“A Mirror of Men”:
Sovereignty, Performance, and Textuality in Tudor England, 1501-1559

by

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ABSTRACT

Sixteenth-century England witnessed both unprecedented generic experimentation in the recording of spectacle and a shift in strategies of sovereign representation and subject formation: it is the central objective of this dissertation to argue for the reciprocal implication of these two phenomena. Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I used performance to legitimate their authority. Aristocratic and civic identities, in turn, were modelled on sovereign identity, which was disseminated through narratives in civic entries, tournaments, public progresses, and courtly pageantry. This dissertation investigates the relationship between ritualized social dramas (a marriage, birth, and coronation) and the mechanisms behind the recording and dissemination of these performances in courtly and civic texts in England from 1501 to 1559. Focussing on The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne (London 1501), The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster (Westminster 1511), and The Quenes Maiesties Passage (London 1559), this project attempts to understand the role performance texts played in developing conceptions of social identity. Specifically, this dissertation seeks to demonstrate that a number of new hybrid genres emerged in Tudor England to record ritualized social dramas. I argue that each of the texts under scrutiny stands out as a unique record of performance as their authors use unprecedented narrative strategies to invest their accounts with “liveness,” situating the reader as a “spectator” of the sovereign within a performatve context. An important objective of these hybrid genres was to control the audience/reader’s response to the symbology of performance. Each monarch attempted to influence social and political identities through courtly performance; however, the challenges of governing differed among reigns. While Henry VII struggled against charges of illegitimacy, Henry VIII had to consolidate the loyalties of his nobles, and Elizabeth I came to the throne
amidst religious turmoil and anxieties about female rule. Strategies for the performance and recording of sovereign authority shifted, therefore, to account for the changes in England’s political structure. By examining how performance is textualized in these new genres, I attempt to expose the tensions animating the relationships among the monarch, his/her nobility, and the civic authorities.
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One of the central themes of this study is that performance is not a unified, coherent product of a single animating author. Instead, multiple agents are responsible for the production of meaning: a host of valuable contributors are essential to the success or contestation of larger figural narratives. In the case of this dissertation, that set of collaborators includes a great number of friends, family members, and colleagues who have generously dedicated countless hours of their time reading drafts, critiquing arguments, fixing format, providing suggestions, and always giving boundless support.

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Chapter One
“words do fly, but writing doth remain” (QMP 88): Performance & Textuality in Tudor England

Remarking on late twentieth-century scholarship on sixteenth-century drama, Sydney Anglo states that contributions have “been modest, and, with a few exceptions, … confined to matters of detail (1997, vii). Anglo also notes that “almost every study of Tudor spectacle has been descriptive rather than analytic, and, as a result, much of its significance has been missed” (3). Sixteenth-century courtly and civic performance, such as tournaments, masques, disguisings, interludes, and civic entries, have been understood almost exclusively as “propaganda,” a univocal instrument of the state deployed for hegemonic purposes: Malcolm Vale, for instance, claims that these spectacles were produced by a “singular, monocentric, sovereign gaze” (49).\(^1\) Similarly, Alan Young argues that tournaments and pageantry were important sites for the production of propaganda to “bolster the status of the monarch” (25);\(^2\) and, despite his remarkable contributions to the field of Tudor performance, Anglo overlooks the role drama played in shaping social identity rather than merely reflecting subjecthood, asserting that sixteenth-century pageantry was “a straightforward display of sovereign power” (1997, 353).\(^3\)

Increased scholarly interest in non-commercial drama in recent years has revised this critical attitude. New studies of Tudor courtly and civic drama focus on the complex relationship between performance and politics.\(^4\) Jennifer Loach argues that Tudor courtly entertainments are “now universally recognized as having a serious political purpose; to transmit a message about the dynasty and its ambitions, and to claim for England a place among the cultural elite of Europe” (43).\(^5\) In keeping with this new scholarly attitude, Lloyd Kermode, Jason-Scott Warren, and Martine Van Elk declare the necessity “for reengagement with non-canonical drama in its own right, and not necessarily set over and
against the writings of Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Jonson” (2). With this approach in mind, I investigate courtly and civic drama and its textualization in order to argue that non-commercial drama and its various modes of dissemination played a crucial role in the reflection, shaping, and troubling of social identity in Tudor England.

Several surveys of Tudor drama in the last thirty years have broadened our understanding of early modern culture and its relationship to performance. David Bevington’s pioneering study, *Tudor Drama and Politics*, provides a cursory glance at tournaments and courtly pageants. Glynne Wickham supplies a broad overview of various dramatic representations from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, including tournaments, royal processions, miracle plays, mummmings, and interludes. W.R. Streitberger surveys Tudor courtly entertainments through an analysis of the administrative offices responsible for the production of tournaments and pageant-disguisings from the reigns of Henry VII to Elizabeth I. Anne Lancashire charts the history of London civic drama from Roman times to 1558. These studies portray medieval and early modern England as having a rich and complex performance culture. However, since most of the work on early Tudor drama has favoured historical overviews, many nuances of performance and textuality remain unexplored. Critical oversights in the scholarship mentioned above include the relationship between performance and social identity and the relationship between performance and records of performance. There are very few sustained analyses of individual Tudor performances and their impact on idioms of sovereignty, modes of textual production, and the reception of meaning. By analyzing courtly and civic drama as a site of ideological contestation, I argue that this struggle is reflected and shaped during the act of recording spectacle itself and mediated
by the multiple interest groups (authorial, scribal, noble, royal, etc.) involved in this process.

Every text examined in this study is at some remove from the historical performance itself; it is precisely the mediated nature of these texts that constitutes a discourse of social identity shaped by genre. In this regard, Lawrence Manley’s landmark study of early modern London’s social and material processes and their impact on literary culture focuses on “the systemic relationships of literary genres and on the myths, motifs, and mental structures that sustain these genres and change with them” (11). Although Manley is primarily concerned with non-dramatic prose pamphlets in Elizabethan England, his analysis of literary forms is crucial to my readings of sixteenth-century performance records, especially his argument that the “inter-orientation” of genres is inflected by processes of historical change (12). I take as one of my points of departure the hypothesis that genres have a “systemic” relationship to the culture that produces these forms of representation, and argue further that genres are not only shaped by historical change but also shape perceptions of sovereignty, social identity, and political culture.

In the following chapters, I examine one major cultural performance in each of the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I in order to argue that these ritualized social dramas are sites for the production, dissemination, and contestation of sovereign authority. When Katherine of Aragon arrives in England in 1501 to marry Henry VII’s eldest son, Prince Arthur, the Anglo-Spanish alliance is marked with elaborate festivities, including a civic entry, tournaments, banquets, and disguisings. In 1511, Henry VIII produced an heir eighteen months after his coronation; to celebrate he hosted a spectacular tournament, called the Great Tournament at Westminster, which featured an
allegorical challenge, processions, tournament pageant-cars, and court disguisings. When Elizabeth succeeded her sister Mary in 1558, the City of London hosted an elaborate entry on the eve of her coronation that celebrated her triumph over adversity under the Catholic regime. While they differ in scope and theme, each celebration is an important ritualized space for the dramatization of Tudor power, politics, and social identity. I argue that these social dramas not only provide a sustained contemplation of authority but also bring power structures into being. The study of performance also permits analysis into the range of relationships between and among social groups, deepening our insights into the processes of identity construction in Tudor performance.

In this study, I am particularly interested in the relationship among sovereignty, social identity, and textuality. Records of each performance were commissioned in order to encourage proximity to sovereign spectacle through the act of reading. In Chapter Two I examine *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne*, a manuscript commissioned by King Henry VII, recorded by a courtier, and intended for print. Chapter Three looks closely at *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*, a pictorial narrative commissioned by King Henry VIII, produced by heralds, and designed for a royal audience. Chapter Four investigates *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, a printed pamphlet of Elizabeth’s civic entry commissioned by the City of London and printed for civic, royal, and international audiences. Each text stands out in its field as a unique record of courtly performance: the authors use innovative narrative strategies to invest their accounts with performative presence in order to offer readers unprecedented access and proximity to cultural performance.

While each text has its roots in traditional forms of documentation (medieval chronicles, classical historiography, continental pageant books, heraldic rolls, and
pictorial narratives), the Receyt, the Tournament Roll, and the Passage demonstrate generic experimentation; all three texts utilized new strategies of representation to record sovereign spectacle. The aim of these new performance records attempted to capture the dynamics of performance and situate the reader as spectator “within” the scenic tableau. This new genre generates “liveness” in textualized performance in order to control the optics of sovereignty. Although patrons, authorship, and representational strategies differ, all three documents educate the populace on how to access a system of symbols and beliefs circulating in Tudor performance. I do not analyze these texts to recover the “original” lost performances; instead, I am interested in scrutinizing the relationship between textuality and performativity and how their interrelationship offers insights into the process of subject production. Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I saw the potential for the textual dissemination of sovereign spectacle to shape and reinforce relations between the monarch and his/her aristocratic and civic subjects. By examining how performance is textualized in these new genres and in various modes of dissemination, I will attempt to expose the tensions animating the often fraught relationships among sovereign, nobility, and the civic populace.

Extensive documentation in a variety of sources of the Anglo-Spanish marriage celebration, the Great Tournament at Westminster, and the Elizabethan coronation festivities reflects the importance of these ritualized social dramas for both the Tudor court(s) and the City of London. Several first-hand narrative accounts survive for each event, most notably in the form of civic chronicles, like the Great Chronicle of London and Chronicles of London. These chronicle accounts, read alongside the central texts in each chapter, produce their own version of sovereignty, authority, and subjecthood. In particular, class tension is expressed in different ways, adding depth to our understanding.
of how sovereign authority is produced, circulated, and interpreted in the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I. An analysis of the civic records also exposes a high degree of manipulation in the recording of cultural performance and opens up fissures between ritual and representation. As Louis Montrose asserts, “the commissioning and shaping, the perception and promotion, of the royal image were components of a dynamic and unstable process. In its motives and in its impact, this process was just as likely to be hortatory or contestatory as it was to be panegyrical” (14).¹³

This study approaches the relationship between performance and textuality via an analysis of three modalities. Each chapter analyzes one cultural performance, evaluates how each main record of the performance textualizes performance, and, finally, examines the reception of figural narratives by interpretive communities determined by class, education, religion, and nationalism. Examining the politics of the sovereign-subject relationship across these diverse representational media provides insights into the dynamic process of royal representation and leads to a more precise definition of genre formation in the field of Tudor performative and textual culture.

The motivations behind, and meaning of international marriage, the birth of a prince, and a royal coronation vary based on the needs of the monarch and the English people: Henry VII advanced an image of a stable hierarchical court to both a domestic and an international audience; Henry VIII employed allegory to lend his early reign symbolic power and consolidate the loyalties of his nobles; Elizabeth promoted her legitimacy as a monarch amidst misogyny and charges of illegitimacy while the City of London endeavoured to build a strong relationship with the crown based on Protestant reform after the tumultuous Catholic reign of Mary I. However, these cultural performances all demonstrate a reliance on ritual to forge relationships between sovereign
and subject and, in particular, demonstrate shifts in the social identity of their primary subjects: Katherine, as a foreign princess, is domesticated as a future English queen; Henry VIII, once he produces an heir, demonstrates his transition from young king to a meritorious and dynastic sovereign; and Elizabeth I undergoes a processual transformation from private princess to public queen.

**Ritual and Performance**

In late medieval and early modern culture, the relationship between ritual and performance is in delicate and continually re-negotiated balance. Often it is difficult to identify where ritual ends and performance begins. Gavin Brown highlights the problem of defining performance and the “semantic ambiguity that now attends its usage” (4). Richard Schechner acknowledges that “performance” is an inclusive term that includes “play, sports, theatre, dance, ceremonies, rites, and performances of great magnitude” (xvii). Catherine Bell, in response to the fluid usage of the term “performance,” asserts that a “focus on the performative aspects of ritual easily leads to the difficulty of being unable to distinguish how ritual is not the same as dramatic theatre or spectator sports” (42-3). Bell argues that conflating ritual and performance without careful attention to the relationship between a symbolic act and its impact on an audience is inadequate. This dissertation will investigate the intersections between performance and spectator, text and reader, in order to investigate what Bell calls ritual’s “communicative” role and how it “affects social realities and perceptions of those realities” (43).

Susan Crane, in her discussion of fifteenth-century performance, argues that “rituals resemble other performances in their reiterability, their use of symbolic strategies, and the assertion of a connection between the specific event and its wider implications” (5). She defines performance as “heightened and deliberately communicative
behaviours, public displays that use visual as well as rhetorical resources” (3). However, Crane states that there must be distinctions drawn between ritual and theatre:

I am committed to a few of the venerable distinctions between rituals and performances in general. Rituals seek to draw all the members of a group into performance; even apparently passive onlookers have a stake in the rituals’ operations. These are quite formal occasions that assert prominent cultural values, occasions that accomplish their work by invoking the power of shared commitments and beliefs. (5)

Royal entries, courtly disguisings, and tournaments are examples of secular social dramas that rely heavily on ritual. Although Crane argues that secular rituals lack “transcendent goals” that baptism or marriage seek to accomplish, Gordon Kipling investigates the liturgical significance of civic entries in order to demonstrate that they are also devotional performances. In their discussions of cultural performance, both Crane and Kipling register the permeability of the boundaries between the secular and the sacred, ritual and drama. While I do not seek to resolve the debate about the distinctions between ritual and drama, the cultural performances I analyze contain elements of both: the audiences are implicated into the action dramatized by the pageantry as participants and even producers of meaning during Katherine’s reception and marriage, the tournament to celebrate the birth of Henry VIII’s first son, and the coronation of Elizabeth I. As Stephen Greenblatt asserts, “[r]oyal power is manifested to its subjects as in a theatre … [and] [t]he play of authority depends upon spectators” (65). Prominent cultural values around sovereignty and subjecthood circulate in performance and are then remediated in textual form through the interpretive lens of the author.
In any discussion of Tudor cultural performance, boundaries between ritual and performance are unclear and always permeable. Alexandra F. Johnston argues that in the mid-sixteenth century, “[t]he custom of the citizens themselves acting out their identity was no longer observed. ‘Representation,’ where spectators and participants were distanced from each other in what has become a theatrical occasion, has superseded ‘presentation,’ where spectators and participants were both involved in an event” (400).  

