

THREE

INVISIBLE BULLETS: RENAISSANCE AUTHORITY AND ITS SUBVERSION

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In Italy in 1583 the Inquisition arrested a Friulian miller named Menocchio who had been denounced for heresy.¹ In the long interrogations that followed, Menocchio proved to be oddly willing, even eager, to expound his beliefs which came, he said with an untimely measure of pride, entirely from his own head. After a great deal of thought and some reading—for the miller, surprisingly enough, was literate—he had come to the conclusion, he told the Inquisitors, that the entire cosmos had originated in the manner of a giant cheese that had coagulated out of chaos; and as cheeses spontaneously generate worms, so this newly formed world generated beings, the purest of whom were God and the angels.

Out of this theory of origins—which is, of course, in its underlying materialism far closer to our construction of reality than orthodox creation *ex nihilo*—Menocchio proceeded to the conclusion that doctrinal distinctions, even between Islam and Christianity, let alone between Catholicism and heresy, were finally meaningless and that religious persecution was pernicious. He was a Christian because he was born a Christian; he had no desire to change, but neither did he wish to convert anyone else. Moreover, he declared to his incredulous and increasingly alarmed auditors, he believed that most of the sacraments were worthless, or more accurately, that they were cunning devices designed by Pope and priests to extract money from the poor. He had shared these views, in the mill, the tavern, and the streets, with his fellow villagers and would, he said, be happy to share them with the Holy Father himself.

Perhaps because of the novelty and apparent inexplicability of the miller's beliefs—neither “Luterano” nor “Anabattisto”—the Inquisition showed a prolonged, almost anthropological interest in him. At the desperate urging of his family and friends, he finally recanted and pleaded for mercy; and eventually, albeit with restrictions laid upon his movements, he was released. Under orders to wear at all times on his clothing the badge of his infamy and expressly forbidden to discuss his former ideas, he was returned to the community where, despite the fact that he was quite literally a “marked case,” he seems to have resumed for some years a position of local consequence. But at length he was drawn irresistibly back to his convictions, if he had ever in fact abandoned them, and he could not remain silent. One evening in the piazza he met an acquaintance—a fellow amateur musician who was contemplating becoming a friar—and the conversation turned to the old forbidden themes. The conversation was dutifully reported to the Holy Office; arrest followed. At the end of nearly twenty years of sporadic interrogation and imprisonment, Menocchio was burned at the stake as a relapsed heretic.

I begin with this odd story because I want to make it clear that radical subversiveness—not merely the schemer's attempt to seize existing authority but a challenge to the principles upon which authority was based—was possible in the Renaissance, and I stress this because much of what I am about to say may seem to imply that it was virtually impossible. Virtually but not absolutely—and the exception, the extravagant, zany exception, is a useful caution against the complacent acceptance of our own metaphorical talk of cultural inscription, ideological hegemony, and containment. There is, of course, containment in this case, but it is containment after the fact, the containment of prison and the stake. My interest in what follows is in a prior form of restraint—in the process whereby subversive insights are generated in the midst of apparently orthodox texts and simultaneously contained by those texts, contained so efficiently that the society's licensing and policing apparatus is not directly engaged.

Here too Menocchio provides a useful preliminary caution, for when he was pressed to specify the sources of his extraordinary notions, he cited not prohibited texts but rather books that in the main had never aroused official suspicion: *Il fioretto della Bibbia*, *Il Rosario della gloriosa Vergine Maria*, *Il leggendario delle vite de tutti li santi*, and so forth. In each instance, as the historian Carlo Ginzburg has documented, Menocchio pulled a detail out of context and found something subversive in it. Thus he traced his sense of the spiritual equivalence of all religious doctrines to no more dangerous or novel work than the fourteenth-century classic, Mandeville's *Travels*, where the Italian villager found to his astonishment that people existed who had never heard of Christianity.² For Ginzburg, this mode of reading is a sign of the operation of a peasant consciousness,

rooted both in oral modes of discourse and in unspoken radical materialism, upon the ideological fruits of literate culture—that is, the accident of Menocchio's literacy and indiscretion provides a glimpse of a widespread but hitherto inaccessible peasant radicalism.³ This strikes me as a conclusion that, while it may be true, depends more upon a modern political act of faith than upon available historical evidence; that evidence does, however, unmistakably suggest at the very least that it was possible for a sixteenth-century reader to find subversive notions contained within an apparently untroubled expression of orthodoxy. Hence the identification of the orthodox ideology that informs a particular text by no means obviates the possible presence of genuinely subversive elements—that is, elements that can be understood to be subversive either by ourselves or by a reader who lived surrounded by the institutional expressions of that ideology. The point is worth making because the interpretation of Renaissance art—of plays by Marlowe and Shakespeare, of paintings by Bosch and Breughel—has been bedeviled by the misleading assumption that to identify a powerful idea of order in a cultural artifact is to expose as mere illusion or anachronism, and hence to consign to nonexistence, those elements that appear to threaten or subvert the dominant order.⁴

But what then is the status of such elements for those who acknowledge their existence? Carlo Ginzburg's theory has its equivalent in literary scholarship in the recurrent notion that major Renaissance artists participated with considerable subtlety and deviousness in a kind of opposition party. This opposition ranges from the "counter-Renaissance" that Hiram Haydn sees in the history of ideas, to the frustrated republicanism that G. K. Hunter detects in the humanist as courtier, to the full-scale membership in a secret society of freethinkers that Frances Yates and others have postulated for Raleigh and his circle.⁵ Each of these notions proves upon examination to be inadequate: the "counter-Renaissance" has an unpleasant way of including the same texts that would constitute anyone else's Renaissance; the humanists appear, as Hamlet says of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to have made love to their employment; and the School of Night seems to have existed only as a sixteenth-century Jesuit's fantasy of what Queen Elizabeth's favorites did in their spare time.⁶ Clearly we need to find a more adequate way of accounting for the subversive elements in Renaissance texts, a way that neither cancels their existence entirely nor uses them to construct a visionary freemasonry in which all the artists one admires turn out to have been secretly enrolled. For the sake of clarity, I will take as my primary example today a relatively simple tract by Thomas Harriot and try to construct an interpretive model that may be used, as I will suggest briefly at the close, to understand the far more complex problem posed by a major literary work.

