

Cinequest Film Festival (2002), where McKellen received the Maverick award, and at the San Francisco Pride 2002 celebrations where he was the Celebrity Grand Marshall, and again at a fund-raiser for The Gate Theatre (2003). Clearly the words that Shakespeare has given Sir Thomas More can and do still speak to audiences in the twenty-first century. Sir Ian McKellen continues to make certain that they are heard, and understood.



A bibliographical note: Ian McKellen's website (www.mckellen.com) contains a wealth of factual information on his life and work. It is his on-line autobiography, complete with visual and sound materials, and it is easy to use. The handwritten addition to the *Acting Shakespeare* script is from the working script (p. 54) prepared by stage manager Johnny Handy for the 1987 USA tour. It was the basis for all later performances, and can be seen on the McKellen website. Other related websites are www.leeds.ac.uk/centenary/celebration for his speech at the University of Leeds Centenary, and www.rosetheatre.org for more information on the Rose Theatre. Julian Bowsher's book, *The Rose Theatre: An Archeological Discovery* (Museum of London, 1998) with a foreword by Sir Ian, provides an excellent account of the discoveries made during the excavation.

The matter of More and conscience is discussed by R. J. Schoeck, "A Lawyer with a Conscience," *Moreana* 39 (1973): 25–32, and by Germain Marc'hadour, "St. Thomas More and Conscience," *Moreana* 113 (1993): 55–64. Father Marc'hadour adds that as an actor, McKellen figures in four past issues of *Moreana*. In N° 4/89, Jacques Gury describes and applauds his "gallant and successful" achievement at Nottingham. Gury's vibrant page is summarized in French in N° 67–68/199. In N° 71, Marie-Claude Rousseau quotes McKellen's 1980 protest against "literary analysis" when it ignores "how a play works on stage" (p. 157). In N° 83–84, she evokes the two-hour BBC production of the play of Christmas 1958, with McKellen again in the title role (p. 133).

THOMAS MORE'S RICHARD III AND SHAKESPEARE

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For his drama *Richard III* Shakespeare clearly relied on More's narrative as filtered mainly through the chronicles of Edward Hall and Raphael Holinshed. The complications of transmission and authority relating to Shakespeare's use of More's unfinished work, and to the numerous forms each text would come to assume, uncannily replicate the very issues of authority and validation their narratives scrutinize. With his account More produced an archetype of modern, cunning individualism, an archetype that Shakespeare would popularize in *Richard III*.

Key words: Edward Hall, Raphael Holinshed, Machiavellianism, authority, autonomy

Pour sa pièce Richard III, Shakespeare s'est manifestement appuyé sur le récit de More, filtré principalement à travers les chroniques d'Edward Hall et Raphael Holinshed. La complexité de la transmission entre More et le dramaturge, accrue par le fait que l'Histoire était inachevée, et que le texte a été publié sous diverses formes, reproduit de façon troublante les problèmes d'autorité et de validation que les récits explorent. Le récit de More a constitué un archétype d'individualité moderne et astucieuse, archétype que Shakespeare devait populariser dans Richard III.

Mots-clés: Edward Hall, Raphael Holinshed, machiavélisme, autorité, autonomie.

Para su drama *Richard III*, Shakespeare confió claramente en la obra narrativa de More, que le llegó filtrada principalmente a través de las crónicas de Edward Hall y Raphael Holinshed. Las complicaciones de transmisión y autoridad que se derivan tanto del uso que hizo Shakespeare del trabajo inconcluso de More, así como de las diversas formas que cada texto llegaría a adoptar, reproducen extrañamente las mismas cuestiones de autoridad y validación que estas obras narrativas escudriñan. Con su relato More produjo un arquetipo de individualidad moderno y astuto, un arquetipo que Shakespeare popularizaría en *Ricardo III*.

Palabras clave: Edward Hall, Raphael Holinshed, Maquiavelismo, autoridad, autonomía.