The civic entries, courtly disguisings, and tournaments are part of a genre of cultural performance that relies on the reiteration of prominent cultural values while also asserting the creative potential to bring power structures into being and ratify social identity for sovereign and subject. As Brown asserts, social drama is a “vehicle of transformative social processes” (9). In my analysis of Tudor civic entries, courtly disguisings, and tournaments, I argue that these constitute a genre of cultural performances that transform spectators into participants and mediate the relationship between and among social groups. Brown’s model of performance as a “dialectical form of activity” is useful to my discussion: he argues that performance “represents the repeatable because it is action which follows a script (scripted action) but performance also represents the emergent because in action a script may undergo some degree of reconstitution which then alters further performances and, by corollary, cultural ideas and belief” (6). The cultural performances I analyze all contain elements of reiteration and innovation. As I will discuss below, these modes of performance had been circulating in England since at least the fourteenth century and followed pre-existing “scripts.” However, I argue that every reign also stages an “emergent” set of narratives based on the particular set of objectives of the sovereign. Scripted action in performance is further reconstituted when
performance is textualized; the recorded form became a site for expressions of, and experiments in, sovereign authority and subjecthood.

Visual fields

Among scholars who study cultural performance, the term “spectacle” carries pejorative connotations. Guy Debord, theorizing spectacle, argues that “everything that was directly lived has moved away into representation” (1). For Debord, spectacle is an instrument of coercion used by the dominant ideology to elicit obedience: he asserts that the spectacle “defines the program of a ruling class and presides over its formation” (57). According to his theory, the spectator is alienated because “the tangible world is replaced by a selection of images which exists above [society] and the spectator mistakenly fetishizes spectacles as tangible commodities” (36). Debord’s theory of spectacle is somewhat anachronistic to my discussion of sixteenth-century performance because his argument is specifically situated in “the social conditions of large scale commerce and of the accumulation of capital” (40). However, scholars have adopted his paradigm in their discussions of early modern performance. In her study of early modern continental festivals, Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly differentiates between “ceremony” and “spectacle”: while the former is concerned with bringing power structures into being, and includes coronations, solemn entries, baptisms, marriages, and funerals, she defines the latter as a theatrical performance (like operas, ballet de cour, carrousel, and fireworks) that “merely reflects power” (14). Juliet Barker surveys early modern tournaments and notes that by the end of the fifteenth century, there was an “unmistakable taint of decadence” around hastiludes (84). She argues further that the pageantry surrounding the lists “degenerated from a robust unselfconsciousness into the ‘mere externals’ of lavish spectacle and empty ritual” (84). Watanabe-O’Kelly and Barker deploy the term “spectacle” as a form
without substantive content, suggesting that spectacle does not provide audiences with meaningful experiences. While Anglo appreciates spectacle as an important display of sovereign magnificence, he uses the terms “spectacle” and “prestige propaganda” interchangeably (110). In all these accounts, “spectacle” carries a strong institutional connotation governed by the underlying assumption that it is a hegemonic instrument disseminated by the state and, therefore, produces an “empty” mode of cultural activity.

In sixteenth-century England, however, “spectacle” was a term used to describe public displays that were neither empty nor superficial; instead, spectacle comprised an image or set of images specially prepared to educate, entertain, or amaze audiences. Richard Mulcaster, who records Elizabeth’s entry into London in The Quenes Maiesties Passage, states that civic spectators were treated to “the wonderful spectacle of a noble-hearted princess” (76). “Spectacle” was a term used to describe magnificent displays of royal power, but was also deployed to describe civic visibility: “the Queen’s highness has passed through the City and had seen so sumptuous, rich, and notable spectacles of the citizens, which declared their most hearty receiving and joyous welcoming of her Grace into the same” (QMP 93). Spectacle operates in early modern England to make concepts visible and, therefore, material. In this process, “the spectacle is not a collection of images but a social relation among people mediated by images” (Debord 4).

It is also important to clarify my use of “the gaze.” The gaze is often considered to be complicit with patriarchal hegemony, performing an intrusive appropriation or even violation of the female body. However, Mulvey’s exclusively gendered male gaze has been subject to scrutiny and critique in recent years. Joan Copjec suggests that Mulvey misconstrues the psychoanalytic notion of the gaze by failing to see how the gaze is aligned with the Other, not the subject. Indeed, an analysis of the Lacanian gaze reveals
that it is fundamentally dissociated from the “eye” of the subject. Lacan states: “In the
scopic field, the gaze is outside, I am looked at, that is to say, I am a picture … What
determines me, at the most profound level, in the visible, is the gaze that is outside”
(106). 27 While I do not wish to pursue a Lacanian reading in this study, Lacan’s theories
of vision offer insights into how performance creates a “geometrical space of vision” which
maps images into space and creates correspondences between objects within the spatial
field (86). 28 What is particularly applicable to my analysis of the relationship between
performance and textuality is Lacan’s discussion of “our desire to see ourselves seeing”
(3). He argues that the subject is only ever constituted when she/he can occupy a three-
dimensional space. Lacan says that the formation of the subject occurs through the field
of the Other, or, in performance through the eyes of an audience: “The gaze I encounter is,
not a seen gaze, but a gaze imagined by the me in the field of the Other” (84). 29 Tudor
performances of identity produce a visual field that allows the sovereign and the spectator
to find signification in the optics of social dramas. Drama functions as a particularly rich
type of social performativity because it draws attention to the visual matrices of identity
formation. In courtly performance, the king’s sovereign identity derives from his
visibility, while the subjects are actively made aware of their position within a social
group (royal, aristocratic, civic) through the royal gaze created in performance.

The concept of vision is a rich and contested discursive terrain in late medieval
England. The most influential early modern thinking about optics assumed a degree of
power in the object of vision. Augustine’s theory of “extramission” held that vision was
as “a ray projected onto the object that then passed into the viewer and bonded with the
soul and that the spectator understood themselves to be active agents in the visual
experience” (Sponsler 122). According to Claire Sponsler, this active theory of
spectatorship dominated popular belief throughout the late middle ages (122). She argues that “visualization was often understood as an aid to devotion” and that “images were not viewed as abstract illusions but rather as ways of perceiving the religious world and so providing a route to direct sensory experience from which the worshipper might otherwise be shut off” (123). Archbishop Peacham’s influential *Perspectiva Communis* (c.1264) placed power in both the viewer and the object: “Every natural body, visible or invisible, diffuses its power radiantly into other bodies. The proof of this is by natural cause, for a natural body acts outside itself through the multiplication of its form. Therefore the more nobler it is the more strongly it acts” (qtd. in Collette, 19). Carolyn Collette argues that, in the late middle ages, the subject one looked at was thought to be as important as the act of looking itself, and the act of looking was always a dynamic interchange between viewer and viewed (14). Indeed, the very nature of medieval vision was dynamic and reciprocal. For Suzannah Biernoff, “the eye was simultaneously receptive, passive, vulnerable to sensations; and active: roaming, grasping or piercing its objects” (3). A late medieval definition of vision, then, is incompatible with a methodology that would treat either spectacles or spectators as autonomous entities, or the gaze as monolithic. These theories of vision continued to dominate thinking about optics into the Renaissance well after Kepler “discovered” the retinal image in the early seventeenth century. In my analysis of cultural performance, I employ the term “specularity” in order to signal that spectacles and spectators are not in a unidirectional relationship, but rather interact within the three-dimensional space of performance in a process of mutual subject formation. Thus, as Kaja Silverman puts it, “all subjects are within specularity, even when occupying the viewing position, and that all antitheses of spectator and spectacle are false” (9).
Strategies of visibility differ among monarchs depending on their political strategies. Henry VII, the founder of the Tudor dynasty, had the most tenuous genealogical claim to the English throne and, therefore, deployed a model of visibility I have termed “chiaroscuro specularity.” Although the term “chiaroscuro” most often describes a representational method that emerged in the late fifteenth century, one that uses contrasts between light and shade, it was also a phrase used in literary discussion to describe the combination of clearness and obscurity. Henry VII is partly revealed and partly obscured in performance, appearing at strategic points during Katherine’s civic entry and reception in order to draw attention to his presence without being fully accessible to the gaze of his subjects. The king enters the viewing stands through secret passageways and, once he is positioned, is often shielded from direct view, either by latticework or curtains. The taint of illegitimacy makes him vulnerable to charges of histrionic appropriation of power, in contrast to Henry VIII who uses drama to make visible the “essence” of sovereign authority. Henry VII manipulates access to his sovereign spectacle in a way that partially shields his body from the gaze of his subjects, generating fascination around his image.

Henry VIII, as the offspring of the Houses of York and Lancaster, did not have the same issues of legitimacy and could, therefore, cultivate a mode of visibility that invited the direct gaze of his subjects. Henry VIII generates fascination by appropriating chivalric spectacle from the noble estate. He cultivates a tournament culture in his court in order to ground his model of sovereign authority on noblesse, which in the late fifteenth century was an authorizing narrative founded on merit and lineage. When the audience beholds Henry VIII’s success in the tournament lists, he is coded as the dominant, masculine subject and the audience experiences the king as the material embodiment of legitimate
authority. For Henry VIII, success in the tournament lists establishes a mutually
reinforcing dyad between merit and genealogy, a dyad that required iteration in live
performance. Chivalric performance involves risk and reward. Every time the king
performs in a tournament, his body is invested with significance and risk. The more his
body is on display to be seen, the more labour is required of Henry to succeed. However,
the more risk involved in performance, the greater the reward. Risk, an essential part of
performance, is surmounted; success demonstrates the ultimate control of the king and his
mastery over chance, and functions as evidence of his divine favour.

As a woman, Elizabeth I occupied an anomalous position at the apex of political
power. She cultivated a model of legitimacy based on her behaviour and social
approbation. In performance, she capitalizes on a spectacle of spontaneity, carefully
stage-managing her actions and reactions to emphasize her special individuality.
Elizabeth operates in her coronation entry as chief spectator and spectacle, engaging with
the pageants and her audience in a manner that makes her accessible and enables her to
bestow royal favour through seemingly unscripted speeches and gestures.

In addition to my analysis of sovereignty, the royal female gaze is also an
important component to the construction of social identity in performance. As J.L.
Laynesmith has pointed out, it is impossible to discuss kingship without looking carefully
at the role queens play in the production of sovereign authority.\textsuperscript{37} She states, “queenship
is such an integral part of mature kingship that any assessment of the latter must consider
the political and ideological relationship between king and queen if it is to achieve the
fullest possible understanding of the exercise of sovereignty” (22). Katherine of Aragon’s
civic reception celebrates her as the chief spectator and, therefore, suggests the possibility
of privileging the female gaze. Yet, female spectatorship is carefully coded through the
norms imposed by royal masculine ideology. Katherine’s special role as spectator and spectacle creates a mode of specularity that is crucial to sovereign authority. Although the allegorical challenge that circulated before the Great Tournament at Westminster in 1511 asserted that the festivities were staged for the queen’s pleasure, Katherine’s role was largely ceremonial. Katherine’s gaze, however, was institutionalized in the tournament ordinances in order to differentiate and reward successful performances of masculinity. While her symbolic role was a necessary component of chivalric masculinity, her gaze lacked political and performative force. Mary’s brief rule and Elizabeth’s succession changed the nature of queenship significantly; queenship moved from the position of consort to imperial monarch. Masculinity, once the normative precondition for sovereignty, was displaced with the advent of female rulers. In Elizabeth’s entry into London, the royal female gaze had symbolic and political force. In my discussion of the royal gaze, I do not simply equate possession of the gaze with narrative or performative agency. Both gaze and agency need to be located in terms of the meaning that underwrites each social performance and the context of the records for that performance.

**Social Identity**

My argument relies on the premise that the public affirmation of identity through performance was central to the construction of sovereign authority in Tudor England. Sovereign authority is, in many ways, made material through performance. Judith Butler has argued that the performance of identity is central to the construction of gender:

> In what senses, then, is gender an act? As in other ritual social dramas, the action of gender requires a performance that is *repeated*. This repetition is at once a re-enactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already
socially established … gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*. (140)

According to Stephen Greenblatt in his landmark study of masculine self-construction, “in the sixteenth century, there appears to be an increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process” (1980, 2). These two critics supply important theoretical points of departure for my analysis of sovereign authority and social identity. Sovereignty circulates in “ritual social dramas” and, much like Butler’s model of gender, repeatedly lays claims to universals. Performance enabled Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I to naturalize their authority because they appeared to perpetuate time-honoured discourses of sovereignty. Sovereignty appears to refer to static and enduring values while in reality it is continually in the process of changing; the paradoxical nature of sovereign self-constitution suggests that every repetition of sovereign authority “establishes instability of the very category it constitutes” (Butler 311). According to Butler, “[s]ince the “I” only gains semblance of identity through a certain repetition of itself, then the “I” is always displaced by the very repetition that sustains it. The “I” can never be cited or repeated faithfully and there is always a displacement from its former moment” (311). While those responsible for shaping the royal image, including but not limited to Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I, invoked authorizing discourses from historical models of kingship, strategies for the performance and recording of sovereign authority shifted to account for the change in England’s political structure. Greenblatt acknowledges that the mechanism behind the production of sovereign authority is paradoxical, yet he asserts that the ostensible “paradoxes, ambiguities, and tensions of authority … [are] the very condition of power” (1988, 65).
This dissertation investigates how sovereignty operates in the field of cultural meaning in Tudor England. I employ the term “cultural idiom of sovereignty” to designate the collective discourses of sovereignty drawn from images, emblems, tropes, and motifs circulating in Tudor England. However, the collective discourse around royal authority was not coherent, nor was it produced by a monolithic Crown for the purposes of Tudor propaganda, as has been argued in scholarship on sixteenth-century courtly performance. Rather, the discourses of sovereign authority are produced by multiple agents, including the monarch, the nobility, the civic populace, and many competing interest groups and individuals within those larger categories. While Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I were active participants in the production of their royal images, they were not fully in control of representation; individual and collective appropriations of sovereign authority overlapped and sometimes contradicted larger figural narratives promoted by these Tudor monarchs. Louis Montrose, in his discussion of Elizabeth I’s royal image, asserts that “the ruler and the ruled are construable as subjects differentially shaped within a shared conjuncture in the continuous process of performing, speaking, picturing, and writing it” (3). The production of sovereign authority is a process that stages what Susan Frye calls the “competition for representation” between sovereign self-definition and interest groups who used discourses of sovereignty for their own purposes (11). The slippage of meaning produced by this competition, according to Frye, has material consequences in the political sphere (17). While Montrose and Frye investigate the forms of cultural production that shape representations of Elizabeth I, they overlook the significance of Henry VII and Henry VIII to the development of a Tudor idiom of sovereignty and subjecthood. The focus of this dissertation on performance, textualization, and reception in the reigns of these three monarchs addresses this critical oversight;
moreover, my analysis attempts to demonstrate that the cultural idiom of sovereignty is shaped by, and depends upon the historical trajectory of Tudor sovereignty.