In his notorious police report of 1593 on Christopher Marlowe, the Elizabethan spy Richard Baines informed his superiors that Marlowe had

declared, among other monstrous opinions, that "Moses was but a juggler, and that one Heriots, being Sir Walter Raleigh's man, can do more than he."⁷ The "Heriots" cast for a moment in this lurid light is Thomas Harriot, the most profound Elizabethan mathematician, an expert in cartography, optics, and navigational science, an adherent of atomism, the first Englishman to make a telescope and turn it on the heavens, the author of the first original book about the first English colony in America, and the possessor throughout his career of a dangerous reputation for atheism.⁸ In all of his extant writings, private correspondence as well as public discourse, Harriot professes the most reassuringly orthodox religious faith, but the suspicions persisted. When he died of cancer in 1621, one of his contemporaries, persuaded that Harriot (like our Menocchio) had challenged the doctrinal account of creation *ex nihilo*, remarked gleefully that "a *nihilum* killed him at last: for in the top of his nose came a little red speck (exceeding small), which grew bigger and bigger, and at last killed him."⁹

Charges of atheism levelled at Harriot or anyone else in this period are extremely difficult to assess, for such accusations were smear tactics, used with reckless abandon against anyone whom the accuser happened to dislike. At a dinner party one summer evening in 1593, Sir Walter Raleigh teased an irascible country parson named Ralph Ironside and found himself the subject of a state investigation; at the other end of the social scale, in the same Dorsetshire parish, a drunken servant named Oliver complained that in the Sunday sermon the preacher had praised Moses excessively but had neglected to mention his fifty-two concubines, and Oliver too found himself under official scrutiny.¹⁰ Few if any of these investigations turned up what we would call atheists, even muddled or shallow ones; the stance that seems to come naturally to the greenest college freshman in late twentieth-century America seems to have been almost unthinkable to the most daring philosophical minds of late sixteenth-century England.

The historical evidence, of course, is unreliable; even in the absence of substantial social pressure, men lie quite readily about their most intimate beliefs. How much more so must they have lied in an atmosphere of unembarrassed repression. Still, there is probably more than politic concealment involved here. After all, treason was punished as harshly as atheism, and yet, while the period abounds in documented instances of treason in word and deed, there are virtually no professed atheists.¹¹ If ever there were a place to confirm the proposition that within a given social construction of reality certain interpretations of experience are sanctioned and others excluded, it is here, in the boundaries that contained sixteenth-century skepticism. Like Machiavelli and Montaigne, Thomas Harriot professed belief in God, and there is no justification, in any of these cases, for a simple dismissal of the profession of faith as mere hypocrisy.

I am not, of course, arguing that atheism was literally unthinkable in the late sixteenth-century; rather that it was almost always thinkable only as the thought of another. This is, in fact, one of its attractions as a smear; atheism is one of the characteristic marks of otherness. Hence the ease with which Catholics can call Protestant martyrs atheists, and Protestants routinely make similar charges against the Pope.¹² The pervasiveness and frequency of these charges then does not signal the probable existence of a secret society of freethinkers, a School of Night, but rather registers the operation of a religious authority that, whether Catholic or Protestant, characteristically confirms its power in this period by disclosing the threat of atheism. The authority is secular as well as religious; hence at Raleigh's 1603 treason trial, Justice Popham solemnly warned the accused not to let "Harriot, nor any such Doctor, persuade you there is no eternity in Heaven, lest you find an eternity of hell-torments."¹³ Nothing in Harriot's writings suggests that he held the position attributed to him here, but of course the charge does not depend upon evidence: Harriot is invoked as the archetypal corrupter, Achitophel seducing his glittering Absalom. If he did not exist, he would have to be invented.

Yet, as we have already seen in the case of Menocchio, atheism is not the only mode of subversive religious doubt, and we cannot entirely discount the persistent rumors of Harriot's heterodoxy by pointing to his perfectly conventional professions of faith and to the equal conventionality of the attacks upon him. Indeed I want to suggest today that if we look closely at *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, the only work Harriot published in his lifetime and hence the work in which he was presumably the most cautious, we can find traces of exactly the kind of material that could lead to the remark attributed to Marlowe, that "Moses was but a juggler, and that one Heriots, being Sir Walter Raleigh's man, can do more than he."

I should first explain that such an apparently feeble wisecrack finds its way into a police file because it seems to bear out one of the Machiavellian arguments about religion that most excited the wrath of sixteenth-century authorities: Old Testament religion, the argument goes, and by extension the whole Judeo-Christian tradition, originated in a series of clever tricks, fraudulent illusions perpetrated by Moses, who had been trained in Egyptian magic, upon the "rude and gross" (and hence credulous) Hebrews.¹⁴ This argument is not actually to be found in Machiavelli, nor does it originate in the sixteenth century; it is already fully formulated in early Pagan polemics against Christianity. But it seems to acquire a special force and currency in the Renaissance as an aspect of a heightened consciousness, fuelled by the period's prolonged crises of doctrine and church governance, of the social function of religious belief.

Here Machiavelli's writings are important, for *The Prince* observes in

its bland way that if Moses's particular actions and methods are examined closely, they do not appear very different from those employed by the great Pagan princes, while the *Discourses* treat religion as if its primary function were not salvation but the achievement of civic discipline and hence as if its primary justification were not truth but expediency. Thus Romulus's successor, Numa Pompilius, "finding a very savage people, and wishing to reduce them to civil obedience by the arts of peace, had recourse to religion as the most necessary and assured support of any civil society."¹⁵ For although "Romulus could organize the Senate and establish other civil and military institutions without the aid of divine authority, yet it was very necessary for Numa, who feigned that he held converse with a nymph, who dictated to him all that he wished to persuade the people to" (147). In truth, continues Machiavelli, "there never was any remarkable lawgiver amongst any people who did not resort to divine authority, as otherwise his laws would not have been accepted by the people" (147).

From here it was only a short step, in the minds of Renaissance authorities, to the monstrous opinions attributed to the likes of Marlowe and Harriot. Kyd, under torture, testified that Marlowe had affirmed that "things esteemed to be done by divine power might have as well been done by observation of men," and the Jesuit Robert Parsons claimed that in Raleigh's "school of Atheism," "both Moses and our Savior, the Old and the New Testament, are jested at."¹⁶ On the eve of Raleigh's treason trial, some "hellish verses" were lifted from an anonymous tragedy written ten years earlier and circulated as Raleigh's own confession of atheism. (The movement here is instructive: the fictional text returns to circulation as the missing confessional language of real life.) At first the earth was held in common, the verses declare, but this golden age gave way to war, kingship, and property:

Then some sage man, above the vulgar wise,
Knowing that laws could not in quiet dwell,
Unless they were observed, did first devise
The names of Gods, religion, heaven, and hell. . .
Only bug-bears to keep the world in fear.¹⁷

Now Harriot does not give voice to any of these speculations, but if we look attentively at his account of the first Virginia colony, we find a mind that seems interested in the same set of problems, a mind indeed that seems to be virtually testing the Machiavellian hypotheses. Sent by Raleigh to keep a record of the colony and to compile a description of the resources and inhabitants of the area, Harriot took care to learn the Algonkian dialect and to achieve what he calls a "special familiarity with some of the priests."¹⁸ The Indians believe, he writes, in the immortality of the soul and in otherworldly punishments and rewards for behavior in

this world: "What subtlety soever be in the *Wiroances* and Priests, this opinion worketh so much in many of the common and simple sort of people that it maketh them have great respect to their Governors, and also great care what they do, to avoid torment after death and to enjoy bliss" (374). The split between the priests and the people implied here is glimpsed as well in the description of the votive images: "They think that all the gods are of human shape, and therefore they represent them by images in the forms of men, which they call Kewasowak. . . . The common sort think them to be also gods" (373).