Thomas More's unfinished *History of King Richard III* preceded Shakespeare's *Richard III* by roughly 80 years and two generations. Shakespeare's history play relies upon More's narrative as filtered mainly (though perhaps not exclusively) through the chronicles of Edward Hall and Raphael Holinshed. Shakespeare not only adapts More's portrait of a physically and ethically monstrous tyrant, but benefits from More's insights into Richard's motivations and from the larger portrait of political interaction that derives from those insights. Following an initial discussion of structural parallels between More's *History* and Shakespeare's play—parallels resulting from a particular aspect of their shared subject—this essay surveys recent scholarly positions concerning the relation of these two texts (and of various textual intermediaries). It concludes with a bibliography of primary and secondary texts associated with the topic.

We could begin by noticing an almost unavoidable feature of both research and pedagogy devoted to Richard III and his literary afterlife. Scholars, general readers, teachers and their students typically wind up thinking and talking about—when they are not involved in actively scrutinizing—“trees.” By this word one could understand, first, the expansive genealogical tables that almost necessarily accompany courses examining texts and issues closely taking up English political history, perhaps especially those relating to the Wars of the Roses. Charting births, marriages, deaths, and family relations, such familiar visual illustrations are routinely published with works (literary and otherwise) treating the political upheavals of fifteenth-century England.

Those interested in Richard III, however, will also encounter another kind of “tree,” this one detailing not political and familial but textual relations. Richard S. Sylvester's edition of More's *History* for the Yale *Works*, for instance, features an intriguing stemma that hypothesizes the work's transmission into and through various forms (liii). His tree has three main branches, each with further branches of its own. From More's knowledge of Richard III (in essence, the trunk of the tree) came an English Version, a Latin Version, and a Corrupted

English Version, each of these leading ultimately to printed texts in, respectively, the 1540s, 1550s, and 1560s.

It is probably more than coincidence that a similar stemma relating to Shakespeare's *Richard III* appears in *The Textual Companion* to the Oxford Shakespeare (230). From Shakespeare's foul papers the editors posit two lines of transmission that ultimately intersect. One line proceeds through a scribal transcript to an annotated quarto copy (perhaps the third quarto [Q3] as modified by the sixth [Q6]), resulting in the version of *Richard III* contained in the First Folio of 1623. The other line, it is hypothesized, leads from a prompt book and actors' parts through performances and communal memorial reconstruction to the eight quarto editions of the play—two of which may have shaped the presentation of the Folio version.

The parallels between these genealogical and textual “trees” may themselves be more than coincidental, and their details no less than their emphasis on lineage suggest at least two things.

First, whether we understand him as historical personage or mythic figure at some remove from that reality, Richard was an uncannily recurrent focus of representation in the field of English history during the sixteenth century. Ruling England for fewer than 800 days—from 26 June, 1483 to 22 August, 1485—Richard took a disproportionate place in the literary output of Tudor England; he appeared as the subject of many poems, including popular ballads and “higher” treatments like that in *A Mirror for Magistrates*. May and Ringler's *Bibliography and First-line Index of English Verse 1559–1603*, for instance, records seven poems featuring the York monarch, including (to give only one example) Giles Fletcher's “The Rising to the Crowne of Richard the third. written by him self” (publ. 1593), which begins “The stage is set for stately matter fit.”

For reasons we will examine presently, it would indeed be in the drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the Richard constructed in More's narrative would find his most adequate home. Looking at surviving dramas from this era and at the titles of lost works, we notice Richard not only in such civic pageants as Thomas

Dekker's *Troia Nova Triumphans* (1612) and John Webster's *Monuments of Honor* (1624), but in the Latin university play *Richardus Tertius* (1578–80) by Thomas Legge, the anonymously published *True Tragedy of Richard the Third* (1591–94), in *2 Edward IV* (1599) by Thomas Heywood et al., and in two lost plays: Ben Jonson's drama of 1602, *Richard Crookback*, and Samuel Rowley's 1623 play, *Richard III*. These seven dramas are, of course, in addition to Shakespeare's *Tragedy of King Richard the Third*. We have already noticed its appearance in both quarto and folio versions: the eight quartos appeared between 1597–1634, and the First Folio in 1623. It is worth pointing out, further, that this play ranked as among Shakespeare's best-selling works, second only to *1 Henry IV* in the number of editions it witnessed prior to 1634.