Authority is a characteristic that cannot be extricated from sovereign identity. The stability of sovereign power was determined by the monarch’s willingness to engage and structure the discourses current in his or her culture that naturalized sovereignty. There are five major narratives of sovereign authority circulating in Tudor England: genealogy, which draws on “history” for legitimacy through lineage; dynastic continuity, which demonstrates the ability to produce heirs and ensure the future stability of the Tudor line; social approbation, which invests monarchs with power through the consent of the commons; divine authority, where God appoints the monarch as His representative on earth; and special individuality, a model of authority grounded in the behaviour and personal merit of the monarch. Proof of these various models of authority was available in performance: a monarch’s visual signification was coded so that his or her outward appearance yielded truth; success, whether on the battlefield or in the tournament lists, coded victory as incontrovertible evidence of legitimacy; the lack of calamity was offered as a sign of divine favour; and, finally, a sovereign’s behaviour and actions were analyzed for proof of virtue. Although Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I incorporated all of these discourses of authority into their style of rule, some aspects were magnified depending on the sovereign’s political and personal projects.

Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I generate discourses that claim a transcendent truth grounded in their sovereign authority; Michel Foucault argues, “There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association” (93). Furthermore, he asserts, “sovereign power affirms itself by claiming that what it enacts is outside itself
“and transcendent” (93-4). Since Henry VII’s genealogy was tenuous, he emphasized in
courtly performance his ability to provide the nation with dynastic continuity and
cultivated his divine authority in civic performance. Henry VIII capitalized on his special
individuality, shaping a spectacle that asserted he was a man at once like all others and
better than all others. In this model of performance his success, whether it was competing
in a tournament or storming an allegorical castle in Westminster Hall, proved his noblesse.
Elizabeth’s authority in civic performance was based on her divine authority as a
Protestant martyr and the overwhelming support of the English people. However, her
genealogical legitimacy, particularly her descent from Henry VIII, was emphasized in
aristocratic performance. Each monarch founded the legitimacy of their power to some
degree on their exemplary behaviour and, therefore, bound themselves to a continuous,
quasi-theatrical production of the values they proclaimed.

**Spectatorship**

In Tudor cultural performance, audience members are not passive spectators.
Instead, sovereign authority is reified, or made material, by the civic spectators who line
the streets of London or fill the tournament stands at Westminster. Performance provides
a social space which is not merely representational but also transactional, demanding
participation and collaboration in the production of meaning. The royal entry, replete with
pageants, performers, acrobats, and orations, was a foundational element of Tudor
coronations, largely because the procession dramatized the legitimacy of the monarch to
rule the nation: this legitimacy was in turn authorized by the people who attended the
public spectacle. From the fourteenth century, kings, queens, princes and princesses
participated in civic entries to mark coronations, marriages, and military victories.
Members of the royal family would enter the gates of a city, process through the streets,
and stop at designated stations to hear an oration or watch a pageant that flattered and instructed them on appropriate styles of rule.\textsuperscript{43}

Civic specularity was present in royal entries to provide the monarch with the necessary social approbation to make his or her sovereign authority legitimate. This mode of spectatorship was particularly important to Henry VII. In the \textit{Traduction}, a printed pamphlet issued by the Crown and circulated before Katherine’s entry, the king ordered every guild to be visible in their liverys “for the honour of the city and of the State” (2). Henry VII’s proclamation reveals his reliance on a unified corporate body in order to invest his rule with stability. Important contractual negotiations between sovereign and subject are also enacted during Elizabeth’s entry. The pageant-dramatists orchestrate exchanges designed to engage royal complicity. Elizabeth’s participation in this social drama makes her, according to \textit{The Quenes Maiesties Passage}, “bound by promise” to serve her subjects (97). The coronation entry dramatizes the relationship between monarch and subject that is mutually constitutive: without social approbation Elizabeth’s reign lacks legitimacy, but without the love of the queen the people will continue to live in \textit{Ruinosa Respública}. In these cultural performances, social identity is ratified in performance because spectators are transformed into participants and drawn into the social drama staged for and by them. In Katherine’s entry into London, civic spectators are likened to the “wil beloved children of Israel” (\textit{Receyt} 2/593). Spectators are made aware of their dual position as subjects of the king and children of God. Obeying the king is thus a spiritual as well as a political duty.

The primary audience for tournaments differs from those for civic entries. Louise Fradenberg, who analyzes kingship in late medieval Scotland, states that the tournament is a “site of phenomenalization of the aristocratic self of honor” (xi).\textsuperscript{44} Meg Twycross
suggests that “[l]ate medieval and Tudor tournament spectacle confirmed and broadcast important political and social perceptions about noble participants and their roles within their societies” (104). In Henry VIII’s project of sovereign self-fashioning, tournaments are used as a medium to consolidate aristocratic loyalty. He is less concerned with social approbation from civic spectators than Henry VII or Elizabeth I, and relies on an aristocratic audience to witness his masculinity. Since he requires elements of risk and a live audience to prove himself dynastic and meritorious, his queen and his nobles play an important role as witnesses of his success in the lists.

Greg Walker excludes tournaments from his study, stating “we shall not be concerned here with the numerous disguisings, mummings or costumed jousts which were also presented at Court at this time and which frequently carried distinctly political overtones” because “a study of such activities would involve a rather different methodology from that employed here” (1991, 4-5). Walker claims that these “activities” are only “quasi-dramatic” entertainments which are “not sufficiently complete” to trace their development of political ideas or rhetorical strategies (1991, 5). However, in Chapter Three I argue against Walker’s assertion and reveal that the Great Tournament at Westminster was not only a fully “dramatic” production but that a close reading of the tournament reveals a wealth of complex political and social discourses circulating in Henry VIII’s court. During the Great Tournament at Westminster, Henry performs meritoriously in front of all other knights and in he is celebrated as a “Mirror of men our lodestar and light” in a poem that accompanies the Roll (m.39). Henry VIII is coded as a paragon of masculinity that aristocratic men must strive to emulate. Knights are participants as well as spectators, however, and enter the tournament grounds during the Great Tournament at Westminster with their own pageant-cars and allegorical
identities in order to petition the king for their various individual projects. During all three cultural performances, civic and aristocratic spectators are made aware that group-belonging is strengthened by participating in ritualized cultural performance.

**Textuality**

A common objection in performance studies to reading texts of performances is that it is impossible to recover vanished and ephemeral performances through textual vestiges. Many performance theorists have argued that once live performance succumbs to mediatization, it loses its value and becomes reproduction without representation.  

For Peggy Phelan, “[p]erformance’s only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance” (146). 

She goes further: “The pressures brought to bear on performance to succumb to the laws of the reproductive economy are enormous. The document of a performance then is only a spur to memory, an encouragement of memory to become present” (146). However, Philip Auslander argues against this tendency to subordinate record and privilege performance, critiquing performance scholars like Phelan because they “yield a reductive binary opposition of the live and the mediatized … In other words, the common assumption is that the live event is ‘real’ and that the mediatized events are secondary and somehow artificial reproductions of the real” (3). 

Instead, Auslander challenges performance studies to re-evaluate the relationship between performance and record: “What is mediatized is not what comes off the daily press, out of the tube, or on the radio: it is what is reinterpreted by the sign form, articulated into models, and administered by the code … the representation of one medium in another where new technologies of representation proceed by reforming or remediating earlier ones” (7). While I agree with
Auslander, I prefer to use “mediate” instead of “mediatize” to avoid the modern technological associations. In Tudor cultural performance, the live event is already the product of mediation because textual tablets, nametags, and other modes of representation are introduced to accompany verbal and other visual components of performance.

The debate between performance and record is also present in discussions of early modern history and historiography. According to Sandra Logan:

The problem of historiography is, above all else, a problem of the relationship between events and texts. The notion of the factuality of history is predicated on the erasure of this relationship, or on the simplification of the multiple valences of events to their representation in accounts and their traces in various forms of records. (251)

Logan identifies the impossibility of recovering the “truth” of historical events and highlights the high level of mediation historiographers exert in the process of recording history. Moreover, Crane suggests that the goal of recovering an “accurate” version of history is less interesting than the way in which historiography engages with social identity and shapes cultural consciousness: “A chronicle’s account of a courtier’s disguising offers only mediated access to a historical moment, but its very mediation – its explanations of the behaviour, its economy of representation, its judgments – constitute a generically shaped discourse of identity” (1).

The texts I analyze, _The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne_, _The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster_, and _The Quenes Maiesties Passage_, all use relatively new forms of historical narrative. The three central texts constitute new genres, and produce what Auslander calls a “repetitive economy which is itself a performance, one which has immense cultural power to produce and reproduce representation” (56). Recording
performance in textual form enables readers to repeatedly access the historical performance, while the reiterability of the textual records has the potential to produce new forms of meaning beyond the ephemeral moment.

The Tudor desire to produce new forms of historical record is symptomatic of larger shifts in historical thought in early modern England. F. Smith Fussner argues that the field of Renaissance historiography underwent significant changes in the “purpose, content, and style of historical writing” from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century (300). D.R. Woolf also identifies the historical revolution that occurred between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries and locates this shift as an effect of a broad range of cultural changes taking place in England. For Woolf, “the almost daily conversations, familial readings, public performances, and correspondence discussions of historical issues” changed the nature of English historiography, but states that early modern England did not have any uniformity of method or purpose until the eighteenth century (7). While Fussner and Woolf differ on the nature of these changes and time-frame of shifts to English historical thought, both agree that the late sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century was a time of innovation in English historiography.

Ivo Kamps argues that the term “history” was not a stable term and could be applied to genres as diverse as “poems, plays, memorials, biographies, narratives of current events, political narratives, annals, chronicles, surveys, antiquarian accounts” (8). The fluidity between history and fiction, discourse and narrative in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries means that generic distinctions are difficult to assert with any degree of accuracy before the end of the seventeenth century (Kamps 8). In my reading of The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne, The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster, and The Quenes Maiesties Passage, I suggest that a movement towards a type of
historical narrative was already being innovated at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Several traditions are borrowed from, reshaped, or rejected by authors who seek new representational strategies for sovereign authority and social identity. In addition to traditional genres, such as medieval, providential, classical and humanist historiographies, other forms of record circulated in the first half of the sixteenth century that had a profound impact on the texts in this study, including heraldic records, continental festival books, and iconographical picture books. My dissertation will make clear that the boundaries between these genres disintegrate under sustained scrutiny, especially in the light of the conditions of production around *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne*, *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*, and *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*.

Tudor monarchs were acutely aware of the importance of historiography to mediate history and their role within it. Alistair Fox characterises Henry VII’s reign as a strategic rewriting of historical legitimacy: “Needing to consolidate and legitimize his new dynasty, Henry VII mounted a major campaign to amplify the magnificence of his rule by using artists and men of letters … Polydore Vergil was set the task of writing a history of Britain that would show how Henry VII was the prophesied and true heir of the ancient British Kings” (17). Fox notes that Henry VII shrewdly exploited humanist historiography, which endeavoured to highlight the moral significance of historical events through a highly structured and classically rhetorical style: this narrative technique, according to Fox, allowed historians to “imply the existence of a stable order of meaning in the universe at large” (109). Henry VII’s desire for dynastic legitimization found expression in the patronage of continental humanist writers like Polydore Vergil and Bernard André. *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne*, written by a member of Henry VII’s court, employs similar providential narratives as those used by Vergil and André.
However, the *Receyt* does not fit under the traditional generic categories of classical, civic, or medieval historiography because it is synchronic rather than diachronic. Furthermore, the *Receyt* records multiple types of performance, including disguisings, banquets, and tournaments, and provides access to private spaces and “secret closets” within the court. The *Receyt* author provides his readers with unprecedented access to sovereign spectacle and uses textualization techniques that infuse his historical narrative with performative presence.

Henry VIII used chronicles differently than Henry VII. Instead of retaining classical historians to celebrate England’s glorious past, Henry VIII employed Edward Hall, a Cambridge-educated citizen, to record contemporary events and gave him access to his court. Henry VIII commissioned Hall because the king recognized that everything in spectacle could not be grasped in the moment of lived experience. In doing so, Henry VIII ensured that his spectacular sovereignty, ephemeral in performance, would find lasting permanence in a court-centric humanist historiography. Although Henry VIII worked closely with Hall, chronicle accounts did not fully capture the element of risk in live performance, nor could they be relied upon to promote his sovereign fiction that kings perform better than aristocrats. *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* fulfills this needs in its maintenance of immediacy in performance. *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* is a new form that exposes how performance structures ways of seeing and desiring in order to transmit Henry VIII’s project of royal authority. The *Roll* does not create a “live” experience, nor is it a record of a past performance. Rather, it is a “lived” performance that remediates performance by providing its “readers” with a model of sovereign authority that could not find expression in other forms of media.
The City of London commissioned a “historye” from Richard Mulcaster, probably expecting a historical narrative from the medieval chronicle tradition. However, the City was presented with a narrative that merged classical and humanist traditions to create a new hybrid form of record. In *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, Mulcaster provides his readers with an experience of sovereign spontaneity which generates liveness that reinforces Elizabeth’s legitimacy as queen. The interactive exchange encouraged between text and reader tries to replicate the relationship between performance and spectator. *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* is interested in the role of Elizabeth’s individuality in her civic entry, especially the relationship between her inward thoughts and her outward behaviour. Elizabeth’s exemplarity provided Mulcaster’s readers with a model of ideal behaviour whereby they could shape their own experience. Mulcaster records the civic entry, restaging sovereign-subject relations to create a new performance through reading.

