II*

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Shakespeare wrote most of what we know as his English history plays rather early in his career. He was skilled at making the genre more than a copy of the published historical documents and chronicles of his day. Scholarship has long recognized his favorite sources and has established a solid collection of the material he used to bring his country's past to life on stage. There are many scholarly studies of the influence of Froissart's, Holinshed's, Hall's and Stow's *Chronicles*, among others, and they usually describe what Shakespeare borrowed or sometimes even altered from those sources. What they do not normally do is examine what Shakespeare purposefully omitted or altered, and how this has shaped the plays. These omissions and alterations ultimately have major dramatic and philosophical implications for these works.

Understanding Shakespeare's sources is crucial to understanding his history plays. It is important to understand the relationship between the plays and the source, and Ania Loomba demonstrates how the use of these sources transform the plays themselves in *Shakespeare's Sources*. Loomba has demonstrated the important role of exploring the chronicle material plays in our sense of the history plays overall:

In Shakespeare studies, as in literary studies more generally, the relationship between the text and its sources has fueled charged debates about the purpose, formal properties and politics of art. Rather than something that distilled and transcended its sources, the literary text began to be understood as existing in a similar plane and in dialogue with other historical and cultural materials. It thereby became a source in itself—a source for understanding history and culture.

(131)

Essentially, Loomba contends that these works turn into a source on their own. This is because, when used, they coincide with the historical and cultural materials. These new sources can help

us understand the culture in which this new source was created in; they can help us understand the political context, especially with a history play. Yet a close look at these sources reveals important discrepancies between them and Shakespeare's works, as often he either leaves some details out, or makes a change. Throughout his Lancastrian tetralogy, there are a few specific examples of some glaring changes that Shakespeare made.

In *Richard II*, Act V, scene I, right after Richard hands over the crown to Bullingbrook, Shakespeare makes one of these deviations. This important change occurs when Richard speaks to his wife before being exiled. In this scene, the queen laments about her love for Richard, and she states, "but see, rather do not see, / my fair rose wither; yet look up, behold / that you in pity may dissolve to dew and wash him again with true love tears" (V.i.7-10). She explains how she is shedding true love's tears for Richard, as she clearly cannot bear the thought of being separated from him. Richard responds by telling his queen to not think about this sadness, but instead to think about all the wonderful times they have spent together. This perhaps sounds more like something John of Gaunt would have said, especially in his farewell scene to his son. However, Richard wants her to think "our former state a happy dream from which awak'd, the truth of what we are / shows us but this," (V.i.18-20). Shortly after this, though, she begins to question his intellect. She calls him a coward for not standing up to Bullingbrook and asks; "What, is my Richard both in shape and mind / transform'd and weak'ned? Hath Bullingbrook depos'd thine intellect?" (V.i.26-30). Not only is she questioning his masculinity, but she is questioning his behavior as king, as he does not even stand up for himself. Just like everyone else, she is questioning his claim to the throne, and this scene shows us this.

In this notable scene, where the Queen objects to leaving the King's side, we see an emotional side to Richard. The queen states, "Banish us both, and send the King with me" (V. i.

83). It may be powerful, but this moving episode was entirely fabricated. Shakespeare did this in order to make Richard seem more human. Having his wife portray such devotion to him is arguably the greatest way to humanize him. Since love is something so universal, it is easy for someone to relate to this kind of devotion, or perhaps even seek this kind of devotion in their own life. Many readers, Peter Saccio among them, have noted the queen's farewell to Richard is a completely unhistorical invention by Shakespeare, but the moving farewell would have had an impact on the audience. Shakespeare invented this in order to create a more romantic relationship between King Richard and his wife, to make a more dramatic play. Shakespeare's invention allows for Richard to demonstrate some depth to his character. He goes from being an unlikable, two-dimensional character that the audience would likely not relate to, to someone who is loved. Now he is more easily understood and relatable, and in doing so, Shakespeare has made him a more complex, multi-dimensional character, rather than a stereotyped medieval king. Having a flat, two-dimensional main character would not make for an entertaining play, so it is an understandable invention. This deviation, while not groundbreaking, is ultimately another illustration of Shakespeare's inventions in order to create a more dramatic work. These inventions make for a more complicated main character as he is now multi-faceted, but force the reader to question if Shakespeare's histories are crafted to be more like his tragedies or comedies.