If Richard III was over-represented in the literature of early modern England, the reasons are not far to seek. Cunning, ambitious, and wildly successful in his political manipulations, Richard stood, for More, Shakespeare, and their contemporaries, as the clearest example of the human potential to rewrite one's social and political surroundings in the image of one's desire. Indeed, when we recall that Machiavelli penned *Il Principe* (*The Prince*, 1513) at almost exactly the same time More was composing his *History*, Richard's selfish, instrumental actions take on a larger significance. In More, as in Shakespeare and the historical narratives that connected his work to More's, Richard is, for better or worse, an archetype of modern, cunning individualism.

To this observation concerning Richard's notoriety in early modern England we could join a second and related point: to a greater extent than most other contemporary narratives concerning English history, More's *History* and Shakespeare's *Richard III* generated textual afterlives as active and complicated as their title character himself. The legacy of More's *History* involves, from one branch of its tree, redactions in Hardyng's *Chronicle* of 1543 and Halle's *Chronicle* of 1548. Out of More's Fair Copy came Rastell's edition of 1557 (with passages translated from the Latin) and Grafton's *Chronicle* of 1568–69. And from the Latin Version came at least two manuscripts prior to

the Louvain edition of 1565, which itself formed the basis of another manuscript copy a decade or so later. We have already noted that *Richard III* formed something like a "best-seller" for Shakespeare, producing eight quartos as well as the folio versions, which in all likelihood, again, rely upon two of these quartos for their text.

The many manifestations of More's Richard in the century following the composition of the *History of King Richard III*, then, not only bear witness to the very confusion of authority that marked the historical episode More chronicles (confusion involving who has legitimate claim to authority, and on what basis), but in their ubiquity replicate the urgent, extensive nature of their ambitious subject. Like the Richard they portray, the texts of More and Shakespeare are both everywhere and everywhere uncomfortably compelling.

This ubiquity complicates matters for those interested in tracing the relationship between More's *History* and Shakespeare's *Richard III*, not least because, in its many incarnations and redactions, More's narrative affected so many works available to Shakespeare before the composition of his play. Edleen Begg paved the way for modern scholarship's recognition of this *copia* when, in 1935, she demonstrated Shakespeare's use of various chronicles for assorted details in *Richard III*. But Begg was by no means the first to recognize the competing versions of the Richard story that existed during the sixteenth century. In his influential *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (1966), for instance, Geoffrey Bullough relies upon G. B. Churchill's still useful study, *Richard the Third up to Shakespeare* (1900), to cite over a dozen historical narratives that Shakespeare could have drawn upon in composing *Richard III*; nearly half of these comprise works derived from More's *History*. Bullough concludes that "Of all these authorities it is likely that Shakespeare knew at least Hall, Grafton, Holinshed, Fabyan and Stow" (3: 227), but he gives no good evidence for Shakespeare's acquaintance with anything other than Hall and Holinshed (for which, Bullough points out, we have evidence that Shakespeare consulted the 2nd edition, published in 1587 [227]).