We have then, as in Machiavelli, a sense of religion as a set of beliefs manipulated by the subtlety of the priests to help insure social order and cohesion. To this we may add a still more telling observation not of the internal function of native religion but of the impact of European culture upon the Indians: "Most things they saw with us," Harriot writes, "as mathematical instruments, sea compasses, the virtue of the loadstone in drawing iron, a perspective glass whereby was showed many strange sights, burning glasses, wildfire works, guns, books, writing and reading, spring clocks that seem to go of themselves, and many other things that we had, were so strange unto them, and so far exceeded their capacities to comprehend the reason and means how they should be made and done, that they thought they were rather the works of gods than of men, or at the leastwise they had been given and taught us of the gods" (375-76). The effect of this delusion, born of the vast technological superiority of the European, is that the savages began to doubt that they possessed the truth of God and religion and to suspect that such truth "was rather to be had from us, whom God so specially loved than from a people that were so simple, as they found themselves to be in comparison of us" (376).

What we have here, I suggest, is the very core of the Machiavellian anthropology that posited the origin of religion in a cunning imposition of socially coercive doctrines by an educated and sophisticated lawgiver upon a savage people. And in Harriot's list of the marvels—from wildfire to reading—with which he undermined the Indian's confidence in their native understanding of the universe, we have the core of the claim attributed to Marlowe: that Moses was but a juggler and that Raleigh's man Harriot could do more than he. It was, we may add, supremely appropriate that this hypothesis be tested in the encounter of the Old World and the New, for though vulgar Machiavellianism implied that all religion was a sophisticated confidence trick, Machiavelli himself saw that trick as possible only at a radical point of origin: "if any one wanted to establish a republic at the present time," he writes, "he would find it much easier with the simple mountaineers, who are almost without any civilization, than with such as are accustomed to live in cities."¹⁹

In Harriot then we have one of the earliest instances of a highly significant phenomenon: the testing upon the bodies and minds of non-

Europeans or, more generally, the noncivilized, of a hypothesis about the origin and nature of European culture and belief. Such testing could best occur in this privileged anthropological moment, for the comparable situations in Europe itself tended to be already contaminated by prior contact. Only in the forest, with a people ignorant of Christianity and startled by its bearers' technological potency, could one hope to reproduce accurately, with live subjects, the relation imagined between Numa and the primitive Romans, Moses and the Hebrews. And the testing that could then take place could only happen once, for it entails not detached observation but radical change, the change Harriot begins to observe in the priests who "were not so sure grounded, nor gave such credit to their traditions and stories, but through conversing with us they were brought into great doubts of their own" (375).²⁰ I should emphasize that I am speaking here of events as reported by Harriot. The history of subsequent English-Algonkian relations casts doubts upon the depth, extent, and irreversibility of the supposed Indian crisis of belief. In the *Brief and True Report*, however, the tribes stories begin to *collapse* in the minds of their traditional guardians, and the coercive power of the European beliefs begins to show itself almost at once in the Indians' behavior: "On a time also when their corn began to wither by reason of a drought which happened extraordinarily, fearing that it had come to pass by reason that in some thing they had displeased us, many would come to us and desire us to pray to our God of England, that he would preserve their corn, promising that when it was ripe we also should be partakers of the fruit" (377). If we remember that, like virtually all sixteenth-century Europeans in the New World, the English resisted provisioning themselves and were in consequence entirely dependent upon the Indians for food, we may grasp the central importance for the colonists of this dawning Indian fear of the Christian God.²¹ As Machiavelli understood, physical compulsion is essential but never sufficient; the survival of the rulers depends upon a supplement of coercive belief.

The Indians must be persuaded that the Christian God is all-powerful and committed to the survival of his chosen people, that he will wither the corn and destroy the lives of savages who displease him by disobeying or plotting against the English. We have then a strange paradox: Harriot tests and seems to confirm the most radically subversive hypothesis in his culture about the origin and function of religion by imposing his religion—with all of its most intense claims to transcendence, unique truth, inescapable coercive force—upon others. Not only the official purpose but the survival of the English colony depends upon this imposition. This crucial circumstance is what has licensed the testing in the first place; it is only as an agent of the English colony, dependent upon its purposes and committed to its survival, that Harriot is in a position to disclose the power of human achievements—reading, writing, gunpowder, and

the like—to appear to the ignorant as divine and hence to promote belief and compel obedience.

Thus the subversiveness which is genuine and radical—sufficiently disturbing so that to be suspected of such beliefs could lead to imprisonment and torture—is at the same time contained by the power it would appear to threaten. Indeed the subversiveness is the very product of that power and furthers its ends. One may go still further and suggest that the power Harriot both serves and embodies not only produces its own subversion but is actively built upon it: in the Virginia colony, the radical undermining of Christian order is not the negative limit but the positive condition for the establishment of that order. And this paradox extends to the production of Harriot's text: *A Brief and True Report*, with its latent heterodoxy, is not a reflection upon the Virginia colony nor even a simple record of it—not, in other words, a privileged withdrawal into a critical zone set apart from power—but a continuation of the colonial enterprise.

By October 1586, there were rumors in England that there was little prospect of profit in Virginia, that the colony had been close to starvation, and that the Indians had turned hostile. Harriot accordingly begins with a descriptive catalog in which the natural goods of the land are turned into social goods, that is, into “merchantable commodities”: “Cedar, a very sweet wood and fine timber; whereof if nests of chests be there made, or timber thereof fitted for sweet and fine bedsteads, tables, desks, lutes, virginals, and many things else. . . [it] will yield profit.” (329–30)²² The inventory of these commodities is followed by an inventory of edible plants and animals, to prove to readers that the colony need not starve, and then by the account of the Indians, to prove that the colony could impose its will upon them. The key to this imposition, as we have seen, is the coercive power of religious belief, and the source of this power is the impression made by advanced technology upon a “backward” people.