The queen continues by asking him if he will just roll over and "mildly kiss the rod, / and frown on rage with base humility, / which art a lion and the king of Beasts?" (V. i. 32-34). He tells her that they are all beasts, and she must prepare herself for France. Richard wants her to think of this goodbye as her speaking to him on his deathbed. This episode is a powerful invention because it helps establish the emotional impact of Richard's exile. He is now a more

human character, with emotions, and someone who loves him. Before this, he was mostly seen as busy and emotionless. Richard wants her to tell tales of the rightful king. He wants her to remember him, stating:

Tell thou the lamentable tale of me, / and send the hearers weeping to their beds. / For why, the senseless brands will sympathize / the heavy accent of thy moving tongue, / and in compassion weep the fire out, / and some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black, / for the deposing of a rightful king. (V. i. 44-50)

Not only is he telling her to not forget him, but he's also reminding others of the injustice that is being done to the rightful king. This is an important philosophical point because it highlights the deviation from the medieval notion that since the king is ordained by God, no one should be able to question his authority. The change of power from the rightful king to someone who is not is a critical point to understanding the impact this has on the rulers to come. As this new method to attaining power becomes normalized, it will continue to happen. In reminding his audience of the deposition of the rightful king, Shakespeare is showing Richard's unworthiness of the traditional respect given to his office.

In some of their last words exchanged, the queen asks, "And must we be divided? Must we part?" to which Richard replies, "Ay, hand from hand, my love, and heart from heart" (V. i. 81-83). Their final words really show the characters' love for each other. While this conversation is not based on Shakespeare's sources, the playwright crafts this scene with intention.

Shakespeare has invented this conversation purposefully to humanize Richard with the love of his wife, and also to highlight the deviation from medieval thought as Ernst Kantorowicz has described. Kantorowicz explains the body natural and the body politic, and how they each exist in a king at once (9). The body politic "appears as a likeness of the 'holy sprites and angels'" (8).

The duality of the king is represented through the king's *character angelicus*, which states that the king is a mediator between God and man. Shakespeare's invented conversation between Richard and Isabelle represents not only their division, but also the departure from this medieval idea that the king is an agent of God, and chosen by him. When a king is able to now be replaced under the discretion of man, kings are no longer ordained by God.

Shakespeare's historical alterations are not restricted to Richard. In the crucial scenes depicting Richard's deposition/abdication, we witness one of the most flagrant departures from chronicle source material. Bullingbrook, along with Northumberland, Percy, Fitzwater, Surrey, the Bishop of Carlisle, and the Abbot of Westminster are present. Richard's deposition scene before this audience is perhaps one of the most inventive scenes Shakespeare created in *Richard II*. It was a complete and flagrant departure from the sources. Richard never would have been allowed to speak before the new king in this manner, and there certainly is no record of it in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, or in Froissart's. It is equally important to understand that most, if not all, dialogue in *Richard II* was invented by Shakespeare himself. His sources did not contain much dialogue, and it was completely up to Shakespeare to create this in his plays. There were some moments that deviated more from historical accuracy than others. Richard's deposition scene in IV.i is perhaps the most flagrant.

When Richard appears on stage, he begins by saying, "Alack, why am I sent for to a king / Before I have shook off the regal thoughts / Wherewith I reign'd? I hardly yet have learn'd / To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend me knee" (IV.i.162-165). Richard has not come to terms with the fact that he is no longer king, and he has been told by York that he must hand over the crown to Bullingbrook. Richard has only just been "demoted" in a sense, as this is all very new to him. He has been a ruler for nearly all his life, so he says that he doesn't yet know how to bend the

knee. This passage is important because it shows the speed at which Bullingbrook seized power, and also demonstrates Shakespeare's skill as a playwright, as he was able to fabricate this conversation, assuming the real personalities of historical characters. Additionally, it shows Richard's resistance to giving up the crown, as he explains how sudden this all is for him. It also shows that Richard assumed certain behaviors without much thought, or regard for them. Now he is no longer able to assume external gesture and demeanor, and finds himself unable to act.