Whatever the intermediaries that brought More's Richard to Shakespeare's attention, our search for Shakespeare's primary source "ends in More" (76), according to Antony Hammond's edition of *Richard III* for the Arden Shakespeare ("Arden 2"). Hammond acknowledges the busy afterlife of the Richard story that Churchill chronicles, but insists that these potentially secondary and tertiary sources lacked the impact that More's narrative possessed, for Shakespeare:

In [More's] book we find the Richard of [Shakespeare's] play: a witty villain, described in ironical terms by the author. Shakespeare modifies More in two ways: by adding to him (More ends his account with Buckingham's flight), and by omitting materials he included. But he is true to the tone of the book: his emphases are More's, though they are modified by the technique of dramatization. What this means in practice is (as Aristotle observed of poetic art) that Shakespeare universalizes the historical detail. He does not falsify, but he makes general what in More is sometimes more specific, by the use of materials available to the dramatist in the 1590s: Seneca, the tradition of the Vice, the Machiavel, and so on. He thereby remains true both to the drama and to the concept of history as he and More understood it. (75–6)

Hammond explains the concept of "history" that Shakespeare shared with More:

It is true that he invents more villainies for Richard than More (or anyone else), but this is compatible with this view of history—that the fact is less important as such than the moral truth, the detail less important than the general principle: More and Shakespeare both set out to present a tyrannical monster. The modern scholar might say that More's *History* is more witty and ironic fiction than history, and that Shakespeare's play shares this characteristic. However, the notion that anything not strictly factual must be regarded as fiction is a modern one; neither author would have thought of

the genres as incompatible. More, though presenting his history wittily and ironically, undoubtedly believed himself to be writing history, of a kind he and his contemporaries would have recognized. (76)

For Hammond, More's *History* was as important to Shakespeare for its tone and convictions as for its incidents.

A recent account of these texts by Stuart Gillespie in *Shakespeare's Books: A Dictionary of Shakespeare's Sources* (2001), is more interested than Hammond in the incidents that Shakespeare borrows from More. Gillespie begins by noting what most every reader of More's narrative recognizes: the absolutely precocious, avant-garde nature of More's history and its complex portrait of its ambitious subject. For Gillespie, Shakespeare's play overlaps with More's narrative most strongly in its third act:

[T]hough Act 3 is close to the History, Act 1 is largely fictional, Act 2 allows only a subordinate role for Richard, and Act 4 veers away from the chronicles in giving the female characters more prominence. And the final three scenes of the play derive from Hall exclusively, since More's narrative ends with Buckingham's flight; this can be seen as decisive for Richard's presentation in that the vibrant figure More delineates is replaced after this point [by the didactic figure of Hall]. (369)

Calling More's *History* "one of the most influential books of its era" (367), Gillespie cites such authorities as E. M. W. Tillyard and George Hunter to confirm the stimulus this narrative had upon Elizabethan drama, particularly its history plays. He follows Begg in seeing the chronicles of Hall and Holinshed, respectively, as the basis of Shakespeare's history.

Particularly thoughtful attention to these two Richard stories comes at the hands of Judith H. Anderson in her study *Biographical Truth: The Representation of Historical Persons in Tudor-Stuart Writing* (1984). In separate but linked chapters, she explores the nature of the

“biographical truth” in More and Shakespeare. Her reading of More’s *History* begins by characterizing it as “a generically mixed work and a virtual touchstone for the extension of biographical truth beyond a single form or genre” (75). This sense of generic indeterminacy comes to the fore in the *Richard III* chapter, where she notes that “To the editors of the First Folio, Shakespeare’s *Richard* was also a mixture, for they classified the play as a history, entitled it a tragedy, and used as an alternative title and a running-head, *The Life and Death of Richard the Third*, a heading more properly biographical than historical in Renaissance writing” (111). To her treatment of the generic mingling within these two Richard texts, Anderson adds a focus on the pervasiveness and function of the “stage metaphor” (92) in More’s narrative.