Performance becomes increasingly textualized in the sixteenth century. By Henry VII’s reign the social contract that is renewed through ritual is no longer trustworthy or far-reaching enough to secure the necessary relationship between sovereign and subject, yet the old reliance on ritual remains since there is an urge to contain or recreate the performance within the *Receyt*, the *Roll*, and the *Passage*. Recording these ritualized social dramas provides a lasting testament to sovereign power, a particularly attractive idea for the upstart Tudor dynasty. By the time Elizabeth processes through the streets of London, performance itself has become textualized. The six pageant stations along the procession route include textual versions of the pageant orations. Textual aids were often present in sixteenth-century European processions to aid the spectators’ interpretive abilities, suggesting that the primary audience for these events was comprised of the nobility and the urban elite since literacy is implicitly assumed. André Valladier, in
Labyrinthe royal de L’Hercule Gaulois triumphant (Avignon 1600), explained that the spectators “lisoient cette Inscription en francois affigee [sic] sur la tapisserie du theatre, our ester leue à loisir, et faciliter à ceux qui n’estoient pas versez au latin l’intelligence des allegories caches sous l’escorce de l’Arc Triomphal [read this inscription in French affixed on the stage curtain and which could be perused at leisure, and helped the understanding of those who had no Latin as to the meaning of the allegories hidden beneath the surface of the Triumphal Arch]” (qtd. in McGowan, 33). However, while discursive mediation may help stabilize meaning, it can also destabilize it. An increasing reliance on textual meaning occurs in sixteenth-century England, caused in part by rising literacy rates and the post-Reformation tendency to privilege the text over the image, but also because the idiom of sovereignty had undergone significant change and revision from Henry VII to Elizabeth I’s reigns.

Print translated performance into new mediums which were then disseminated to various interpretive communities. Analyzing the types of reception, and how reception is shaped by class, provides insights into the cultural processes and political forces that shaped sovereign authority and social identity in Tudor England. Victor Turner writes: “[c]ultural performances are not simple reflectors or expressions of culture or even of changing culture but may themselves be active agencies of change, representing the eye by which the culture sees itself” (24). In each of the following chapters I read the extant eye-witness accounts of the cultural performances alongside one another in order to argue that these ritual social dramas are not univocal pieces of propaganda, but rather complex cultural performances; once they are in circulation they can be interpreted and manipulated to suit individual and ideological projects. Records as diverse as civic and court chronicles, heraldic records, personal diary accounts, and diplomatic dispatches
magnify various aspects of sovereign, aristocratic, and civic spectacle. In his definition of performance, Brown suggests that it is “wholly inadequate to understand performance as cultural ideas or values merely transmitted to a given audience” (5). Instead, “an audience produces a diverse range of receptions, not always intended or even sanctioned by the script” (5-6). Moreover, as Louis Montrose points out, “motifs are not so deeply embedded that they cannot experience change, and culture is not so stable that it can be classified as impermeable” (114). Brown and Montrose supply important theoretical points of departure for my analysis of the role spectators and readers play in the production of meaning. An analysis of the relationship between text, textuality, and performance reveals that the text is not a passive record of courtly performance, but rather a dynamic performance text that produces new representations of sovereign spectacle.
In February of 1496, Spanish ambassadors were entertained royally at the court of Henry VII and treated to plays, masques, and interludes, including Henry Medwall’s *Fulgens and Lucrece* (Kipling 1998, 21-3; Anglo 1997, 36-40). The festivities were numerous and the task at hand was of the most serious import: the negotiation of the marriage between Henry’s eldest son, Prince Arthur, and Princess Katherine, daughter of the king and queen of Spain. That October a treaty of marriage was concluded, followed by a formal betrothal in August 1497 conducted in Woodstock, Ambassador De Puebla representing the Spanish Princess *in absentia*. The following February the marriage treaty was further ratified by the Spanish, but the alliance remained uncertain for three more years. For the marriage to take place, Henry VII needed to project an image of a secure court free from the destabilizing forces of “Pretenders” who could overthrow the Tudor monarchy.¹

Although the City of London approved funds for Katherine’s civic entry as early as 6 May 1499, and the first of two proxy marriages took place that same month, courtly and civic preparations began in earnest only after Perkin Warbeck and the Earl of Warwick were executed in late November 1499.² By January 1500, Ambassador De Puebla wrote to Ferdinand that “great sums” of money were being spent in preparation for Katherine’s arrival in England (*CSP. Spanish*. I., 249). In fact, the Spanish ambassador could hardly contain his joy, and from January through June De Puebla repeatedly assured Ferdinand and Isabella that the Infanta Katherine was about to witness such festivities as had “never before been seen in England” (*CSP Spanish*. I., 216).
The timeline of events leading up to the dynastic marriage is significant because it reveals that politics and performance were mutually constitutive in Henry VII’s court. In order to combat threats to his authority, Henry VII employed a two-pronged strategy to centralize his power and ensure the success of his new dynasty: domestically he stabilized the English nobility and consolidated loyalty, while internationally he sought to create dynastic alliances with Spain, Scotland, and Burgundy that loaned the Tudor dynasty prestige, increased trade wealth, and, more pragmatically, ensured his allies would not harbour pretenders and rebels that could disrupt his hold on the English throne. Henry VII made extensive use of courtly performance to promote his royal authority to audiences of Englishmen and foreigners alike. Courtly performances such as the marriage-themed *Fulgens and Lucrece* aimed to promote his goals of international alliances, while occasions diverse as May Day festivities and civic entries lent his claims to the English throne the force necessary to persuade his Spanish allies that the Tudor dynasty was well worth the investment of a royal daughter. Kingship became an essential component of Henrician performance culture during the Anglo-Spanish marriage negotiations. An idiom of sovereignty emerged that aligned Henry VII closely with St. George, King Arthur, and Cadwalader, all martial and spiritual leaders who were also closely associated with chivalric ideals. In the three years leading up to the marriage, a multitude of fictional figures, from Lady May and Mother Nature, to the Nine Worthies and King Arthur, were deployed in various performative spaces to promote a royal image of Henry VII as divinely ordained and martially meritorious and, therefore, a worthy ally for Spain.

While performance was a crucial venue for shaping the idiom of sovereignty in Henry VII’s reign, the king also demonstrated a commitment to the textualization of sovereign spectacle in order to generate discourses of royal authority that circulated more
widely than the narratives promoted in ephemeral performances. The Royal Household commissioned a printed pamphlet, *The Traduction of Ladie Kateryne*, to prepare subjects for the imminent arrival of Katherine. The pamphlet provided readers with details about the reception of the Spanish princess and instructed them on their required roles. *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne* was also commissioned to record of Katherine of Aragon’s arrival, reception, and marriage. This historical narrative, designed for a largely aristocratic readership, focussed on the elaborate pageantry the Court and the City organized to celebrate the Anglo-English alliance. The *Receyt* is a hybrid genre that employs various narrative strategies (authorial narration, architectural descriptions, pageant orations, scenic descriptions, stage directions, audience reception) aimed at manipulating the responses of an aristocratic readership: Henry VII sought to discursively shape a royal image that located authority in international diplomacy, political acumen, and the king’s ability to perpetuate the Tudor dynasty. The anonymity of the *Receyt* author, and the claims that he makes about the “truth” of his account, frame his text as a transcription of the social text present during Katherine’s reception. In this formulation, however, the recording of the performance has immense cultural power to produce and reproduce representation. In commissioning the *Receyt*, Henry VII demonstrates his belief in the power of representation to articulate royal power and consolidate relations between sovereign and (aristocratic) subject.

The author of *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne* begins Book 1 with a description of Katherine of Aragon’s arrival in England. According to the *Receyt*, she landed at Plymouth in late October 1501 after a tumultuous “storm and tempest” blew her company’s ships hundreds of miles off their directed course and intended destination of Southampton (1/60). Henry VII hastily arranged for a welcome party to receive the
Princess at her new entry point, but he was “not soo intentifly [sic] satisfied with the chere, servyce, and diligente attendans” (1/60-1). Without waiting for Prince Arthur to join him, Henry VII set off on horseback to meet his new daughter-in-law. The king’s haste likely indicated the intensity of his commitment to ensuring the marriage proceeded without impediment. Henry VII’s desire for international alliances, the central preoccupation of his later reign, hinged on the success of this event. Certainly the political stakes were high: Henry VII was reliant on the Anglo-Spanish marriage, the most important dynastic alliance in his reign, to début England on an international stage, specifically in the realms of trade, diplomacy, and national stability.

There were, however, more personal objectives embedded in the English reception of Katherine. When Henry VII wrested control from Richard III on the battlefield and entered the gates of London as *de facto* king, the civic entry held to celebrate Henry’s coronation was not marked with elaborate pageantry characteristic of previous reigns. Fifteen years later, the political milieu had stabilized significantly. In many ways, Katherine’s civic entry is framed as Henry’s royal entry, a renewal of vows between sovereign and subject that ratified a social contract that had not been fully ritualized. This royal entry provided Henry with an opportunity to dramatize the power of the fledgling Tudor royal house, symbolically marking his transition from an upstart king to the founder of a dynasty further strengthened by the Anglo-Spanish alliance. As I will argue later in this chapter, Henry VII occupies the central position as the bridegroom in this marriage between two nations, displacing the actual bridegroom Arthur to the margins of the cultural performance.

Henry VII was so invested in the systems of cultural and ideological meaning deployed in the marriage festivities that he stepped outside his royal jurisdiction to infuse
the civic entry with a royal perspective. The City of London was, by long standing
tradition, the official “sponsor” of Katherine’s civic entry. In this capacity, the Mayor
and his Aldermen were responsible for funding the event and hiring pageant devisors to
produce appropriate narratives independent of royal interference. However, in an
unprecedented and highly controversial move, Henry appointed Sir Reginald Bray and
Lord Burgevanny, two of his most powerful and influential counsellors, to “assist” the
citizens. Gordon Kipling speculates that the royal counsellors, following Henry VII’s
directive, chose the pageant master and worked closely with him while the City of
London merely built the pageants and paid the bills (1990, 74). W.R. Streitberger
suggests that Henry VII appointed men from his own Privy Chamber and household
offices to oversee the civic festivities and “by this means he effected personal control of
his revels and of the image he projected in them: the reserved patron and magnanimous
host” (1994, 45). Contemporary accounts confirm this unusual royal intervention:
according to the civic chronicler Robert Fabyan, Katherine’s civic entry was “ordained
and devised by the king’s commandment” (qtd. in Kipling Triumph, 74). A court record
also acknowledges that “[Katherine’s entry] into the Citie of London might moost
conveniently in every maner bihalve be prepared … by our Sovereign assigned” (Receyt
1/173-5). The traditional relationship between sponsor and spectator, between the City
and the king, was significantly disrupted by this unprecedented royal involvement.

The king took a keen interest in many aspects of the royal performance; he
ordered Henry Wentworth, the Master of the Revels, to pack up his costumes and
pageantry halfway through production and ship them from London to Richmond “to
thentent [the king] might see the disguising stuff” (PRO MS LC 9/50, fol. 152v). Once
they met with royal approval, the costumes were shipped back to London for completion.
The *Revels Accounts* strongly suggest that Henry VII not only commissioned the pageantry but that he was an active participant in the imaginative conception and material production of these spectacles.\textsuperscript{12} During the months leading up to the Anglo-Spanish marriage official roles were reformulated in the light of such a crucial cultural performance. As I will discuss below, tensions between the Court and the City escalated over this royal intrusion, fuelling civic resentment that manifested itself in subversive artisanal performances, which in turn disrupted the illusion of stability and plenitude Henry VII took such pains to construct.

The performances created to celebrate the marriage of Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon were by far the most elaborate, costly, and symbolically-charged festivities of Henry VII’s reign. Events planned by the Royal Household and the City of London included Katherine’s progress through the English countryside to London, her civic entry through the streets of the City, an elaborate wedding ceremony at St. Paul’s, a tournament of several days at Westminster, and four major banquets at Westminster Hall replete with dramatic disguisings, plays, and interludes. What appear to be discrete performances are, upon closer examination, designed to build upon one another to form a sustained argument about the nature of Tudor authority. Extended over a two-week period, Katherine’s English reception was a highly dramatic set of pageants intended to ratify the social identities of spectators and participants alike. Susan Crane argues that reiterative behaviour both produces and reinforces social identity, which in turn alters social relations and has the force to reshape ideologies and institutions (3).\textsuperscript{13} These royal performances, particularly Katherine’s London entry, demanded interaction between sovereign and subject that dramatized the legitimacy of the monarch, a legitimacy that was in turn authorized by the subjects who participated in this social drama.
The English reception of Princess Katherine illuminates this larger set of connections between social identity and sovereign performance. In the first section of this chapter, I analyze how the narratives circulating in royal performance offer a sustained analysis of authority through the assertion of prominent cultural values. Pageants like the Castle of Policy and the Temple of God invoke the power of shared commitments and beliefs, reifying the social contract forged between sovereign and subject. I argue that the festivities surrounding the Anglo-Spanish marriage afforded Henry VII the opportunity to depict the appearance of a stable hierarchical society and capitalize on ritual performance in order to make material the power structures. For the aristocracy, genealogy forms the basis of sovereign power. Since Henry VII’s pedigree was plagued with indeterminacy, the author of the Receyt focuses the attention on the future of the Tudor dynasty rather than its past. Female reproduction assumes centre stage as Katherine’s body is subjected to sustained scrutiny. The royal female gaze is also dramatized as an important component of sovereign masculinity, particularly Katherine’s role as an appreciative audience for English masculinity. In the author’s formulation, the performances that celebrate the Anglo-Spanish marriage dramatize the triumph of the Tudor court and, by extension, the aristocratic community. Central to the Receyt’s ideological project is an unwavering commitment to upholding the established social hierarchy with Henry VII as its visible centre. The power to communicate this naturalized hierarchy through idealized representations lies in courtly performance.