Froissart describes Richard's abdication of the throne, and it is nothing like what we see in Shakespeare's play. Richard had never read his wrongdoings aloud in front of everyone. In fact, according to Froissart, Richard stated:

Cousin, I have been thinking over my position, and God knows it is weak enough! I see that I should not longer think of wearing a crown and ruling a nation Having considered it carefully, cousin, I fully see and admit that I have behaved very wrongly towards you I gladly and willingly resign to you the crown of England, and I beg you to accept it as a freely offered gift. (449)

In the sources, Richard is much more willing to give up the crown. In fact, he begs Bullingbrook to accept it as a gift. Also, Richard does this in a private meeting with his cousin, which is not touched upon in the play. In *Richard II*, however, he seems to be protesting his abdication, as he says he hasn't been able to shake off his regal thoughts. Through this passage, we see Shakespeare's clear departure from his sources, as he makes some changes to the way in which Richard abdicates the throne, by having him give some resistance to his transition from king ordained by God, to being an outcast and an exiled. This resistance and transition created some tension and allows for more divide between Richard and Bullingbrook. If he made the transition of power as it was historically, which was smooth and willing by Richard, it would have been

very anti-climatic and uninteresting. By inventing this tension and resistance, he kept his audience interested.

Moreover, Richard goes on to describe the betrayal he feels, and he explains that he feels as though the betrayal he is experiencing is similar to what Jesus faced with Judas. Richard states, “Yet I will remember the favors of these men / Were they not mine? / Did they not [sometimes] cry ‘All hail!’ to me? / So Judas did to Christ; but He, in twelve, / Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none” (IV.i.167-171). This is a very interesting parallel to draw because it helps establish what Richard is truly feeling. It is a very powerful similarity to draw because it highlights just how many people did not have Richard’s back, while he clearly is not comparable to Jesus, he had no one on his side. As Kantorowicz notes: “the name of Judas is cited to stigmatize the foes of Richard. . . . But before being delivered up to his judges and his cross, King Richard has to ‘un-king’ himself” (35). It is an outrageous comparison, as Richard is clearly not as virtuous as Jesus, and he is to blame for the situation that he is in. Shakespeare’s use of this hyperbolic, dramatic language demonstrates Richard’s own self-pity. But it is powerful, if hyperbolic, theatre.

Richard’s abdication scene also exhibits some of the medieval concepts that Kantorowicz describes, specifically the idea of the king’s two bodies. Richard specifically sheds his body politic in this scene, as he passes the crown to his cousin, he no longer is an agent of God. Kantorowicz notes the importance of Richard’s shedding of his regal skin, as this scene marks Richard’s resignation from God (36). He has now lost his kingship, as he has undone himself, it is worth noting the degree of pride that he is able to retain as the way he words his abdication: “With mine own hands I give away my crown, / With mine own tongue deny my sacred state, / With mine own breath release all duteous oaths” (IV.i.203-205). The repeated phrase, “with

mine own hands” establishes Richard’s pride which he seems to hold onto for as long as he can. While he is no longer a king, he still speaks in the manner of someone with power. Kantorowicz description of Richard shedding his regal skin in this scene displays the movement away from medieval thought, which was previously mentioned, as now Richard is no longer and agent of God. He is not seen as the bridge between man and God, so now they will treat him as such, which was previously inconceivable.

Rebelling against an anointed king was outrightly sinful. This fabricated scene which exhibits the king’s abdication was so inflammatory that it was actually censored out of the earliest editions of the play. It is important to understand the impact of this invention. Saccio explains:

From Holinshed’s long account of the transfer of power, rich in incidents such as this of Carlisle, Shakespeare creates the splendid and quite unhistorical scene of Richard’s public deposition before parliament...Henry obviously could not have permitted Richard a public hearing of this or any other kind. Indeed, Shakespeare’s theatrical scene, composed two centuries after the event, was thought so inflammatory that it was censored out of the earliest editions of *Richard II*. (32)

This scene would suggest that Richard was indeed publicly humiliated by having to read his misdeeds aloud. It also demonstrates a deviation from the medieval understanding of a monarchy. Richard’s deposition was his own fault; the success of these rebels in taking power from him shows us this. In having Richard hand over the crown, albeit, begrudgingly, Shakespeare was able to show not only the transfer of power, but also the transfer into a new way of thinking.