Hence Harriot's text is committed to record what we have called his confirmation of the Machiavellian hypothesis, and hence too this confirmation is not only inaccessible as subversion to those on whom the religion is supposedly imposed but functionally inaccessible to most readers and quite possibly to Harriot himself. It may be that Harriot was demonically conscious of what he was doing—that he found himself situated exactly where he could test one of his culture's darkest fears about its own origins, that he used the Algonkians to do so, and that he wrote a report on his findings, a coded report, of course, since as he wrote to Kepler years later, “our situation is such that I still may not philosophize freely.”²³ But we do not need such a biographical romance to account for the phenomenon: the subversiveness, as I have argued, was produced by the colonial power in its own interest, and *A Brief and True Report* was, with perfect appropriateness, published by the great Elizabethan exponent of missionary colonialism, the reverend Richard Hakluyt.

Yet it is misleading, I think, to suggest without qualification that the radical doubt implicit in Harriot's account is *entirely* contained. Harriot was, after all, hounded through his whole life by charges of atheism and, more tellingly, the remark attributed to Marlowe suggests that it was fully possible for a contemporary to draw the most dangerous conclusions from the Virginia report. Moreover, the “Atlantic Republican Tradition,” as Pocock has argued, does grow out of the “Machiavellian moment” of the sixteenth century, and that tradition, with its transformation of subjects into citizens, its subordination of transcendent values to capital values, does ultimately undermine, in the interests of a new power, the religious and secular authorities that had licensed the American enterprise in the first place.²⁴ What we have in Harriot's text is a relation between orthodoxy and subversion that seems, in the same interpretive moment, to be perfectly stable and dangerously volatile.

We can deepen our understanding of this apparent paradox if we consider a second mode of subversion and its containment in Harriot's account. Alongside the *testing* of a subversive interpretation of the dominant culture, we find the *recording* of alien voices or, more precisely, of alien interpretations. The occasion for this recording is another consequence of the English presence in the New World, not in this case the threatened extinction of the tribal religion but the threatened extinction of the tribe: “There was no town where we had any subtle device practiced against us,” Harriot writes, “but that within a few days after our departure from every such town, the people began to die very fast, and many in short space; in some towns about twenty, in some forty, in some sixty and in one six score, which in truth was very many in respect of their numbers. The disease was so strange, that they neither knew what it was, nor how to cure it; the like by report of the oldest man in the country never happened before, time out of mind.” (378)²⁵ Harriot is writing, of course, about the effects of measles, smallpox, or perhaps simply the common cold upon people with no resistance to them, but a conception of the biological basis of epidemic disease lies far, far in the future. For the English the deaths must be a moral phenomenon—the notion is for them as irresistible as the notion of germs for ourselves—and hence the “facts” as they are observed are already moralized: the deaths only occurred “where they used some practice against us,” that is, where the Indians conspired secretly against the English. And, with the wonderful self-validating circularity that characterizes virtually all powerful constructions of reality, the evidence for these secret conspiracies is precisely the deaths of the Indians.

Now it is not surprising that Harriot seems to endorse the idea that God is protecting his chosen people by killing off untrustworthy Indians; what is surprising is that Harriot is interested in the Indians's own anxious speculations about the unintended but lethal biological warfare that was

destroying them. Drawing upon his special familiarity with the priests, he records a remarkable series of conjectures, almost all of which assume—correctly, as we now know—that their misfortune was linked to the presence of the strangers. “Some people,” observing that the English remained healthy while the Indians died, “could not tell,” Harriot writes, “whether to think us gods or men”; others, seeing that the members of the first colony were all male, concluded that they were not born of women and therefore must be spirits of the dead returned to mortal form (an Algonkian “Night of the Living Dead”). Some medicine men learned in astrology blamed the disease on a recent eclipse of the sun and on a comet—a theory Harriot considers seriously and rejects—while others shared the prevailing English interpretation and said “that it was the special work of God” on behalf of the colonists. And some who seem in historical hindsight eerily prescient prophesied “that there were more of [the English] generation yet to come, to kill theirs and take their places.” The supporters of this theory even worked out a conception of the disease that in some features uncannily resembles our own: “Those that were immediately to come after us [the first English colonists], they imagined to be in the air, yet invisible and without bodies, and that they by our entreaty and for the love of us did make the people to die. . . by shooting invisible bullets into them” (380).

For a moment, as Harriot records these competing theories, it may seem to a reader as if there were no absolute assurance of God’s national interest, as if the drive to displace and absorb the other had given way to conversation among equals, as if all meanings were provisional, as if the signification of events stood apart from power. This impression is intensified for us by our awareness that the theory that would ultimately triumph over the moral conception of epidemic disease was already at least metaphorically present in the conversation.²⁶ In the very moment that the moral conception is busily authorizing itself, it registers the possibility (indeed from our vantage point, the inevitability) of its own destruction.

Buy why, we must ask ourselves, should power record other voices, permit subversive inquiries, register at its very center the transgressions that will ultimately violate it? The answer may be in part that power, even in a colonial situation, is not perfectly monolithic and hence may encounter and record in one of its functions materials that can threaten another of its functions; in part that power thrives on vigilance, and human beings are vigilant if they sense a threat; in part that power defines itself in relation to such threats or simply to that which is not identical with it. Harriot’s text suggests an intensification of these observations: English power in the first Virginia colony *depends* upon the registering and even the production of such materials. “These their opinions I have set down the more at large,” Harriot tells the “Adventurers, Favorers, and Wellwishers” of the colony to whom his report is addressed, “that it may

appear unto you that there is good hope they may be brought through discrete dealing and government to the embracing of the truth, and consequently to honor, obey, fear, and love us” (381). The recording of alien voices, their preservation in Harriot’s text, is part of the process whereby Indian culture is constituted as a culture and thus brought into the light for study, discipline, correction, transformation. The momentary sense of instability or plenitude—the existence of other voices—is produced by the power that ultimately denies the possibility of plenitude, just as the subversive hypothesis about European religion is tested and confirmed only by the imposition of that religion.

We may add that the power of which we are speaking is in effect an allocation method—a way of distributing resources to some and denying them to others, critical resources (here primarily corn and game) that prolong life or, in their absence, extinguish it. In a remarkable study of how societies make “tragic choices” in the allocation of scarce resources (e.g. kidney machines) or in the determination of high risks (e.g. the military draft), Guido Calabresi and Philip Bobbitt observe that by complex mixtures of approaches, societies attempt to avert “tragic results, that is, results which imply the rejection of values which are proclaimed to be fundamental.” These approaches may succeed for a time, but it will eventually become apparent that some sacrifice of fundamental values has taken place, whereupon “fresh mixtures of methods will be tried, structured . . . by the shortcomings of the approaches they replace.” These too will in time give way to others in a “strategy of successive moves” that comprises an “intricate game,” a game that reflects the simultaneous perception of an inherent flaw and the determination to “forget” that perception in an illusory resolution.²⁷ Hence the simple operation of any systematic order, any allocation method, will inevitably run the risk of exposing its own limitations, even (or perhaps especially) as it asserts its underlying moral principle.