Extensive documentation of the Anglo-Spanish marriage festivities reflects the importance of performance for both the Tudor Court and the City of London. Three first-hand narrative accounts survive: two civic chronicle accounts, the Great Chronicle of London and Chronicles of London, and one court-generated text, The Receyt of the Ladie
Kateryne, together record details of the civic entry, hastiludes, and disguisings with varying degrees of proximity and focus. In the second part of my chapter, I undertake an analysis of The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne in order to argue that this document, a first-hand account of the festivities surrounding the marriage between Prince Arthur and Princess Katherine of Aragon, is an innovative hybrid text designed to augment and intensify the narratives produced during “live” performance. An analysis of the relationship among text, textuality, and performance reveals that the Receyt is not a passive record of courtly performance, but rather a dynamic performance text that produces new representations of sovereign spectacle. I examine the strategies that the author of the Receyt deploys in celebrating the performance of sovereignty, strategies that generate an unprecedented readership experience. The Receyt provides its readers with a level of access to sovereign spectacle not hitherto available in civic, heraldic, or aristocratic historiographies: firstly, the format of the text enables special access to sovereign spectacle through the repeatable act of reading not accessible to the spectator; secondly, the narrative textualizes performance in a way that transforms the reader into a spectator and restages immediacy; thirdly, the strategic dissemination of the text ensures that the Tudor narratives produced in performance create a wider textual community who consumes the spectacle of sovereignty promoted in the Receyt. The modalities of form, content, and circulation therefore shape a version of sovereign spectacle that wields more power than any previous generic model available in English historiography.

Although the author of the Receyt ostensibly records the role of the English interest groups (royal, aristocratic, civic) in this cultural performance, he effaces contradictions that are present between and among civic and aristocratic groups in order to provide an “official script” designed to represent the social order as the king desired to
see it and, by extension, desired his nobles to see it. Thus, the third section of this chapter analyses the *Receyt* in relation to two extant civic chronicles, the *Great Chronicle of London* and *Chronicles of London*, in order to expose two distinct versions of sovereignty drawn along class lines. The civic historiographers present a very different relationship between sovereign and subject when compared to the dynamic promoted by the courtly author of the *Receyt*. Reading these two histories alongside the *Receyt* reveals contradictions and inconsistencies in the production of sovereign spectacle; while the civic chronicles shape reception of the royal image for an urban mercantile readership, the *Receyt* attempts to guide aristocratic responses to sovereign authority. Although this analysis exposes a breach within which dissident readings are possible, what also emerges from sustained intertextual comparison is a strategy in the *Receyt* of containment and control, one designed to mitigate various “risks” to sovereign stability. In the court-generated version of Katherine’s reception, the very mechanism of sovereignty that requires “live” performance to reify power is also one that guards against destabilization by utilizing the contingencies of performance to naturalize sovereign authority.

**Section I: Spectatorship and Subjectivity**

In courtly performances, Henry VII is represented as a stabilizing, hegemonic force, informing their content and shape. In the civic entry, Katherine’s role helps the king to define sovereign power. Her marriage to Arthur is aligned with the marriage between Christ and Church, creating a parallel between Henry VII and God and asserting the king’s divine authority. Courtly performance provides a different lexicon of sovereign legitimacy: during the royal banquet English royal masculinity, in the form of virility and marital conquest, is celebrated. Royal and civic groups both have a stake in the ritual’s operations because social identities are first shaped in performance and then ratified.
through spectatorship. Prominent cultural values are asserted in the entry pageants in order to educate the king and the audience on the qualities necessary for successful leadership. Participation in the social drama makes spectators active collaborators in the formation and celebration of nation, class, and individual identities.

Royal rituals, entries, progresses, processions, public offerings, and feast days offer a venue for the societal approbation of sovereign authority. Important formations of sovereign power are introduced during the highly ritualized coronation ceremony: when the new sovereign undertakes a royal entry into London, the spectators who line the streets of the City symbolically grant to the sovereign the ability to exercise his or her rule. The plenitude of royal power in this particular performance space requires a lexicon of legitimacy that brands each monarch as both uniquely suited for the role and dynastically authorized. In addition to symbolic assertions of divine ordination and dynastic legitimacy, power must be given materially to the king by his subjects. In Henry VII’s case, his hereditary claims to the throne were tenuous; yet the ritualized approbation he so desperately needed to shore up the shaky foundation of the fledgling Tudor dynasty could not be fulfilled because he entered London as _de facto_ king after vanquishing Richard III on the battlefield at Bosworth. Unfortunately for Henry, the stability of his reign relied on his subjects’ acknowledgement of his position as king, an acknowledgement that could not be realized fully under the tumultuous conditions threatening his early rule. Luckily for Henry VII, ritualized spaces available for ratifying power and consolidating social contracts were not limited to the coronation entry: processions, progresses, and other modes of social performativity could also provide sovereigns and subjects with ritualized opportunities necessary to promote “official” narratives around structures of power, and sovereignty in particular. Katherine’s entry into London in 1501 afforded Henry VII a
crucial citational plane to experience this desired civic approbation, in turn enabling English subjects to remind the king of his dependence on the social contract forged between sovereign and subject.

**Female Specularity**

Traditionally, medieval queenship has three central functions: queens were expected to forge alliances between ruling families or nations through marriage, provide an heir to the throne, and act as intercessors on behalf of the nation’s subjects. When Elizabeth of York married Henry Tudor, she created an alliance between the houses of York and Lancaster in order to unite England and then successfully produced two male heirs for the fledgling Tudor dynasty. Katherine of Aragon promised to bond England with Spain in an equally important union and, in the future, produce heirs: her potential to ally England and Spain and serve as a future progenitor of English kings are the focus of celebration during her English reception. Naturalizing the role of queenship requires idealized representations to be reiterated in courtly performance. As opposed to sovereign spectatorship, female specularity produces a set of relationships located within a gendered economy that highlights the masculinity of the king. In the following section, I outline the parameters of the royal female gaze and argue that this seemingly contradictory position is necessary for Henry VII to define his version of sovereign masculinity as domestic father and Heavenly Father, bridegroom and king. I argue also that the Receyt, a court-generated document, makes the focus on dynastic continuity particularly acute in contrast to the civic narratives which locate Henry’s power in divine authority.

In tournaments, coronations, and civic entries, female spectatorship is usually depicted as an ancillary component of sovereign spectatorship. During Katherine’s civic
entry, Henry VII is situated at the fifth pageant in a viewing chamber that delineates spectator positions along gender lines:

[And not very ferre thens in anothir chambre stode the Quenes Good Grace, my Lady the Kynges Moder … not in very opyn sight, like as the Kinges Grace did in his maner and party, there they bothe beholdyng the persones, their raise, ordre, and behavynge of the hole company, bothe of Englond and of Spayne, as well of their apparell and their horsis … (2/636-43)

Although the king, the queen, and the king’s mother share the same perspective, the royal women are “not in very opyn sight,” in contrast to the king’s comparative visibility in the adjacent viewing chamber. Henry VII and Elizabeth of York both behold the social drama unfolding before them but their specularity is distinguished in this account. Elizabeth’s presence, while remaining separate and subordinate, functions as a supplementary component of the larger sovereign gaze.

The queen and the king’s mother occupy a position of female spectatorship, insofar as they constitute a group of women confined to a gendered viewing gallery. While this model of female spectatorship is a standard component of late medieval secular ritual, Katherine must fulfill a role that is both spectacle and spectator, isolated from other royal women and assigned a role as active participant in the social drama staged on the streets of London. Katherine’s highest level of visibility occurs during her London entry, a performance which ritualizes her transformation and domestication from a foreign princess to an English queen. Each of the six pageants builds sequentially to form a larger figural narrative about what constitutes English royal authority. Katherine must travel from one pageant to another, acquiring advice and virtues on a quest for
temporal and spiritual honour. Each stage advises her on the characteristics necessary for successful leadership, evaluates her capacity to rule, deems her worthy, and then refers her on to the next level for further instruction. Although Katherine apparently is constructed as the chief spectator and guest of honour, her royal entry is a ritualized social drama that allows English subjects collectively to voice their criteria for an ideal ruler. Katherine’s civic entry endeavours to transform the Spanish princess into the future English queen, but it also functions as a carefully orchestrated royal entry for Henry VII. The entry operates as a dialogue between civic and royal interests, subordinating the traditional function of the entry as a didactic journey for the individual honoured. The Receyt is particularly invested in constructing female spectatorship because Katherine illustrates Henry VII’s sovereign power as divinely authorized and dynastically meritorious.

**Dynastic Authority**

The Receyt locates Katherine’s value in her reproductive ability and politicizes her body accordingly. Spanish ambassadors requested a conference with Henry VII before the wedding in order to provide “assurenes of hir [Katherine’s] virgintie,” a matter the king of Spain desired to be “publisshid full wise and perfightly” (2/883-5). Henry VII granted the Spanish Ambassadors an audience to stage their sworn testimony of female virginity because the successful conclusion of this international alliance and religious sacrament relied on Katherine’s body to be “intact.” Katherine’s body is politicized in the Receyt, a narrative strategy that draws attention to genealogy as a crucial authorizing narrative for sovereign power. Katherine’s intact body is ritualized early in the marriage celebrations so that English masculinity can penetrate her legitimately, both symbolically and in
reality, thus exerting Henry’s military, national, and highly masculinized prowess in a staged and textualized performance of royal virility.

In the *Receyt*, Henry VII is constructed an important agent in the marriage while Arthur’s role in his own marriage festivities is consistently subordinated. As mentioned above, Henry VII was in such haste to welcome Katherine to England that he set off to Plymouth without Arthur. The *Receyt* recounts how “His Highnes avaunced hymself, *levyng the Pryns behynde upon the playne*, and in the tyme of ij or iij of the clok at after none, His Grace entred into the towne [to meet Katherine]” (1/116-128, emphasis added). Katherine’s Spanish advisors tried to defer the encounter, citing strict instructions from Ferdinand to cloister Katherine from the English until the day of her marriage.17 However, Henry would not be dissuaded and, in behaviour more befitting an ardent lover than a saturnine king, told the Spanish archbishop “that if she were in her bed, he wold se and commone with her, for that was the myend and thenteent of his commyng” (1/130-2).18 Henry ignores the wishes of the Spanish delegation as soon as Katherine is in English territory, asserting his sense of sovereign control that makes her bedroom his right since it is in the jurisdiction of his kingdom. This notion of territorialization thus marks his stake to the female body now in his possession. While Henry’s threat to penetrate her bedchamber is delivered presumably in jest, it draws attention to fantasies of masculine conquest that surround Katherine’s body throughout her English reception. Henry VII is consistently portrayed as the agent in these fantasies, while Arthur is relegated to a marginalized position, even in his first encounter with his future wife. An hour after Henry met Katherine for the first time in Dogsmerfeld,

the Kinges Hignes and the Lord Prynce made their second resort toguydre
to the chambre of the Pryncesse, and there throught henterpretacion of
busshoppis the spechis of bothecontrethis be the meane of Laten were
understonden. And whereas tofore they were by deputies contractid, they
here now were in their either othre presens spousally ensured. The which
semly ensurans, so as it is promysed, honorably endid, the King sped hym
to his souper. (1/140-8)

This excerpt demonstrates the author’s habitual practice of collapsing the syntactic
distinctions between Henry and Arthur as the agent of the action. The author’s ambiguous
use of “they” and “their” confuses king and prince. This complex sentence, with its use of
possessive pronouns, foregrounds not only the ambiguity of the Henry/Arthur position,
but also establishes ownership on the one hand, and elides the identities of those being
espoused on the other. The pronouns stabilize at the end of the sentence, reasserting the
dominance of Henry over his son, as he “sped hym to his souper.” Although the
marginalization of Arthur is to be expected to some extent since Katherine is marrying
into a dynasty rather than marrying an individual, there is more at stake here than just
dynastic continuity. Again, the festivities surrounding the Anglo-Spanish marriage
repeatedly code Katherine as a reproductive spectacle and figure Henry as triumphant
spouse and martial conqueror in order to legitimize his project of sovereign authority.

Katherine’s reproductive potential is continually emphasized within the visual
matrix of courtly performance. When Katherine processes past the king’s viewing
position located at the fifth station of her London entry, her body is overtly on display for
the masculine royal gaze: “her heere hanging down abowt her shulders, which is faire
auburne, and in maner of a coyfe betwene her hede and her hatt of a carnacion colour, and
that was fastenyd from the myddis of her hed upwards so as men might weell se all her
heere from the myddill parte of her hed downward” (2/687-691 emphasis added). Long
hair, which symbolized virginity in late medieval England, codes Katherine’s body as a virgin spectacle.\(^{19}\) This image-construction has a ritualized quality since a similar description is employed to describe Elizabeth of York during her coronation procession in November 1487:

[Queen Elizabeth] was rially appareled, having about her a Kyrtill of whithe Cloth of Golde of Damafke, and a Mantell of the fame Suete furred with Ermyns, faftened byfor her Breft with a great Lase curioufly wrought of Golde and Silk, and riche Knoppes of Golde at the Ende tafelled. *Her faire yellow hair hanging downe pleyne byhynd her Bak*, with a Calle of Pipes over it. She had a Serkelet of Gold richely garnished with precious Stonys uppn her Hede; and fo empareled departed from her Chamber of Aftate unto her litter. (Leland *Collectanea* 219-220, emphasis added)

Both women are spectacles of virginity for Henry Tudor’s viewing pleasure, and by extension the pleasure of the English nation. Thomas More, in a letter to John Holt recounting Katherine’s procession, states, “Take my word for it, she thrilled the hearts of everyone; she possesses all those qualities that make for beauty in a very charming young girl. Everywhere she receives the highest of praises; but even that is inadequate. I do hope this highly publicized union will prove a happy omen for England” (qtd. in Rogers, 3).\(^{20}\)

Thomas More codes Katherine’s body as a site of visual pleasure because she is an iconic representation of national hope. In the *Receyt*, the desiring gaze of male spectators aligns with the male readers without breaking narrative verisimilitude. The visual pleasure experienced from looking at Katherine within the diegesis becomes available to the reader’s extradiegetic gaze. The natural identification between male readers and male spectators not only facilitates access to the experience of Katherine’s erotic spectacle for
male readers, but also enhances their viewing pleasure. Katherine, as the object of both gazes, is an object for heterosexual erotic fantasy. Katherine’s virginal spectacle is described in the Receyt as she processes by the fifth station, Henry VII’s location during her civic entry. In doing so, the narrative privileges Henry VII’s perspective and presents Katherine as a source of visual pleasure for him.