As Paul Siegel contends, God's providence is ingrained in the monarchy. Traditional assumptions about world order are rooted in the belief that everything is part of God's plan. If someone rebels against a king and is able to succeed, it is because God wanted it that way. In Richard's case, the rebels succeed because he was not a good king and this says the laws that were deserving of his punishment. Siegel states:

Immediately after Gaunt's death, he seizes, despite Gaunt's warning, the estate that should have gone to Gaunt's son Bolingbroke. York, aghast, remonstrates that he is taking from "Time" his "customary rights," violating the natural law that makes the son the inherit of his father's possessions. . . . Richard, in disinheriting Bolingbroke, is paving the way to his own deposition by violating 'order and degree' as the rebels are to violate it. (9)

Siegel explains that this new way of understanding is based upon Richard's divine punishment for violating the natural law. When Richard seized Bullingbrook's inheritance, he condemned himself. This is critical for understanding Shakespeare's deposition scene because it provides background for the movement into this new way of thinking. Previously in history, rebelling against the king was seen as an act against God, because the king was allowed to be in a position of power because of God. Now, the rebels are agents of divine wrath, seeking vengeance against the king. While Siegel considers the effects of violating the natural law of inheritance, he fails to consider the natural law the Richard violated when it is implied that he killed his own uncle, Woodstock. In leaving this detail out, Siegel misses an opportunity to discuss the obscurity surrounding Woodstock and Richard's involvement in his death. However, Siegel still makes an important point which highlights the deviation from medieval thinking.

The changes made to certain historical figures in *Richard II* is equally as important as the invented episodes. One such example of this is the important details Shakespeare omits about the Duke of Ireland. Shakespeare omitted the extent to which Richard II was manipulated by the Duke of Ireland, whom he was known to keep in his council. King Richard's uncles did not approve of the King and his council, which included the Duke of Ireland. Jean Froissart's *Chronicles*, which we know was used by Shakespeare, discusses this. Froissart points out their disdain for him:

Their discontent was great and they said in private: 'This Duke of Ireland twists the King round his finger and does what he likes in England. The king listens only to bad people, of mean birth in comparison with princes. As long as he has his present council things cannot go right, for a kingdom can never be well governed nor a sovereign properly advised by bad people...What good can come of this intimacy between the Duke of Ireland and the King? (316)

Shakespeare doesn't directly mention the Duke of Ireland in *Richard II*. Shakespeare omitted this part of history, and it is an important deviation from history because the Duke of Ireland was a primary source of disdain from Richard's uncles, as he was an especially problematic influence on the king.

Richard was so wrapped around the Duke of Ireland's finger that he allowed him to get away with some things that he should not have. One example of this is perhaps the greatest thing that discredited the Duke of Ireland; Froissart notes, was "his treatment of his wife, the daughter of the Lord de Coucy and of the Queen of England's daughter, Madam Isabella, who . . . was a good and beautiful lady, of the highest and noblest descent possible" (316). This is worth noting because it shows the type of people that King Richard kept in his company, which is even more

problematic when you consider that this man was in his council. While the questionable council of the King are apparent in *Richard II*, the main culprit, being the Duke of Ireland, was not mentioned to this extent. This is important because his advice has led to the financial detriment of the Kingdom, of which has been reflected on King Richard's bad judgement.

In addition, the Duke of Ireland was also allowed to divorce his wife and remarry a maid-in-waiting to the Queen of England. This was seen as very problematic during the time period because his wife was seen as an honorable woman, and was also the Queen of England's daughter. For him to do something so disgraceful as divorce her, and then marry a maid of the Queen further smeared his reputation. Froissart recounts:

But he fell in love with one of the maids-in-waiting of the Queen of England, a German woman, and so worked on Urban VI, who was in Rome and considered himself Pope, that he obtained a divorce from the Lord De Coucy's daughter with no shadow of an excuse except his own presumption and negligence and married that maid of the Queen's. All this was allowed by King Richard, who was so blinkered by the Duke of Ireland that even if he said black was white the King did not contradict him. (316)

This situation is essential in understanding the kind of men that King Richard kept in his council. It is just another example of the Duke of Ireland's questionable actions. He was one of the paramount reasons for the mistrust of the council by the King's uncles.