This exposure is at its most intense at moments in which a comfortably established ideology confronts unusual circumstances, moments when the moral value of a particular form of power is not merely assumed but explained. We may glimpse such a moment in Harriot’s account of a visit from the colonists’ principal Indian ally, the chief Wingina. Wingina was persuaded that the disease decimating his people was indeed the work of the Christian God and had come to request that the English ask their God to direct his lethal magic against an enemy tribe. The colonists tried to explain that such a prayer would be “ungodly,” that their God was indeed responsible for the disease but that, in this as in all things, he would only act “according to his good pleasure as he had ordained” (379). Indeed if men asked God to make an epidemic he probably would not do it; the English could expect such providential help only if they made sincere “petition for the contrary,” that is, for harmony and good fellowship in the service of truth and righteousness.

made sincere "petition for the contrary," that is, for harmony and good fellowship in the service of truth and righteousness.

The problem with these assertions is not that they are self-consciously wicked (in the manner of Richard III or Iago) but that they are highly moral and logically coherent; or rather, what is unsettling is one's experience of them, the nasty sense that they are at once irrefutable ethical propositions and pious humbug designed to conceal from the English themselves the rapacity and aggression that is implicit in their very presence. The explanatory moment manifests the self-validating, totalizing character of Renaissance political theology—its ability to account for almost every occurrence, even (or above all) apparently perverse or contrary occurrences—and at the same time confirms for us the drastic disillusionment that extends from Machiavelli to its definitive expression in Hume and Voltaire. In his own way, Wingina himself clearly thought his lesson in Christian ethics was polite nonsense. When the disease had in fact spread to his enemies, as it did shortly thereafter, he returned to the English to thank them—I presume with the Algonkian equivalent of a sly wink—for their friendly help, for "although we satisfied them not in promise, yet in deeds and effect we had fulfilled their desires" (379). For Harriot, this "marvelous accident," as he calls it, is another sign of the colony's great expectations.

Once again a disturbing vista—a skeptical critique of the function of Christian morality in the New World—is glimpsed only to be immediately closed off. Indeed we may feel at this point that subversion scarcely exists and may legitimately ask ourselves how our perception of the subversive and orthodox is generated. The answer, I think, is that "subversive" is for us a term used to designate those elements in Renaissance culture that contemporary authorities tried to contain or, when containment seemed impossible, to destroy and that now conform to our own sense of truth and reality. That is, we locate as "subversive" in the past precisely those things that are *not* subversive to ourselves, that pose no threat to the order by which we live and allocate resources: in Harriot's *Brief and True Report*, the function of illusion in the establishment of religion, the displacement of a providential conception of disease by one focussed on "invisible bullets," the exposure of the psychological and material interests served by a certain conception of divine power. Conversely, we identify as the principle of order and authority in Renaissance texts things that we would, if we took them seriously, find subversive for ourselves: religious and political absolutism, aristocracy of birth, demonology, humoral psychology, and the like. That we do not find such notions subversive, that we complacently identify them as principles of aesthetic or political order, is a version of the process of containment that licensed what we call the subversive elements in Renaissance texts: that is, our own values are sufficiently strong for us to contain

almost effortlessly alien forces. What we find then in Harriot's *Brief and True Report* can best be described by adapting a remark about the possibility of hope that Kafka once made to Max Brod: There is subversion, no end of subversion, only not for us.

I proposed earlier in this essay to close with a few remarks on the relevance of what I've been doing to our understanding of more complex literary works. It is tempting to focus such remarks on Shakespeare's *Tempest* where Caliban, Prospero's "salvage and deformed slave" enters cursing the expropriation of his island and exits declaring that he will "be wise hereafter, / And seek for grace."²⁸ What better instance, in the light of Harriot's Virginia, of the containment of a subversive force by the authority that has created that force in the first place: "This thing of darkness," Prospero says of Caliban at the close, "I acknowledge mine."

But I do not want to give the impression that the process I have been describing is applicable only to works that address themselves directly or allusively to the New World. Shakespeare's plays are centrally and repeatedly concerned with the production and containment of subversion and disorder, and the three modes that we have identified in Harriot's text—testing, recording, and explaining—all have their recurrent theatrical equivalents. I am speaking not solely of plays like *Measure for Measure* and *King Lear*, where authority is obviously subjected to open, sustained, and radical questioning before it is reaffirmed, with ironic reservations, at the close, but of a play like *I Henry IV* in which authority seems far less problematical. "Who does not all along see," wrote Upton in the mid-eighteenth century, "that when prince Henry comes to be king he will assume a character suitable to his dignity?" My point is not to dispute this interpretation of the prince as, in Maynard Mack's words, "an ideal image of the potentialities of the English character,"²⁹ but to observe that such an ideal image involves as its positive condition the constant production of its own radical subversion and the powerful containment of that subversion.

We are continually reminded that Hal is a "juggler," a conniving hypocrite, and that the power he both serves and comes to embody is glorified usurpation and theft; yet at the same time, we are drawn to the celebration of both the prince and his power. Thus, for example, the scheme of Hal's moral redemption is carefully laid out in his soliloquy at the close of the first tavern scene, but as in the act of *explaining* that we have examined in Harriot, Hal's justification of himself threatens to fall away at every moment into its antithesis. "By how much better than my word I am," Hal declares, "By so much shall I falsify men's hopes" (1.2. 210–11). To falsify men's hopes is to exceed their expectations, and it is also to disappoint their expectations, to deceive men, to turn their hopes into fictions, to betray them. At issue are not only the competing claims of Bolingbroke and Falstaff but our own hopes, the fantasies continually

aroused by the play of absolute friendship and trust, limitless playfulness, innate grace, plenitude. But though all of this is in some sense at stake in Hal's soliloquy and though we can perceive at every point, through our own constantly shifting allegiances, the potential instability of the structure of power that has Henry IV at the pinnacle and Robin Ostler, who "never joy'd since the price of oats rose" (2.1. 12), near the bottom, Hal's "redemption" is as inescapable and inevitable as the outcome of those practical jokes the madcap prince is so fond of playing. Indeed, the play insists, this redemption is not something toward which the action moves, but something that is happening at every moment of the theatrical representation.

The same yoking of the unstable and the inevitable may be seen in the play's acts of *recording*, that is, the moments in which we hear voices that seem to dwell in realms apart from that ruled by the potentates of the land. These voices exist and have their apotheosis in Falstaff, but their existence proves to be utterly bound up with Hal, contained politically by his purposes as they are justified aesthetically by his involvement. The perfect emblem of this containment is Falstaff's company, marching off to Shrewsbury: "discarded unjust servingmen, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fall'n, the cankers of a calm world and a long peace" (4.2. 27-30). These are, as many a homily would tell us, the very types of Elizabethan subversion—masterless men, the natural enemies of social discipline—but they are here pressed into service as defenders of the established order, "good enough to toss," as Falstaff tells Hal, "food for powder, food for powder" (4.2. 65-66). For power as well as powder, and we may add that this food is produced as well as consumed by the great.