Fantasies of masculine conquest circulate around Katherine’s body, particularly during courtly performance. During the marriage banquet, three pageant cars were wheeled into Westminster Hall. The first pageant is a castle populated by “viij goodly and fresshe ladies” (4/168-9). Four of these women are dressed “aftir the thenglissh fachyon” and four are dressed “aftir the maner of Hispayne” (4/223-4; 224-5). Next, a ship, made to look “as though it hade been saylyng in the see,” is wheeled in to the hall (4/182-3). The only passenger “was a goodly and a faire lady, in her apparell like unto the Princes of Hispayne” (4/189-190). Finally, a “great hill, mount, or mountayne” is wheeled in to Westminster Hall filled with eight “Knightes of the Mount of Love” (4/208-9). The ladies in the castle are approached by two allegorical ambassadors, Hope and Desire, who carry messages of love from the knights. When the ladies refuse their advances, the knights made “battail and assault” on the castle to demonstrate their “power and malesse” (4/205; 207). The ladies “yeldyng themselyvs, descendid from seud castell and submittid them to the pouver, grace, and will of thoese noble knightes” (4/220-2). This sequence of pageant cars, designed by William Cornish at the king’s behest, celebrates the wooing and conquest of females as a socially unifying endeavour. The conquest of women, both English and Spanish, by knights from the Mount of Love celebrates the chivalric and “curragyous myend” of English masculinity, a performance staged primarily for the king and queen located at the upper part of the hall (4/168). However, the performance is also
watched by the the representation of Katherine on the ship. Her dramatized spectatorship is in place to behold representations of English military might and national power.

Katherine’s body is subject to narrative scrutiny in courtly disguisings and the subsequent consummation of her marriage. A select group of lords and ladies went *en masse* to the marriage chamber “for thentent to have the oversight and apparament of the chambre and bedde that the Prince and Princes, aftir the condicion of wedlok, shuld take in their reaste and ease” (3/289-291). Pleasure experienced at the banquet festivities is paralleled with the pleasure offered by the marriage bed:

> aftir the goodly disportes, dauncynges with pleasure, myrthe, and solas before usyd, [Prince Arthur] departid to his seid arrayed chambre and bedde, wheryn the Princes bifoire his comyng was reverently leied and resposid … And thus thise worthy persones concludid and consummat thefecte and complement of the sacrement of matrimony. The day thus with joye, mirthe, and gladnes deduced to his ende. (3/300-312)

The syntax seems deliberately ambiguous: do the newlyweds experience fulfillment, or does the pleasure belong to the revellers as they anticipate marital consummation? Both scenarios are suggested. The erotic details of the consummation find public expression in the narrative: the successful coupling ensures the marriage is validated and might produce heirs for the fledgling Tudor dynasty. Anxiety around the legitimacy of Henry VII’s reign and the potential for disruption by pretenders is assuaged in the *Receyt* with the promise of the future Tudor line that would be two generations removed from issues of genealogical legitimacy so prevalent during Henry VII’s early tenure.  

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21
Divine Authority

The focus on Katherine’s virginal body in the Receyt is crucial because it testifies that the Anglo-Spanish marriage is a “pure” union. The sacrament of marriage between Katherine and Arthur is not merely a political alliance between Spain and England: J.L. Laynesmith argues that marriage between royals also functions as a sacrament that mirrors the marriage between Church and Christ. This parallel between marital and Holy communion is “particularly emphasized and expanded upon for royalty in order to stress the sovereign’s divine authority” (Laynesmith 31). Divine authority is a central narrative that circulates in the marriage festivities, particularly during Katherine’s civic entry. During the fifth pageant, titled “The Temple of God,” an actor identified as “the Prelate of the Chirche” expands on the trope:

The maryage of God to the nature of man,
This mariage was so secret a mystery
That oure Blissed Savyour, Crist Jhesus,
Compared it to a maryage ertyhely,
To make it appiere more open and pleyn to us
By a parabill or symylitude, seyeng thus:
The Kyng of Heven is like an ertyhely kyng
That to his sonne prepareth a weddyng. (2/607-14)

This popular Pauline image, that marriage signifies the sacramental and nuptial union of Christ and his Church, is recast in Tudor performance. The pageant producer capitalizes on this traditional motif in order to make Henry VII the visible center of the Anglo-Spanish alliance; just as Arthur is imbued with Christ-like qualities in the process of
image construction, Henry VII is explicitly aligned with God.26 The civic entry is heavily invested in defining royal authority as a divinely sanctioned position. Thus, Prelacy states,

And right so as oure sovereign lord, the Kyng,
May be resemblid to the Kyng Celestiall
As well as any prince erthely now lyvyng,
Sittyng amonge the vij candilstikkes roiall,
As he whom hit hath pleasid God to accept and calle,
Of all honour and dignite unto height,
Moost Cristen kyng and moost stedfast in the feithe. (2/615-21)

The explicit connection drawn between God and Henry VII again invests the king with divine authority. According to this passage, Henry was chosen by God as his agent on earth and therefore must be obeyed as God’s representative.27 Performance may have also reinforced these connections visually because the king was stationed in the audience for this pageant. Both Kipling and Anglo suggest that Prelacy’s comparison of Henry VII to the Father of Heaven “pointedly takes advantage of the fact the king stood watching” and it is very likely that “features of God were made to resemble those of Henry VII” (1990, 138; 1994, 89).

The civic entry capitalizes on images of the Trinity to unify Henry VII and Arthur as bridegrooms. However, Arthur’s social identity is strategically constructed so that he is subordinate to his father. In the third civic entry pageant, Alfonso tells Katherine,

Doughter, the sonne, signifiour of kinges,
Entryng the Sagittary and his triplicite,
To whoes conjunction approximate is
Hesperus and Arthure … (2/374-7)
While Alfonso instructs Katherine on how to read the zodiac, he also asserts that Arthur is governed by a larger sovereign power who has arranged the “conjunction” between Katherine and Arthur. The significant role the alignment of the stars plays in the pageant narrative further implicates Henry VII in the Anglo-Spanish marriage.\(^28\) Allegorically, the sun is King Henry while Katherine is linked to Hesperus and Arthur to Arcturus.\(^29\)

Alfonso uses the word “triplicity” (also called a trigon) as a technical term to indicate a combination of three signs of the zodiac; this tripartite star structure invokes the spiritual Trinity of God, Christ, and the Heavenly Ghost. This trinity is reiterated when, later in his speech, Alfonso refers to the “Leonine triplicity” of which Sagittarius is part, a combination that is specifically English because, as Kipling points out, the lion is also the British royal ensign (130).\(^30\) Katherine is given two bridegrooms, but a hierarchy of spouses is made very clear. Job, stationed at the same pageant as Prelacy, draws attention away from Arthur towards God in his oration. He states,

> Alfons hath shewed you the hevenly bodies
> For your compfort, and of your spouse a figure.
> But now, Madam, loke up above all this
> And ye shall fiend a more speciall pleasure
> To knowe and beholde the great Lord of Nature,
> Almghti God, that creatyd and wrought
> Arthure, Hesperus, and all the heven of nought.
> It is the Sonne of Justice, therthe illumyneng. (2/427-34)

Job promises “pleasure” if Katherine will “behold” the figure of God, who is stationed at the top of the pageant. While Katherine’s husband Arthur elicits “comfort,” the true visual, and spiritual, pleasure comes from looking upon God, with whom Henry VII is
implicitly aligned. The pageant establishes a series of symbolic relays whereby Arthur stands for Henry, Henry for God, and vice versa. In this oration, Job instructs Katherine on her role in England and educates her on the hierarchy of royal masculinity. Even in the fourth pageant, which was designed around Arthur’s “fatall dispocion and desteny,” the performance privileges the “Father of Heven” who sits above Arthur’s chariot, presiding over the “spere of the sun” (2/514).

The connection between Katherine and Arthur’s marriage and the union of Church and Christ is introduced in the first pageant in order to invest Henry, in his role as an earthly God, with the identity of bridegroom. St. Katherine greets the Spanish princess:

As I holpe you to Crist your first make,
So have I purveyed a secunde spouse trewe,
But ye for him the first shal not forsake;
Love your firste spouse chef, and aftir that your newe,
And thise rewardes therof shall ensue;
With the secunde honour temporall,
And with the first glory perpetuall. (2/74-80)

The message is clear: Henry, as God’s representative, is Katherine’s primary spouse who must take precedence over her second spouse, Arthur. Honouring this hierarchy promises plenitude through the sacrament of a royal marriage. So, while Henry is God’s representative on earth, Arthur is Henry’s (and the nation’s) in the conjugal bed.

Laynesmith asserts that “[i]t is important that the marriage of Christ and Church was not for the purpose of producing heirs but an end in itself, which brought into being the New Jerusalem and was thus the expression of God’s ultimate purpose” (31). Laynesmith’s assertion, however, is not entirely applicable since the entry pageants are fixated on
Katherine’s reproductive capabilities. In the fifth pageant, God blesses Katherine to produce Tudor heirs:

‘Blissid be the frute of your bely,
Your sustenuce and frutes shall encrease and multiplye,
Your rebellious enemyes I shall put in your hande,
Encreasyng in honour bothe you and your lande.’ (2/594-7)

Katherine’s ability to procreate is politicized, and the pageant asserts that God’s ultimate purpose is the perpetuation of the Tudor dynasty, which will ensure the well being of the realm. By negotiating the marriage between Katherine and Arthur, Henry VII demonstrates his ability to provide England with dynastic continuity and therefore national stability.

The high level of repetition in the civic entry reinforces the God/Henry correspondence at every station. The cumulative textual evidence exposes a systematic effort on the part of the pageant producer to invest Henry VII with divine authority. Laynesmith states that “[t]he most common means by which the queen’s role explicitly legitimized kingship was in constructing an image of the king’s Christ-like role” (30). While Henry’s social identity as a divinely anointed king is ratified in performance, English subjects are also given an important position in this process. Just as Henry is aligned with God, the English spectators become his “wil beloved children of Israel” (2/593). This association points the civic spectators lining the streets of London to their dual position as subjects of the king and children of God. As God’s “wil beloved children of Israel,” the English populace must obey Henry VII or risk damnation. Obeying the king is thus a spiritual as well as a political duty.
There are rare instances where Katherine is ascribed the agency to propel the pageant narrative forward during her civic procession. One of these occasions presents itself during the second pageant along the route when the princess encounters the Castle of Policy. Her arrival at the Castle of Policy prompts an architectural transformation that draws Policy out of the fortress to exclaim,

Who openyd these gatis? What, opened they alone?
What meanyth this? O now I se weell why:
The bright sterre of Spayne, Hesperus, on them shone,
Whoes goodly beames hath persid mightily
Thorugh this castell … (2/186-190)

Summoned to the entrance, Policy draws the audience into the performance when he asks them “What meaneth this?” The audience is recruited to do interpretive work in order to solve Policy’s puzzle, its members engaged as active participants rather than passive spectators. It is tempting to wonder whether spectators were prompted to point out audibly the presence of Katherine to Policy. Certainly, as soon as he gazes upon Katherine, Policy identifies her as the agent that precipitates the change.

In fact, mutual transformation is staged in this pageant. The elaborate architecture of the pageant is built upon the Great Conduit on Gracechurch Street in order to create two gateways that Katherine must pass through to access the next station. In doing so, she must accept the conditions laid out by Policy, stated in Latin at the outset: “Est sana virtuti, arx hec, nec non nobilitati/ Sed sine me nullus, huc patet introitus [This sound castle is for virtue, not for nobility, but without me no entrance lies open in this place]” (2/184-5). By passing through the gates of Policy, Katherine must privilege virtue over nobility successfully to gain “entrance.” But it is not just Katherine who is transformed:
England also experiences a shift upon her arrival. Since the castle is distinguished by three portcullises (heraldic symbols from the Beaufort badge) and decorated with red roses to render the Lancastrian association visually explicit, the audience would immediately recognize this pageant as a conventional symbol for the realm of England (Kipling 1990, 122). The head of this allegorical realm, Policy, identifies himself as the “governoure” (2/206). He is described as an “arymd and Venturous knight” in the Receyt but in the chronicle accounts he is a “man arrayed like a Senatour” (Receyt 2/161; GCL 299; CL 237). These accounts may not be in conflict if Policy is designed as an iconic representation of Henry VII. The court-generated and civic records enhance different aspects of sovereign masculinity: from a civic perspective the king is a meritorious martial leader, while in the court-generated document he is a statesman skilled in Tudor diplomatic policy. The extent to which Katherine is accorded individual agency is, however, limited because Henry VII consciously grants her this position. Katherine, as a foreigner, can only penetrate England by invitation and through assimilation rather than through force.

In order to reduce Katherine’s narrative agency further, Policy’s ensuing speech subjects her body to sustained scrutiny, reversing specular direction to transform the Princess into a passive object for the audience to experience visual pleasure through. When Policy gazes upon Katherine, therefore, he evaluates her visual signification:

Than forasmoch as I perceyve and se
You disposed to noblesse and vertue,
Ye seme right apte to have auctoryte
Within thy realme. (2/200-4)
Policy declares that her physical appearance is a transparent reflection of her virtue, reassuring the audience that there is no slippage between outward comportment and inner state since “men in you may weel perceyve and see/ A very dispocicion naturall” (2/252-3). Policy invites the audience to subject Katherine’s body to sustained scrutiny as a passive spectacle and as an agent that pushes the narrative forward. The message, that those who wield authority should possess “noblesse and virtue,” naturalizes the characteristics of royal power. This is a key moment in the social contract. The pageant devisors construct criteria for the audience to evaluate both Katherine and royal authority in general. This process engages the audience members as participants in the formation and regulation of sovereignty. Meeting Policy’s evaluative criteria means that Katherine “wins” the right to wield authority in England since she is tested and deemed worthy by an allegorical figure that represents royal authority. At this station pageant producers effectively employ drama as a reiterative tool to define royal power and to celebrate, advise, and aggrandize noblesse in a ruler.