Similar to his omissions to the Duke of Ireland, Shakespeare completely changes the nature of John of Gaunt. He omits information that would completely change his audience's view of the father figure. When compared to his sources, John of Gaunt is an entirely different person. In *Richard II*, he is a fatherly, honorable figure, described as "Old John of Gaunt, time-

honored Lancaster” (I.i.1) . This is far from how he truly was. While at war with the French, John of Gaunt shows his true nature, Jean Froissart’s *Chronicles* offers an example of this:

The Dukes of Lancaster and Brittany with their men reached Vaux near Laon, where they halted for three days and obtained plentiful supplies. They found the country round there rich and stocked with food, for it was harvest-time. They held the farms and big villages to ransom on the threat of burning them, and were brought wine and sacks of flour, bullocks and sheep. (186)

This shows that John of Gaunt participated in holding entire towns for ransom. While nearly committing what we could consider today war crimes, it could be argued that they were only bluffing, but that cannot be proven. It still establishes that he took part in some heinous behavior, and directly contradicts his depiction in *Richard II*.

Moreover, the circumstances surrounding young Richard’s ascent to the throne provides agreement of Gaunt’s power-hungry nature and that Parliament feared his true nature. Richard was only nine years old when the king died, and parliament swiftly moved to make him heir apparent, before any of his older, more powerful uncles could make a claim for the throne. As Saccio notes:

An action of parliament taken immediately after the Black Prince’s death reveals a significant anxiety: the commons asked the king to send young Richard before them so that they might formally honor him as heir apparent. Evidently some feared that Gaunt was scheming to usurp the throne from his nine-year-old nephew as soon as the old king died. When Richard did succeed the next year, the council that was appointed to rule for him included none of the royal uncles. (19)

Gaunt's true nature is shown through the swift action of Parliament. While he was the oldest surviving uncle of the king, he was known for his power-hungry nature and Parliament sought to protect Richard's claim to the throne from Gaunt. They feared that he was going to steal the throne from his younger nephew, which shows just how determined he was when it came to gaining power.

Additionally, John of Gaunt terrorized the French countryside as he continued through France. His war-like and barbarous actions give insight into his true nature. Froissart's recollection of these events paint John of Gaunt in a very different light from how we perceived him in *Richard II*. Froissart states:

The army of the two Dukes lay before the towns of Vertus and Epernay. They forced the whole country round there to supply them with provisions. They found much plunder and booty near that fine river, the Marne, of which they were lords and masters, since none came out against them...They [the French forces] garrisoned the town and waited for the English, who were devastating the surrounding country. (191)

Their rapacious actions are worth noting because they highlight how much of an atrocious warlord John of Gaunt was. Shakespeare altered this aspect of John of Gaunt's personality in order to make him a more likeable character in *Richard II*. He represents the voice of the past and shows Richard's corruption of the monarchy, by his steadfast hold on the fading old world. When Richard violated the right of Bullingbrook to claim his inheritance from his late father, it marks a departure from the past in his violation of Gaunt's character, as Richard violates time-honored tradition and the natural order.

Not only is Gaunt himself transformed in *Richard II*, but his nature, according to historical accuracy, is also violated. Froissart's *Chronicles* provides many instances of Gaunt's power-hungry nature. His aggressive nature was highlighted when he sought the throne of Castile from 1386-7. He was aided in his greed by King John of Portugal, "to whom he had married his elder daughter" (328). His expedition involved more power-hungry actions; as he ventured the countryside, terrorizing it. John of Gaunt, with the aid of King John, "captured many several towns, including Orense" (328). While they were on this expedition, they had to deal with the increasing heat in Galicia. The Castilians were receiving support from the French, which further prolonged the battle. As a consequence, the lords had to secure more food for their armies. They then "stripped the country of food," much to the detriment of those whom they were stealing from. This scorching weather didn't only affect the soldiers of course, it certainly must have made growing food for the villagers in which they were stealing food from, as "no grass could grow, nor any other eatable thing, so hard and dry and sunbaked was the earth. Anything that did come up withered quickly because of the excessive summer heat" (328). These examples further the evidence that John of Gaunt was indeed a very warlike man, rather than the fatherly figure we see in *Richard II*.