Shakespeare gives us a glimpse of this production in the odd little scene in which Hal, with the connivance of Poins, reduces the puny tapster Francis to the mechanical repetition of the word "Anon":

Prince. Nay, but hark you, Francis: for the sugar thou gavest me, 'twas a penny-worth, was't not?

Francis. O Lord, I would it had been two!

Prince. I will give thee for it a thousand pound. Ask me when thou wilt, and thou shalt have it.

Poins. [Within.] Francis!

Francis. Anon, anon.

Prince. Anon, Francis? No, Francis; but tomorrow, Francis; or, Francis, a' Thursday; or indeed, Francis, when thou wilt. (2.4. 58-67)

The Bergsonian comedy in such a moment resides in Hal's exposing a drastic reduction of human possibility: "That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot," he says at the scene's end, "and yet the son of a woman!" (2.4. 98). But the chief interest for us resides in the fact that Hal has himself produced the reduction he exposes. The fact of this pro-

duction, its theatrical demonstration, implicates Hal not only in the linguistic poverty upon which he plays but in the poverty of the five years of apprenticeship Francis has yet to serve: "Five year!" Hal exclaims, "by'r lady, a long lease for the clinking of pewter" (2.4. 45-46). And as the Prince is implicated in the production of this oppressive order, so is he implicated in the impulse to abrogate it: "But, Francis, darest thou be so valiant as to play the coward with thy indenture, and show it a fair pair of heels and run from it?" (2.4. 46-48). It is tempting to think of this peculiar moment—the Prince awakening the apprentice's discontent—as linked darkly with some supposed uneasiness in Hal about his own apprenticeship,³⁰ but if so the momentary glimpse of a revolt against authority is closed off at once with a few words of calculated obscurity designed to return Francis to his trade without enabling him to understand why he must do so:

Prince. Why then your brown bastard is your only drink! for look you, Francis, your white canvas doublet will sully. In Barbary, sir, it cannot come to so much.

Francis. What, sir?

Poins. [Within.] Francis!

Prince. Away, you rogue, dost thou not hear them call? (2.4. 73-79)

If Francis takes the earlier suggestion, robs his master and runs away, he will only find a place for himself, the play implies, as one of the "revolted tapsters" in Falstaff's company, men as good as dead long before they march to their deaths as upholders of the crown.

I have spoken of such scenes in *I Henry IV* as resembling what in Harriot's text I have called *recording*, a mode that culminates for Harriot in a glossary, the beginnings of an Algonkian-English dictionary, designed to facilitate further acts of recording and hence to consolidate English power in Virginia. The resemblance may be seen most clearly perhaps in Hal's own glossary of tavern slang: "They call drinking deep, dyeing scarlet; and when you breathe in your watering, they cry 'hem!' and bid you play it off. To conclude, I am so good proficient in one quarter of an hour that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life" (2.4. 15-20). The potential value of these lessons, the functional interest to power of recording the speech of an "under-skinker" and his mates, may be glimpsed in the expressions of loyalty that Hal laughingly recalls: "They take it already upon their salvation that . . . when I am King of England I shall command all the good lads in Eastcheap" (2.4. 9-15).³¹

There is, it may be objected, something slightly absurd in likening such moments to aspects of Harriot's text; *I Henry IV* is a play, not a tract for potential investors in a colonial scheme, and the only values we may be sure that Shakespeare had in mind were theatrical values. The theoretical problems that beset such appeals to the self-referentiality of literature

are beyond the scope of this paper.³² I would observe here only that *I Henry IV* itself insists that it is quite impossible to keep the interests of the theater hermetically sealed off from the interests of power. Hal's characteristic activity is playing or, more precisely, theatrical improvisation—his parts include his father, Hotspur, Hotspur's wife, a thief in buckram, himself as prodigal and himself as penitent—and he fully understands his own behavior through most of the play as a role that he is performing. We might expect that this role-playing gives way at the end to his true identity—"I shall hereafter," Hal has promised his father, "be more myself" (3.2. 92-3)—but with the killing of Hotspur, Hal clearly does not reject all theatrical masks but rather replaces one with another. "The time will come," Hal declares midway through the play, "That I shall make this northern youth exchange / His glorious deeds for my indignities" (3.2. 144-46); when that time *has* come, at the play's close, Hal hides with his "favors" (that is, a scarf or other emblem, but the word also has in the sixteenth century the sense of "face") the dead Hotspur's "mangled face" (5.4. 96), as if to mark the completion of the exchange.

Theatricality then is not set over against power but is one of power's essential modes. In lines that anticipate Hal's promise, the angry Henry IV tells Worcester, "I will from henceforth rather be myself, / Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition" (1.3. 5-6). "To be oneself" here means to perform one's part in the scheme of power as opposed to one's natural disposition, or what we would normally designate as the very core of the self. Indeed it is by no means clear that such a thing as a natural disposition exists in the play as anything more than a theatrical fiction; we recall that in Falstaff's hands "instinct" itself becomes a piece of histrionic rhetoric, an improvised excuse when he is confronted with the shame of his flight from the masked prince: "Beware instinct—the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter; I was now a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself, and thee, during my life; I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince" (2.4. 271-75). Both claims, the lines darkly imply, are of equal merit.

Again and again in *I Henry IV* we are tantalized by the possibility of an escape from theatricality and hence from the constant pressure of improvisational power, but we are, after all, in the theater, and our pleasure depends upon the fact that there is no escape, and our applause ratifies the triumph of our confinement. Hence the odd blend in this play of spaciousness—the constant multiplication of separate, vividly realized realms—and claustrophobia—the absorption of all of these realms by a power at once vital and impoverished. What lies ahead is the charismatic leader who, in *Henry V*, purges the commonwealth of its incorrigibles and draws Welshman, Irishman, Scot, and Englishman together into the martial national state.