The dramatic force and structure of More’s *History* has often been remarked. One could recall the particularly resonant passage in which More characterizes the dramaturgy of political performances:

And men must sometime for the manner sake not be a known what they know. For at the consecration of a bishop, every man woteth well by the paying for his bulles, that he purposeth to be one, & though he pay for nothing else. And yet must he be twice asked whether he will be bishop or no, and he must twice say nay, and at the third time take it as compelled thereunto by his own will. And in a stage play all the people know right well, that he that playeth the sowdayne [sultan] is percase a sowter [shoemaker]. Yet if one should can so little good, to show out of season what acquaintance he hath with him, and call him by his own name while he standeth in his majesty, one of his tormentors might hap to break his head, and worthy for marring of the play. And so they said that these matters be kings’ 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. For they that sometime step up and play with them, when they cannot play their parts, they disorder the play & do themself no good. (Sylvester, ed., 80–81, lines 26ff.)

This paragraph and the “stage metaphor” in More’s text generally have led many interpreters to see the *History* as a kind of drama manqué. Yet, Anderson cautions us, if we wish to extend the metaphor to the whole of More’s work, “we should also have to add that at each intermission, as we move toward the lobby, More beckons to us from the side door, urging that we pause to look at his collection of pictures from productions of the past” (92).

If, as we have seen, Shakespeare’s play shares with More’s *History* a productive blending of history, biography, and tragedy (to name only these forms), it departs from More’s work in several ways—most notable among them, in Anderson’s reading, in the drama’s “hopeful” and “bright” (113) ending. This ending contrasts markedly, of course, with the largely ironic tenor of More’s *History*—which breaks off before the events that the last scenes of Shakespeare’s drama portray. To what can we attribute this change? Joseph Candido has argued that the moralistic ending of Shakespeare’s play derives in large part from the playwright’s reliance upon Hall’s version of the story, which portrays Richard as oppressed and even drained by his malignant actions. Reversing a typical paradigm by which we look at “how the dramatist shaped [his] materials,” Candido asks us to consider “how [these materials] may have shaped him” (137). Shakespeare’s *Richard* differs from More’s, he suggests, not out of any deep decision taken by the professional playwright, but rather because Hall’s *Richard* differs from More’s.

Critics have debated Shakespeare’s political intentions in *Richard III*, or at the very least the impact of the political world he creates. For instance, calling into question an interpretation of Shakespeare’s play that privileges its relation to the “Tudor Myth,” Jens Martin Gurr insists that we read *Richard III* not only as not optimistic but indeed “a devastatingly pessimistic view of history where the only intelligent, versatile, charismatic—even admirable figure is the cruel tyrant Richard” (78). Gurr summarizes the differences between More’s account and Shakespeare’s as follows:

Shakespeare's account of the life and times of Richard III does not so much differ from More's in the portrayal of Richard himself or in his view of Richmond. It differs, however, in the depiction of the general state of the country, which in Shakespeare's play suffers from all-pervading corruption. In accordance with his didactic purpose, More is careful to show the realm in prosperous estate under Edward IV. He contrasts Richard against a virtuous predecessor and opponents of moral integrity. In order to *maintain* this impression, he avoids mentioning Richmond/Henry VII as his successor. Shakespeare, not "burdened" with ideological considerations, freely avails himself of the opportunities afforded by the historical ambiguity. He dramatises a vacuum of moral authority. In this context, the character of Richard undergoes a transformation into something rich and strange, entirely different from the simple, unequivocal renderings in all the preceding works. (78)

By not finishing his work, Gurr suggests, More strategically "avoids mentioning Richmond/Henry VII as [Richard's] successor." It is Gurr's argument, in fact, that More's devotion to an idealized Edward IV precluded his ability to finish the work at all: "It seems likely that the 'incompatibility' of Henry VII with the contrastive approach of his *History* occurred to More only in the process of writing; the way it was begun, the work could not be finished without great incongruities" (59–60). However, we do not know why More did not finish *Richard III* (he did not finish *The Last Things* either). Gurr presents one point of view that can be debated. Sylvester, for example, suggests in his introduction (to CW2.ci–civ) that as More continued serving the Tudors, he found them to be little better than the Plantagnets, and stopped writing.