The author of the Receyt textualizes Katherine’s reception of her civic entry in order to highlight the Spanish Princess’s evaluation of English spectacle: “Whan that the Princes had passid by the pagentes in ray ordyned and sett in the stretes of London, and with grate pleasure harde and beholden the goodly sightes in theim severally, [Katherine arrived at the final pageant]” (2/806-8). In this account, Katherine is a consumer of Englishness. She occupies a position as foreign spectator to appreciate and approve of English political authority. The marriage between Katherine and Arthur is framed as a union between two nations in the politics of the pageantry. A poem read before Arthur and Katherine enter St. Paul’s on the day of their wedding makes the alliance explicit: “Uppon the which Sonday shulde be the goodly weddyng/ And everlastyng unyon of
England and of Ispayne,” and later exclaims, “In Pouls many Simeons thought they hade well taryed/ To see thus Spayne and Englond toguyders to be maried” (3/84-5; 90-1). The textualized account of Katherine’s visual pleasure when she “harde and beholden the goodly sightes” enables readers of the Receyt to experience national pride because they witness themselves being seen by an appreciative foreign gaze. Katherine is a proxy of sorts since she represents Spain. Therefore, her pleasure is also pleasure experienced by the international community; specifically, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.

Thus, Katherine’s visual pleasure is manufactured to fulfill political and aesthetic expectations because the “grate pleasure” derived from what the Princess “harde” was greatly compromised by her inability to speak or understand English. Katherine was able to speak and read Latin and, therefore, could understand only the brief Latin inscriptions that accompanied each pageant. However, the speeches that accompanied the civic pageants, apparently designed to welcome the princess, flatter her, and instruct her on the qualities necessary to rule England successfully, were incomprehensible to Katherine, rendering her role as the central spectator symbolic. The active participation of the audience as “Simeons” nevertheless produces a ritual dimension to the cultural performance, insofar as the pageantry exercises a “symbolic or ritualistic activity … [that is] communicative in some way” (Bell 71). In the politics of the pageantry, the marriage becomes a source of national pride and a celebration of a foreign princess. Instead, a social contract is established between sovereign and spectator using Katherine as an intermediary spectacle. Thus, the focus of the civic pageants was to define royal authority rather than acknowledge Katherine outside her role as a unifier of nations and a symbol of Henry VII’s diplomatic acumen.
While Katherine’s gaze is heavily mediated by political and hermeneutic projects, she is not entirely denied the power to shape meaning in performance. The female gaze is an important component of royal masculinity, in place to identify and approve of Henry VII’s sovereign spectacle. Two days after the marriage ceremony at St. Paul’s, Henry VII returned to the church to make an “honourable and devout offeryng” as a gesture of thanks for the successful conclusion of the Anglo-Spanish alliance (3/356). The night before his public offering he ordered that all the nobles in the realm who were in London attend him, and at nine o’clock Tuesday morning a “multitude of nobles” assembled outside Baynard’s Castle in “riche, pleasaunt, and coostly appariell” to accompany the king to the church (3/361; 366). The author of the *Receyt* provides a detailed account of the status, apparel, and order of the procession, which included members of both the “spirituall and temperall” estates (3/368). After an exhaustive list of names and ranks that comprised the royal retinue, the *Receyt* reveals that this grand display of royal power has an intended audience of one:

And in this season, the Princes was secretly conveyed unto the closett where as the Kings Grace stode in the ‘tyme of’ the mariage upon the Sonday, to see and perceyve this goodly pusauns and nombre of gentils, where were accountid and rekenyd the mountenans of fyve hundred, three score, and three, with chenes and colours of golde wore of the gentils and nobles of this rehersid companye. (3/391-8)

Katherine occupies the same viewing position as Henry VII, yet this female gaze is not a cross identification with masculinity. Instead, this is a position of spectatorship that is self-consciously granted by the king. She is present for this homosocial display of royal support in order to identify, acknowledge, and approve of Henry’s sovereign power.
Katherine is invested with a spectator position to bear witness to the fact his nobles and clergy are unified and harmonious. Her appreciative gaze has national significance since she will undoubtedly report back to her father about this display of aristocratic approbation. However, Katherine also wields a newly domesticated English gaze of appreciation since she has already been married. Her inclusion in the king’s private closet indicates she has been successfully assimilated; her presence is sought after and encouraged for this display of sovereign authority.

**Section II: Textualized performance in *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne***

The social contract forged between sovereign and subject in the marriage festivities finds a new medium in *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne* where readers become aligned with spectators so that they can experience some of the reiterative and therefore ritualistic moments of social approbation around sovereign authority. Since the three extant accounts of the Anglo-Spanish marriage festivities produce divergent perspectives, it is necessary to understand how sovereign and civic specularity are produced by different, and sometimes competing, ideological projects. An analysis of the project of sovereignty promoted in the *Receyt* reveals that the court-generated text differs dramatically from the civic historiography that records the marriage festivities, a topic I will return to in the third section of this chapter. While most of the information we have about Tudor courtly performance is produced by civic historiographers, heralds, and less frequently (but equally valuably), by royal historians or court chroniclers, *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne* diverges significantly from these traditional modes of record-keeping. The narrative is not a civic chronicle account, nor is it written by an appointed court chronicler. Instead, the *Receyt* appears to have been commissioned by Henry VII for the
purpose of recording the extensive courtly performances that comprised the marriage festivities.

In this section, I argue that the Receyt marks a shift in representational strategies that reveals Henry VII’s need for a new medium to shape and disseminate his project of royal authority to a larger audience. The deployment of an innovative record of this cultural performance forges new relations between sovereign and subject through notions of readership. Although Glynne Wickam asserts that The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne is “unquestionably the most important extant document relative to the dramatic records of the early Tudor period” (14), surprisingly the Receyt has not been scrutinized as a literary text, but only as a transparent record of Tudor performance. Issues of genre, authorship, reception, and early Tudor print culture have not been explored in any depth, which renders the Receyt one of the most overlooked extant documents in Tudor courtly performance.

While Sydney Anglo and Gordon Kipling have devoted much scholarly attention to the literary elements of the pageantry that governs Katherine’s civic entry, they have considered the Receyt as a vehicle of transmission rather than a text worthy of independent analysis. Insufficient attention has been paid to the sociology of the text, defined by D.F. McKenzie as the “truths of social development, structure, and function” (3). McKenzie urges scholars to consider the motives and interactions which texts involve at every stage of production in order to gain insight into the roles of institutions and their own complex structures in affecting the forms of social discourse (5). With this approach in mind, I will attempt to ascertain the mechanisms behind the production and circulation of sovereign spectacle in The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne. In this section, I examine three components of the text: first, its generic innovation for expressing royal
authority; second, its translation of performance to semiosis while maintaining “liveness”; third, its textualizing strategies of the cultural performance. My analysis investigates the social motivations which drive the Receyt’s production of meaning in order to expose the various forms of authority that govern courtly performance.

**Genre**

As a court-generated document, the Receyt prompts serious questions about genre, inviting us to consider whether this pageant book is a text of a performance or a performance text. In order to answer this crucial question, we must ask: is the staged production the “original” and “authentic” form, of which the text is a record? Or is the Receyt a variant version of the performance, where the Receyt reproduces performance through a different vehicle of transmission? Or, alternatively, is the Receyt a separate work, which nonetheless provides contiguity with the experience provided by the ephemeral performance? A close reading reveals that elements of the Receyt evoke performance, particularly in Book Two, because the author attempts to constitute the performance’s continuing “presence” despite the disappearance of the ephemeral experience. According to Peggy Phelan, the “very interaction between an art object and the spectator is essentially performative” (146). In my analysis of the Receyt, I argue that the relationship between text and reader is also performative and has reiterative qualities that are crucial to Henry’s project of sovereign authority. Relationships between text and reader, performance and spectator, align in order to provide readers with an experience of narrative verisimilitude. Not only does the Receyt record courtly performances, it also creates a new textualized performance of sovereignty available through the act of reading. Just as the Receyt is invested in recording performative presence, the author is also self-consciously creating a literary monument that celebrates
sovereign power. The author desires to make royal authority present on one hand, and eternally celebrated on the other, producing a hybrid text that has both literary aspirations and performative presence. As I argue below, the Receyt, as a new textual form, intentionally distances itself from traditional forms of historiography and heraldic records in order to invent a vehicle for the expression of sovereignty and subjecthood and manipulate aristocratic responses to royal power.

In Book Two, the author of The Receyt of Ladie Kateryne recreates performative presence by compiling a wide range of performance components; pageant orations, stage directions, and descriptive architectural sketches exist alongside detailed authorial accounts of apparel, procession order, and viewing positions. This heterogeneous repertoire is held together loosely by the author’s narrative. He functions much like Levi-Strauss’s “bricoleur” since he does not subordinate particular elements of the performance while elevating others.\(^{38}\) Instead, the Receyt author reproduces the creative work of the pageant devisors and architects with apparently very little explicit authorial mediation. In this way, the Receyt author acts as an intermediary between pageant producers and his readers. Pageant devisors promote narratives in their orations, scenic architects produce visual meaning through the disposition of symbols, and actors inflect meaning through gesture and delivery. These various registers combine in performance as a multi-dimensional experience; in the Receyt, each aspect finds representation. The narrative oscillates between authorial composition and intratextual compilation and is subject to both authorial and non-authorial revision, yet the author makes no attempt to hide the collaborative nature of his work.\(^{39}\) In the Prologue he states, “Lady Kateryn[‘s] … arryving, receite, mariage, with the circumstans, this pusant and litle tretes following is drawen and compiled, conteyning truly and withowt fables the very gest and
fourne of the matter, nothing being in his dedes abbreviat, neither by eny superfluous
addicions fayn thinges representing” (90-95). The content of the text militates against
reading the Receyt as a coherent work with a single animating author. Although pageant
speeches exist alongside poems and architectural sketches in an eclectic intertextual
medium, the author promises to tie each component together without “abbreviating”
action or interfering with “superfluous additions.” The Receyt constitutes something
outside our available textual categories. Conventional genres, such as historiographies,
heraldic records, play scripts, and poetry, are unduly limiting. Instead, the Receyt is a
hybridized performance text with dramatic and literary elements that co-exist alongside
one another without privileging one form over another. None of the available generic
models contain the potential of the Receyt for the production of meaning as a result of the
tension it maintains between various modes of reading and performance. Compilation
exists alongside narration, generating a readership experience that offers access to
sovereignty that is present and eternal, live and lived, ephemeral and monumental.

Book Two, devoted to Katherine’s entry into London, is the most collaborative of
the five books because it reproduces the pageant speeches verbatim rather than offering a
condensed, descriptive account of the dramatic action, the preferred narrative style in the
other four books. Recording the dramatic scripts overcomes the distance between record
and performance and offers readers proximity to the “liveness” of the event. This type of
access to pageant speeches aligns the reader with the spectator, which not only augments
the performance but improves upon lived experience. The recorded speeches circumvent
possible disruptions in live performance, such as difficulty hearing, an undesirable
viewing position, and other factors that potentially render meaning indeterminate in live
performance. Due to the time constraints during the procession, Katherine rode towards
St. Paul’s without waiting to hear one of the actors deliver his speech because “the day was soo fast passyd” (GCL 304-5). However, the Receyt provides a full, unabridged version of the pageant speeches that can be read and reread, enabling the reader to ponder privately the hermeneutic elements with care. Since reading aloud recreates “live” performance by animating speeches, this act of embodiment restates an experience that resembles the historical performance but produces new dramatic representations that gather force with each re-enactment. In Book Four, a rare authorial address informs the audience about the types of readership the text offers: “Now ye shal be advertisid and also ye shall here of the moost worthy, laudable, joyefull, and pleauntaent entryng of the feld of were and armys made and shewed by the goodly and valiaunt … noble knigtes of the worshipfull and aunncient blod of Englond” (4/67-71). The author locates “advertised” in a different epistemological register than “hearing” about the marriage festivities. This direct address suggests its reader have access to a textual as well as an aural experience, a text equally conducive to being read privately and orally as a communal event. Reading out loud recreates “live” performance by animating speeches. However, direct quotations in the Receyt are reserved solely for fictional characters. Aristocratic and sovereign presence is accessible to the reader-spectator through detailed descriptions of their visual significations, yet the ability to embody their voices, the defining feature of the pageant speeches in the civic entry pageants, is denied. The reader can “gaze” at sovereign spectacle but cannot ventriloquize the king because such an act would violate decorum and render his position histrionic.

**Literary aspirations**

However, the Receyt is at the same time a self-consciously literary text. The prologue divides the narrative into five books and then further into chapters with thematic
headings. Each heading informs the audience about the nature and sequence of upcoming events, a structure that facilitates the reading experience. The author draws attention to the form the narrative takes:

This said tretise is devyded into v partes and small bokes – the furst of her departing and arrivyng; the second of her receite into the noble Cite of London; the iij of her mariag and feast roiall; the iiiij of the justes, banquettes, and disguysing; the v of the Princes lamentable deth and buriyng – with their singuler titles and chaptiers as afterward severally in the book it is appiering. (Prologue 95-101)

This structure facilitates private and repeated access to Katherine’s reception since it allows the reader, upon re-reading, to find a particular section with ease. The Receyt employs a similar textual format as medieval romances, and Kipling notes that the author occasionally borrows “cadences from Malory or Lord Berners to describe the actions of Katherine, Arthur, and Henry VII” (1990, xiii). Through format and “cadences,” the reader is instructed to approach the Receyt as a literary monument erected to commemorate Henry VII’s court. This lends the text an air of literary reputability to place the Receyt within a tradition of timelessness as an enduring symbol of Henry VII’s authority.

In the Prologue, the author reveals his ambition to create an English epic with Henry VII as the central hero in this providential narrative, framing Katherine’s English reception within an English “creation story.” The Prologue begins with a description of the creation of the earth, and then discusses the creation of man before finally moving on to the divine origins of the English people:
Microcosmus, the lesser world, by his diffinicion properlie resemblant is unto mankiend through certayn disposicions … the which nombre of disposicions I specially note, and to my purpose do bring and alledge, the singuler veynes of blode in mannys bodie … by symliitude in the erthe … occupied with most goodly people, devowt ever and right full of vertue. Saynt Austyne named thies people for their fair countnans ‘Englesh’ – ‘aungels’ by his furst nominacion. (Prologue 6-40)

Microcosmus is invoked, connecting seemingly disparate concepts like the creation of the world and the founding of Rome within a historical trajectory that ends with an encomium of Henry VII as “The moost noble and prudent kynges in the world” (73). The marriage between Prince Arthur and Princess Katherine stands as the culmination of large historical shifts which have converged at this moment to establish a new English state characterized by Tudor rule and international peace. Henry VII, the paragon of “proved wisedom affermyng peax above all thinges moost profitable and necessarie,” is portrayed as “the prophesied and true heir of the ancient British Kings” (Receyt 55-6; Fox 17). This Prologue suggests a provenance with medieval providential chronicles but also gestures towards a new humanist history because it moralizes historical events in order to legitimize the foundation of the Tudor dynasty.