To understand this whole conception of Hal, from rakehell to mon-

arch, we need in effect a poetics of Elizabethan power. Testing, recording, and explaining are elements in this poetics that is inseparably bound up with the figure of Queen Elizabeth, a ruler without a standing army, without a highly developed bureaucracy, without an extensive police force, a ruler whose power is constituted in theatrical celebrations of royal glory and theatrical violence visited upon the enemies of that glory. Power that relies upon a massive police apparatus, a strong, middle-class nuclear family, an elaborate school system, power that dreams of a panopticon in which the most intimate secrets are open to the view of an invisible authority, such power will have as its appropriate aesthetic form the realist novel.³³ Elizabethan power, by contrast, depends upon its privileged visibility. As in a theater, the audience must be powerfully engaged by this visible presence, while at the same time held at a certain respectful distance from it. "We princes," Elizabeth told a deputation of Lords and Commons in 1586, "are set on stages in the sight and view of all the world."³⁴

Royal power is manifested to its subjects as in a theater, and the subjects are at once absorbed by the instructive, delightful, or terrible spectacles and forbidden intervention or deep intimacy. These matters, Thomas More imagines the common people saying of one such spectacle, "be kings's games, as it were stage plays, and for the more part played upon scaffolds. In which poor men be but the lookers-on. And they that wise be will meddle no farther."³⁵ Within this theatrical setting, there is a remarkable insistence upon the paradoxes, ambiguities, and tensions of authority, but this apparent production of subversion is, as we have already seen, the very condition of power. I should add that this condition is not a theoretical necessity of theatrical power in general but an historical phenomenon, the particular mode of this particular culture. "In sixteenth century England," writes Clifford Geertz, comparing Elizabethan and Majapahit royal progresses, "the political center of society was the point at which the tension between the passions that power excited and the ideals it was supposed to serve was screwed to its highest pitch. . . . In fourteenth century Java, the center was the point at which such tension disappeared in a blaze of cosmic symmetry."³⁶

It is precisely because of the English form of absolutist theatricality that Shakespeare's drama, written for a theater subject to state censorship, can be so relentlessly subversive: the form itself, as a primary expression of Renaissance power, contains the radical doubts it continually produces.³⁷ Like Harriot in the New World, *I Henry IV* confirms the Machiavellian hypothesis of the origin of princely power in force and fraud even as it draws its audience irresistibly toward the celebration of that power. And we are free to locate and pay homage to the play's doubts only because they no longer threaten us. There is subversion, no end of subversion, only not for us.

NOTES

1. For a full and moving account of Menocchio, see Carlo Ginzburg, *Il formaggio e i vermi: Il cosmo di un mugnaio del 1500* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976). English Translation by John and Anne Tedeschi, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).
2. Ginzburg, *Il formaggio*, pp. 52–58.
3. Ibid., pp. 130–48; see also p. 61: “Non il libro in quanto tale, ma l’incontro tra pagina scritta e cultura orale formavano nella testa di Menocchio una miscela esplosiva.”
4. For a particularly egregious example of this practice, see Hessel Miedema, “Realism and comic mode: the peasant,” *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 9 (1977): 205–219, and the devastating reply by Svetlana Alpers, “Taking pictures seriously: a reply to Hessel Miedema,” *Simiolus* 10 (1978): 46–50.
5. Hiram Haydn, *The Counter-Renaissance* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1950); G. K. Hunter, *John Lyly: The Humanist as Courtier* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962); Frances A. Yates, *A Study of “Love’s Labour’s Lost”* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1936); M. C. Bradbrook, *The School of Night* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1936).
6. See Daniel Javitch, *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Ernest A. Strathmann, *Sir Walter Raleigh: A Study in Elizabethan Skepticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951).
7. John Bakeless, *The Tragical History of Christopher Marlowe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942), 1:111. “Juggler” is a richly complex word, including in its range of associations con man, cheap entertainer, magician, trickster, storyteller, conjurer, actor, and dramatist.
8. On Harriot see especially *Thomas Harriot, Renaissance Scientist*, ed. John W. Shirley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974); see also Muriel Rukeyser, *The Traces of Thomas Harriot* (New York: Random House, 1970) and Jean Jacquot, “Thomas Harriot’s Reputation for Impiety,” *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* 9 (1952): 164–87. Harriot himself appears to have paid close attention to his reputation; see David B. Quinn and John W. Shirley, “A Contemporary List of Harriot References,” in *Renaissance Quarterly* 22 (1969): 9–26.
9. John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. Andrew Clark, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 1:286.
10. For the investigation of Raleigh, see *Willobie His Avisa* [1594], ed. G. B. Harrison (London: John Lane, 1926), appendix 3, pp. 255–71; for Oliver’s story, see Strathmann, *Sir Walter Raleigh*, p. 50.
11. There are, to be sure, some evangelical professions of having been saved from atheism. On treason see Lacey Baldwin Smith, “English Treason Trials and Confessions in the Sixteenth Century,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 15 (1954): 471–98.
12. See, for example, the story William Strachey borrows from Henri Estienne’s commentary on Herodotus: “Pope Leo the 10. answered Cardinal Bembo that alleadged some parte of the Ghospell vnto him: ‘Lord Cardinall, what a wealth this fable of Iesus Christ hath gotten vs?’” (*The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* [1612], ed. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund [London: Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser., no. 103, 1953], p. 101).
13. Jacquot, “Thomas Harriot’s Reputation for Impiety,” p. 167. In another official record, Popham is reported to have said ominously, “You know what men say of *Hereiat*” (John W. Shirley, “Sir Walter Raleigh and Thomas Harriot,” in *Thomas Harriot, Renaissance Scientist*, p. 27).
14. Here is Richard Baines’s version of Marlowe’s version of this argument: “He affirmed . . . That the first beginning of Religioun was only to keep men in awe. That it was an easy matter for Moyses being brought vp in all the artes of the Egyprians to abuse the Jewes being a rude & grosse people” (C. F. Tucker Brooke, *The Life of Marlowe* [London: Methuen, 1930], appendix 9, p. 98). For other versions, see Strathmann, *Sir Walter Raleigh*, pp. 70–72, 87.