What can one say, in conclusion, about the relation of More's text to Shakespeare's? To begin with, the two "trees" we often keep in mind when thinking about their shared subject—the diagrams respectively genealogical and textual—may well be versions of the same cul-

tural interest: in this case, an interest in authority and the networks of relationships that can confirm or deny such authority to both individuals and texts. Speaking of the two authors' works, we can say that there is a clear transmission of content and style from More to Shakespeare. While Shakespeare's *Richard III* would have been possible without More's narrative, it would not have been so exceptional. Shakespeare took from More not only incident but personality and point of view. Indeed, the ironic perspective on a figure himself not only thoroughly attracted to irony but a talented manipulator of it comes from More, as does the emphasis on physical and ethical deformity. But when one says that these features of Shakespeare's play come from More's *History*, one needs to acknowledge the many intermediaries (some well established, others still surmised) that lie between the two great works. Among these intermediaries, as we have seen, are Hall and Holinshed, though it is quite likely that the sources of Shakespeare's play included numerous other texts (including poems both "high" and "low") that bear the traces of More's uncanny, and uncannily modern, subject.

Bibliography and Further Reading

The first subsection of this appendix provides bibliographical information concerning the respective texts of More and Shakespeare; these entries are arranged in chronological order. Following is a list of works cited and suggestions for further reading.

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Edward Halle, *The Vnion of the two noble and illustre families of Lancastre & Yorke*. London: 1548. STC 12721. Sigs. AA1–FF1v1.

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The workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght. London: 1557. STC 18076. Sigs. c2–e4.

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JOHN DONNE AND THOMAS MORE: AN ELIZABETHAN CATHOLIC LEGACY

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John Donne was related to Thomas More through his mother Elizabeth Heywood, daughter of Joan Rastell, More's niece. The persistent Catholicism of Donne's family, and his connections to the powerful English Catholic nobility, grounded him in the Roman Catholic tradition. However, Donne struggled with this faith, writing anti-Catholic polemics (in 1610 and 1614), and he eventually conformed to the English Church in 1615. This was hastened by his illegal marriage (1601), which caused conflict with Sir Thomas Egerton and his wife's brother, Sir George More. After his entry into the Anglican church in 1615, Donne's sermons and poems continued to reflect the conflict with his Catholic heritage.

Key words: recusancy, John Heywood, poetry, sermons, George More.

John Donne était apparenté à More par sa mère, Elizabeth Heywood, fille de Joan Rastell, elle-même fille de John Rastell, beau-frère de More, et soeur de William Rastell, son imprimeur, puis l'éditeur de ses oeuvres complètes. Le catholicisme persistant de sa famille, et ses rapports avec une noblesse anglaise demeurée catholique, ancrèrent Donne dans la tradition du catholicisme romain. Néanmoins, Donne se débattit contre cette foi, écrivit de la polémique anti-catholique (en 1610 et 1614), et finit par se conformer à l'Église d'Angleterre. Ce ralliement fut hâté par son mariage illégal (1601), qui le mit en conflit avec Sir Thomas Egerton et le frère de sa femme, Sir George More. Après son entrée dans l'Église anglicane, les sermons et les poèmes de Donne continuèrent à refléter un conflit avec son héritage catholique.

Mots-clés: recusancy, John Heywood, poésie, sermons, George More.

John Donne estaba emparentado con Thomas More por su madre Elizabeth Heywood, la hija de Joan Rastell, quien fuera sobrina de More. El Catolicismo persistente de la familia de Donne, junto con sus conexiones con la poderosa nobleza católica inglesa, le arraigaron en la tradición católica de Roma. Sin embargo, Donne luchó con su fe, escribiendo escritos polémicos anti-católicos (en 1610 y 1614) e incorporándose finalmente a la Iglesia de Inglaterra en 1615. Esto se vio acelerado por