In John of Gaunt's expedition to Spain, his soldiers' opinion of him greatly changed because of some of his decisions. This is important because many of them disliked him because of his handling of this expedition. Some of their objections stemmed from two things: The first being that "we are taking women with us and they always want to sit about. After one day on the move they need a couple of weeks' rest. That's been a great drag on us so far and will go on being. If we had advanced quickly as soon as we had landed at Corunna, going straight forward from they, we should have done well and have subdued the whole country, with no one

attempting to resist us” (329). John of Gaunt’s choice of taking women along with them essentially caused them to lose this expedition. Had they progressed forward more quickly, they would have been able to decisively subdue the whole country without a problem. This is important because it shows the general opinion of John of Gaunt, and how this expedition led to many soldiers’ dislike of him. It is important to know this because it highlights just how different Shakespeare’s Gaunt is from the actual historical figure. Shakespeare’s deviation is done to create a figure which represents medieval thought, as Gaunt is a link to the past. With his death, Richard makes some decisions that mark the deviation from medieval thought into something entirely new.

Furthermore, the soldiers criticized the Duke of Lancaster bringing his wife and daughter with him on such a serious expedition. How can he lead an army while being held back in maintaining the safety of his family? Froissart describes the hesitation of his soldiers as they questioned his decision making:

‘What was the Duke of Lancaster thinking of,’ said others, ‘when he planned a big campaign yet brought his wife and daughter with him? It has held us back, all to no purpose. All Spain already knows—and others also—that he and his brother Edmund are married to the heiresses of this country, the daughters of King Peter. As for the campaign and the capture of towns, cities and castles, the ladies are not much help there. (329)

The knights and squires did not approve of the Duke’s decisions. His wife and daughter were only holding them back, just like the other women previously stated, they only worked to slow down the army. Had they not been accompanying them, their efforts would not have been in vain, and the expedition could have been successful. This expands upon the general opinion of the Duke of Lancaster as a result of his misguided decisions in his expedition to Spain. The

complete re-invention of Gaunt for *Richard II* is equally as important as Shakespeare's more flagrant departures from his sources and cannot be passed over casually.

Likewise, Shakespeare's willful evasion of the details of Woodstock's death are relevant in understanding *Richard II*. A.L. French states that Woodstock's murder is a "central issue" in the play (337). The murder of Woodstock hangs over the earlier acts of the play and is relevant to the Bullingbrook and Mowbray conflict. It is also worth noting that Shakespeare was well aware this prehistory. Derek Cohen writes: "It is my contention that Shakespeare was likely aware of this prehistory, even if he had not read deeply into the early part of Richard's reign. . . the sources he did consult insist thoroughly on this context for Woodstock's death, which would have become apparent after even only a cursory look into the facts of the notorious murder" (133). Shakespeare's understanding of Woodstock's backstory is relevant because it is not likely that Shakespeare just simply overlooked this and is an integral part of *Richard II* that he purposefully kept vague.

Shakespeare's vagueness surrounding Woodstock's death and lack of detail was done purposefully because he believed that his audience was well aware of the situation, and did not want to bore them at the beginning of *Richard II* with this background information. In his monumental *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, Geoffrey Bullough notes, "Almost it seems as if he were trying to avoid covering the same ground . . . being thus freed from an obligation to discuss such topics as the nature and significance of the . . . general background of Gloucester's downfall, he were directing our attention to other matters more significant for English history" (359). Shakespeare's avoidance of this background knowledge regarding Woodstock's death was done purposefully so as to not overload his audience at the start of the play, perhaps causing them to walk out, as they would have already known this.

Not unlike Shakespeare's favorable changes to Gaunt, as we have seen, invented a romantic relationship between Richard and his wife, in order to humanize the character. Throughout the play, Richard was a very flat, unlikeable character, and Shakespeare crafted their dialogue in Act IV as a tool to ground him, and make him more relatable. Richard's deposition scene in Act V was invented by Shakespeare as a way of showing the transfer of power between Richard and Bullingbrook. It also helped establish the deviation from the medieval way of thinking, in which no one should go against the rightful king, because that would be committing an act against God. As a result, Shakespeare made these changes to create more dynamic, interesting, and relatable characters. In addition, Shakespeare was able to create a more dramatic scene in which there was a shift of power, which would have a lasting effect on English history.