15. For the *Prince*, see *Tutte le opere di Niccolò Machiavelli*, ed. Francesco Flora and Carlo Cordiè, 2 vols. (Rome: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1949), 1:18: “E benché di Moisé non si debba ragionare, sendo suto uno mero esecutore delle cose che li erano ordinate da Dio, tamen debbe essere ammirato solum per quella grazia che lo faceva degno di parlare con Dio. Ma consideriamo Ciro e li altri che hanno acquistato o fondato regni: li troverrete tutti mirabili. E se si consideranno le azioni e ordini loro particolari, parranno non discrepanti da quelli di Moisé, che ebbe sì gran precettore.” (The passage is quoted in the original to preserve the piquant delicacy of its irony.) The *Discourses* are cited in the translation of Christian Detmold (New York: Random House, 1950), p. 146.
16. Kyd, in Brooke, *Life of Marlowe*, appendix 12, p. 107; Parsons, in Strathmann, *Sir Walter Raleigh*, p. 25.
17. Quoted in Jean Jacquot, “Raleigh’s ‘Hellish Verses’ and the ‘Tragicall Raigne of Selimus,’” *Modern Language Review* 48 (1953): 1.
18. Thomas Harriot, *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia: of the commodities there found and to be raysed, as well marchantable, as others for victuall, building and other necessarie uses for those that are and shalbe the planters there; and of the nature and manners of the naturall inhabitants* [London, 1588], in *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584–1590*, ed. David Beers Quinn, 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 2nd series, no. 104, 1955), p. 375. Except in the footnotes, I have modernized all quotations from Renaissance texts.
19. In the next generation, William Strachey would urge that when the colonists have the power, they should “performe the same acceptable service to god, that Iehu king of Israell did when he assembled all the priests of Baal, and slue them to the last man in their owne Temple” (*Historie of Travell*, p. 94).
20. See Harriot’s account of his missionary activity: “Manie times and in euery towne where I came, according as I was able, I made declaration of the contentes of the Bible; that therein was set forth the true and onelie GOD, and his mightie woorkes, that therein was containned the true doctrine of saluation through Christ, with manie particularities of Miracles and chiefe poyntes of religion, as I was able then to vtter, and thought fitte for the time. And although I told them the booke materially & of it self was not of anie such vertue, as I thought they did conceiue, but onely the doctrine therein contained; yet would many be glad to touch it, to embrace it, to kisse it, to hold it to their breasts and heades, and stroke ouer all their bodie with it; to shew their hungrie desire of that knowledge which was spoken of” (pp. 376–77). Could they, one wonders, have contracted European diseases from this eager appropriation of the book?
21. As early as Columbus’s fourth voyage in 1504, the natives, distressed that the Spanish seemed inclined to settle in for a long visit, refused to continue to supply food. Knowing from his almanac that a total eclipse of the moon was imminent, Columbus warned the Indians that God would show them a sign of his displeasure; after the eclipse, the terrified Indians resumed the supply. But an eclipse would not always be so handy. John Sparke, who sailed with Hawkins in 1564, noted that the French colonists in Florida “would not take the paines so much as to fish in the river before their doores, but would have all things put in their mouthes” (in Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, & Discoveries of the English Nation*, 12 vols. [Glasgow: James Maclenose and Sons, 1903–5], 10:54). When the Indians wearied of this arrangement, the French turned to extortion and robbery and, before long, there were bloody wars. A similar situation seems to have arisen in the colony in which Harriot played his part: surrounded by land rich in game and ample fishing grounds, the English nearly starved to death when the exasperated Algonkians refused to build fishing weirs and plant corn.
- It is difficult to understand why men so aggressive and energetic in other regards should have been so passive in the crucial matter of feeding themselves. John Sparke wrote that “Notwithstanding the great want that the Frenchmen had, the ground doth yeeld victuals sufficient, if they would have taken paines to get the same; but they being souldiers, desired to live

by the sweat of other mens brows" (10:56). This explanation bears close attention: it points not to laziness or negligence but to an occupational identity, a determination to be nourished by the labor of others weaker, more vulnerable, than oneself. This was not, we might add, only a military self-conception: the hallmark of power and wealth in the sixteenth century was to be waited on by others. "To live by the sweat of other men's brows" was the enviable lot of the gentleman; indeed in England it virtually defined what being a gentleman meant. The New World held out the prospect of such status for all but the poorest cabin boy.

22. On these catalogs, see Wayne Franklin, *Discoverers, Explorers, Settlers: The Diligent Writers of Early America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp. 69–122.

23. Quoted in Edward Rosen, "Harriot's Science: The Intellectual Background," in *Thomas Harriot: Renaissance Scientist*, p. 4.

24. J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

25. Cf. Walter Bigges's narrative of Drake's visit to Florida in 1586: "The wilde people at first comminge of our men died verie fast and saide amongst themselves, It was the Inglishe God that made them die so faste" (in *The Roanoke Voyages*, 1:306).

26. We should note, however, that the conception of "invisible bullets" implies intention and hence morality.

27. Guido Calabresi and Philip Bobbitt, *Tragic Choices* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), p. 195. The term *tragic* is, I think, misleading.

28. 5.1. 295–96. All citations of Shakespeare are to *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

29. John Upton, *Critical Observations on Shakespeare* (1748), in *Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Brian Vickers, vol. 3: 1733–1752 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 297; Maynard Mack, introduction to Signet Classic edition of *I Henry IV*. (New York: New American Library, 1965), p. xxxv.

30. See S. P. Zitner, "Anon, Anon: or, a Mirror for a Magistrate," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 19 (1968): 63–70.

31. In *II Henry IV*, a still darker color, as we might expect from the general tone of that play, is given to the prince's interests in the good lads of Eastcheap:

The prince but studies his companions
Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language
'Tis needful that the most immodest word
Be looked upon and learned, which once attained,
Your highness knows, comes to no further use
But to be known and hated. So, like gross terms,
The prince will in the perfectness of time
Cast off his followers, and their memory
Shall as a pattern or a measure live,
By which his grace must mete the lives of others,
Turning past evils to advantages. (4.4. 67–78)

32. See, for example, V. N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* [1930] trans. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (New York: Seminar Press, 1973); for a recent, non-Marxist variation, see Walter Benn Michaels, "Against Formalism: The Autonomous Text in Legal and Literary Interpretation," *Poetics Today* 1 (1979/80): 23–34.

33. See, in this issue, D. A. Miller, "The Novel and the Police."

34. Quoted in J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments, 1584–1601*, 2 vols. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1965), 2:119.

For the complex relation between theater and absolutism, see Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975); recent studies include two stimulating articles in the Italian journal *Calibano* 4 (1979): Franco Moretti, "La grande eclissi. Forma tragica e sconsacrazione della sovranità," pp. 9–52; Paola Colaiacono, "Il teatro del principe," pp. 53–98.

35. *The History of King Richard III*, ed. R. S. Sylvester, in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, vol. 3 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 80.

36. Clifford Geertz, "Centers, King, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," in *Culture and Its Creators: Essays in Honor of Edward Shils*, ed. Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clark (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 160.

37. The censorship existed to make certain that this containment functioned properly. In Frank Fowell and Frank Palmer's wonderfully, if unintentionally, ironic account, "The censorship really gave dramatic authors practically unlimited freedom in the selection and treatment of their subjects, so long as the existing order of things was not menaced" (*Censorship in England* [London: Frank Palmer, 1913], p. 78).

The theater itself, of course, may in other circumstances be allied to far different institutions, in which case—as fifth-century Athens and eighteenth-century Paris attest—the form will be conceived in quite diverse ways. For a stimulating account of the Jacobin attempt to transform the theater's ideology, see Joseph Butwin, "The French Revolution as *Theatrum Mundi*," *Research Studies* 43 (1975): 141–52.