The changes in *Richard II* are important on their own, but they're also the groundwork for similar historical alterations in the next play in the tetralogy, *1 Henry IV*. Just as he made some specific changes to characters like Richard and Gaunt in *Richard II*, Shakespeare tailors the characters of *Henry IV*. Arguably the two most prominent characters in the play, Hal and Hotspur, have been edited by Shakespeare to fit into his play. Hotspur was actually much older than he appears in *Henry IV*. There is great contrast between the two, as Prince Hal is made into a teenager who is out drinking with his friends, rather than acting as a responsible prince should. Hotspur on the other hand is an exemplary child, and is seen as the ideal son. King Henry even goes on to state:

Yea, there thou mak'st me sad, and mak'st me sin / In envy that my Lord
 Northumberland / Should be the father to so blest a son— / A son who is the theme of
 honour's tongue . . . / Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him / See riot and dishonor
 stain the brow / Of my young Harry. (I.i.77-85)

King Henry primes his audience with the notion of their opposite natures at the beginning of the play. The rivalry between these two figures is noted through their opposing natures, and sets us up for their conflicts throughout the play. Without Shakespeare's deviation here, there would be no rivalry, and there would be an overall lack of a reason for Hal to improve, because he is not in competition with anyone else. Indeed, without Hotspur, perhaps Hal would not have become the man that we know him to be at the end of the play. He would have stagnated with Falstaff, and never truly grown up.

Early in the play, we see some other changes that Shakespeare made to Hal, specifically the company he kept. Shakespeare invented some characters, such as Falstaff, as he is not explicitly noted in his sources. There are many reasons why Shakespeare would have added a character like Falstaff. Firstly, he was able to create a foil to Hotspur, as Falstaff is wholly irresponsible and not capable of the kind of virtue that Hotspur exhibits. Falstaff is also a great hindrance to Hal as he attempts to grow into a responsible prince. His negative influence on Hal is used as a tool of redemption, as Hal is using his lower-class troubled friends to act as a cover before he reveals his true noble nature. Shakespeare's creation of Falstaff as a character helps to establish the two routes that Hal can take in his life; one of partying and an overall lack of responsibility, or one that will turn him into a man, and make his father proud. Without the deviations by Shakespeare with both Falstaff and Hotspur, there would be no development for Hal, as he is shown the two sides of himself that he can grow into.

Similarly, Geoffrey Bullough notes the changes Shakespeare made to Hal and Hotspur. Specifically, Bullough describes the large age difference between the two. Bullough states, "the King compares the Prince with Hotspur and treats them as about the same age, although Percy was in fact two years older than the King and twenty-three years older than Hal" (156). This

notable deviation from Shakespeare's source material is done to create a rivalry between Hotspur and Hal. It would not be impressive if Hal defeated a sixty-year-old man in the Battle of Shrewsbury, so Shakespeare made them roughly the same age. Bullough goes further: "By increasing his age, and reducing Hal's, their rivalry in *1 Henry IV* is prepared for" (364). This also allows for the change of Hal's character, as he transforms into an honorable character, as Hotspur's virtuous nature was a foil to Hal early on in the play. It seems reasonable to think that without the extensive chronicle/source experience that Shakespeare gained in *Richard II*, the sophisticated innovations and imaginings of the later *Henry* plays would not have been possible.

Shakespeare's histories are crafted with great care to convey an entertaining and interesting story, which may not completely adhere to historical fact. Michael Hattaway describes this in *The Shakespearean History Play*: "Shakespeare's 'histories' therefore are neither generically similar one to another nor bound to historical fact. They are related to history mainly by offering representations of historical figures and the created of theatre out of historical events" (14). Hattaway's description of Shakespeare's history plays as not bound to historical fact is better described as not being completely restricted to historical accuracy. Shakespeare dramatizes historical events which leads to many omissions and changes, for either the entertainment of the play as a whole, the depth of a character, or to create interesting conflicts later in the drama. Shakespeare is also able to emphasize certain political lessons through his creative ability. It is also possible that these alterations and omissions are a way of appeasing Queen Elizabeth, as she was related to some of the characters that Shakespeare includes in these histories. Indeed, Shakespeare could have made some modifications in order to appease the Queen's ego, as she surely would not want to have her ancestors' misdeeds perpetuated too harshly in his plays, as they may be seen as a reflection on her. While Shakespeare's many

alterations and omissions do not adhere to historical accuracy completely, they transform the plays into dramatic art that transcends history.

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