Although the Receyt uses the Prologue to shape the readerly experience, according to Kipling, it was added much later to the Receyt, certainly after Book Five (the modified heraldic account of Arthur’s funeral) was added (1990, xxxvii). While the Prologue fashions the Receyt as a humanist historiography designed to illuminate the moral, political, and religious implications of Henry’s rule, the Prologue seems to be an afterthought rather than an indication of the original objectives behind production.
Nevertheless, the Prologue offers valuable insights into the type of audience the author imagines for his “tretise” because it lays claims to a place amidst an intellectual community comprised of Augustine, Boethius, and Isidore of Seville, and anticipates an audience familiar with history and moral philosophy. The author of the Prologue boasts of his deep knowledge by listing a vast array of ancient authors in order to convey to his readers that he has the literary acumen necessary to mediate sovereign spectacle. Although the *Receyt* exhibits many characteristics of a literary text, there is an authorial effort to recreate performative presence for readers, collapsing distinctions between readership and spectatorship, recorded text and performance text, author and impresario.

**Sovereign Specularity**

During the royal performances staged for the Anglo-Spanish alliance, Henry VII occupies an important mode of specularity. According to Kaja Silverman, “all subjects are within specularity, even when occupying the viewing position, and that all antitheses of spectator and spectacle are false” (9). Silverman’s formulation is especially pertinent to an analysis of Henrician sovereignty because for the king, spectatorship itself becomes a spectacle, but a spectacle that is represented as impervious. Stephen Orgel discusses sovereign specularity in his analysis of Jacobean masques: he argues that “the central experience of drama at court, then, involved not simply the action of the play, but the interaction between the play and the monarch” (12-14). He goes further to argue that “the location of the royal seat was determined by the law of optics” (14). Orgel’s formulation is similar to Silverman’s theory of optics between spectator and spectacle but is situated within early modern courtly performance.

Although ostensibly the king avoids appearing as an overt spectacle, Henry nevertheless manipulates his specularity to draw the gaze of his subjects present at the
fifth pageant. In performance, which employs visual as well as verbal resources, Henry VII, as silent spectator, dominates and controls the exchange of power. By manipulating access to his specularity, Henry VII is a model of unattainable power that still remains an animating force for the pageantry around Katherine’s reception. He is a spectacle that is rarely seen, and yet when seen, refuses total intimacy with his subjects through his use of chiaroscuro specularity. Jonathan Goldberg’s formulation of James I during his coronation entry, that he is “not simply an image of power” but instead offers his subjects the “power of his image,” is pertinent to Henry’s specularity (33). This scopic relationship between sovereign and subject enables Henry VII to project an image of a powerful patron and legitimate ruler without the risk that the kingly body may be perceived as histrionic.

During the marriage ceremony between Prince Arthur and Princess Katherine, the Receyt author carefully notes the king’s visual perspective within St. Paul’s: “above in the vaute, there was a closet made propirly with lates wyndowes enclosid, within which closett the Kinges Grace and the Quenes might stond secreatly to se and apperceyve the fourme and manour of the mynsystracion” (3/27-31). The private viewing chamber that houses Henry VII guards against the direct gaze of his subjects and provides him with control over the dissemination of his spectacle. The Receyt records this strategy of visibility and deferral that promises readers an imagined glimpse of the royal couple very few had the privilege to experience during the actual ceremony:

The Kynges Highnes and the Quenes, bycause they wold make non opyn shew nor apperance that day, whereas they uppon the nyght before had comyn secreatly to the place of the Lord Burganvenyes nere unto the seid Chirch of Poulis adjoynyng, so in like wyse prively they had conveyed
themselfes to the rehersid closett above the consistory aright annempst the
place where the solemnyte of mariage shuld be executid. (3/165-171)

This account of “secret” spectatorship marks the king’s location and perspective as
special since the information is only available to a select few, providing readers with the
pleasure of textual voyeurism as they access the private, almost forbidden, royal
specularity. However, this rhetoric of privileged access is troubled when one compares
the other extant accounts of the marriage. Surprisingly, both civic historiographies also
record Henry VII’s “private” viewing position during the marriage ceremony. The
Chronicle of London states, “where was present in secret manner the kyng, the Quene, my
Ladie and kynges Moder, with dyvers other estates, the which all stode secretly in a closet
latised” (CL 248-9). This relationship between visibility and inaccessibility creates a
performative paradox: instead of concealing royal spectatorship, sovereign specularity is
mentioned in all three first-hand accounts of the marriage. The Receyt momentarily shares
the same narrative focus as the civic chronicles in order to draw attention to the optics of
sovereignty. Henry VII’s specularity is carefully crafted as a chiaroscuro spectacle since
he is simultaneously exposed to the gaze of his subjects whilst remaining partially veiled
from view. This play between visibility and invisibility, exposure and concealment,
augments the impact of sovereign spectacle and codes the king as the animating force
behind performance. Stephen Greenblatt asserts that “[r]oyal power is manifested to its
subjects as in a theatre, and the subjects are at once absorbed by the instructive, delightful,
or terrible spectacles and forbidden intervention or deep intimacy” (65). Henry VII’s
“privileged visibility” engages the audience powerfully in the spectacle of power while at
the same time maintains a “respectable distance” between sovereign and subject
(Greenblatt 1988, 64).
Henry VII manipulates public access to his image in order to foster fascination. The *Receyt* is particularly invested in generating interest in royal specularity, most explicitly in its account of the fifth pageant on Katherine’s civic entry, the pageant where Henry VII is stationed: “And unto this rehearsed pageant at the Standard erectid, the Kings Highnes hade conveyed himself somewhat prevy and secretly and stode in a marchauntes chamber, and with him the Lord Prince, therle of Oxinford, therl of Darby, therl of Shrewesbury, my Lord Chamberleyn, with many other estates” (2/631-5). Although the *Receyt* constructs the king as the focal point of the fifth pageant, the terms “secretly” and “privately” are again employed to create a chiaroscuro model of sovereign spectacle. Henry VII choreographs his specularity so that even a glimpse of the king produces a moment of intimacy between sovereign and subject. The reader of the *Receyt*, however, “sees” the king when they read the *Receyt*; access to Henry VII’s privileged visibility is offered textually, yet readers are refused complete access to the royal image since they must imagine the king’s specularity. However, the reader/spectator is afforded a degree of power; Greenblatt asserts, “Power belongs to whoever can command and profit from this exercise of the imagination” (64).

One of the key elements of chiaroscuro spectacle is to negotiate the economy of visibility and deferral to ensure the audience is always aware of the king’s presence. This type of specularity runs the risk of obscuring the king’s visibility when he should be accessible to his subjects. To combat this risk, visual signs are carefully arranged to draw the audience’s gaze towards the king’s spectacle. According to the *Receyt*, Henry’s presence at the fifth pageant on Katherine’s London entry is easily recognizable because of his large retinue: “Above [the king’s position] in wyndowes, ledis, guttours, and batilmentes stode many of the Yemen of the Garde, and also benethe in the strete the
servantes of my Lord Prince, my Lord of Oxinford, my Lord of Darby … with othir
dyvers to a great and howge nombre on both the siddes of the strete” (2/644-9). The
king’s personal guard, emblazoned in royal livery, draws attention to Henry VII’s
position in the performative space, while the nobles symbolize support for royal authority
on the behalf of the secular elite. The royal retinue frames the king’s position on all sides,
draws the gaze, and establishes a triangular visual matrix encompassing Henry VII, the
pageant, and the audience. The king becomes the focal point of a visual economy in this
account; he is privileged as the primary spectacle while others are subordinated, including
Princess Katherine, Prince Arthur, and the pageant itself.

Chiaroscuro specularity is profoundly difficult to textualize because it requires a
portrayal of visibility on the point of disappearance and reappearance. The Receyt author
provides the reader with descriptive vantage points from the king’s visual perspective,
providing admittance to intimate spaces, secret closets, and clandestine views of
performance. A level of access to the king’s field of vision is offered that is not available
in historiographies, heraldic accounts, or other forms of Tudor record. This textualized
viewing position reinforces the centrality of a single perspective and places Henry VII in
the center of the theatrical experience, just as he is the center of his court and, by
extension, England. In Katherine’s civic entry, the king’s bodily presence, is both present
and absent, accessible and mysterious, material and immanent. The authority accorded the
king via a specular economy reinforces the political and hermeneutical program of
dramatic performance.

**Textualizing Performance**

In the Receyt, strategic narrative techniques are deployed to transform the visual
into the textual, the masculine into the sovereign, the Spanish into the English in order to
provide aristocratic readers with a portrait of sovereign authority that is essential to the well-being of the nation. Henry’s specularity fascinates and fuels the audience’s desire to view the king’s body. The Receyt positions the reader as spectator who participates in the spectacle of allegiance dramatized in the cultural performance. During Katherine’s civic entry, the description of fifth pageant offers access to Henry VII’s field of vision: “And eftsone the beganne to approche to the Kinges sight in the moost goodly wise that ever was seen in Englond or in any othir realme that of qweke and recent memory may be known or undirstond” (2/650-3). Recreating Henry VII’s “sight” connects readers to the larger figural narratives promoted in performance.

Henry VII’s specularity is often privileged during the marriage festivities. During the courtly disguisings, the Receyt records the strategic scenic manoeuvring on site to ensure the king is able to view all aspects of the pageantry: “This herber was so properly brought that such tyme as it came before the Kynge it was turnyd rownd abought in the settyng down of it, so as the Kyng, the Quene, and all thestates might see and behold thoroughly the proportion thereof. And in the settyng downe of this herber the gate thereof was turnyd towards the Kyng and the Quene” (4/318-323). The Receyt first notes Henry’s, and then Henry and Elizabeth’s perspective in the banquet hall. Royal presence becomes the center of the theatrical, and readerly, experience. In this disguising there is one ideal place in the hall within which the “illusion achieves its fullest effect” (Orgel 10). While the royal gaze occupies this position in the courtly disguising, the Receyt places the reader in a position of verisimilitude. What is important in this account is not simply the action of the disguising, but the interaction between the reader/spectator and the monarch. In the Receyt, the king must not merely see the disguising, “he must be seen to see it” (Orgel 16). Henry and Elizabeth are in full view of the readers as they watch the
disguising. Readers wield an extra-diegetic gaze that overlaps with the royal intra-diegetic gaze. The Recuyt is organized to create a perspective that foregrounds the interaction between the performance and the monarch, placing the king within the frame of the figural narratives as an arbiter of meaning. Many performances in the Recuyt are described from the vantage point of “the Kings sight” or “grounded before the Kynges sight” (2/653; 4/629). Proximity to the king’s visual field makes kingship and the readership contiguous, but this contiguity is controlled and reinforces the king’s position at the apex of political, social, and symbolic power.

Indeed, the royal gaze is afforded significant power in the Recuyt. When the procession passes Henry’s viewing station at the fifth pageant on Katherine’s civic entry, the Recuyt author notes that the royal gaze is present to survey and evaluate social identity: “the Kinges Grace did in his maner and party, there they bothe beholding the persones, their raise, ordre, and behavynges of the hole company, bothe of Englond and of Spayne, as well as their apparell and their horsis as of their discreate and goodly ordre, poyntes in features of their demeanour” (2/640-4). A detailed account of each social position follows. The procession order is recorded in the Recuyt in a way that processes the individuals across the page just as they filed past the king’s viewing gallery. Noting the procession order reiterates hierarchies of social power, bringing each social class (royal, aristocratic, and civic) into relief so that the reader is made aware of social identities circulating in performance. The royal gaze is in place to see the order, behaviour, and even apparel of the nobles and civic dignitaries who march past the royal viewing chambers to behold a “visual emblem of the social hierarchy” (Orgel 7). The Recuyt textualizes a complex visual field that includes Henry’s, Elizabeth’s, and their attendants’ visual positions. While membership in each group is strengthened by participating in this ritual, the reader
is also able to witness how the conceptual notion of social identity finds material representation.

In addition to the proximity to the royal gaze, the narrative in the Receyt describes the performance’s physical space, scenic dimensions, and details about architectural structure in order to engage the reader imaginatively in the three-dimensional world created by the pageantry. This type of textualization allows readers to move across social and spatial boundaries set up at the actual performance. Architectural descriptions of each pageant are recorded in the Receyt, and the author carefully describes the composition of the tableau vivant before any dramatic action ensues. The first pageant in the civic entry offers a clear example of the Receyt’s strategic use of focalization to recreate performative presence for the reader. A description of the general scene introduces the position of the pageant within the London landscape: “the furst pagent in manner and fourme folowyng: that is to sey, there was on the myddes of the bridge erecte a tabernacle of two flouers, assemblaunt unto tweyne rodeloftes, in whoes loughe flouere and particion there was a sete” (2/29-33). The author’s gaze focuses in on the pageant, providing a detailed description of the major components in order to guide the extra-diegetic gaze of the reader: “And within the sete a faire yonge lady with a wheel in hir hand in liknes of Seint Kateryne, with right many virgyns in every side of her. And in the iide and higher floure and story, there was anothir lady/ in liknes of Seint Ursula with her great multitude of virgyns right goodly dressid and arayed” (2/33-7). The Receyt author provides his reader with a sense of spatial movement since the pageant’s description begins from the bottom of the pageant and pans upwards.

Textualizing the three-dimensional space shapes the reader’s visual field and controls access. The narrative shifts when the author fixates on smaller details, drawing
attention to the intricacies of the pageant so the reader can appreciate the complexity of the visual (and textual) spectacle that lies before him or her: “Above the bothe flours there was a pictour of the Trinyte, and upon iche side of thise iii storyes, oon small tabernacle square with propir vanys, and in every square of the small tabernacle, the Garter invyrond with his poysye in Frenche: Onye soit que male pens” (2/37-42). But the reader-spectator is offered minute details unavailable to the audience at the “live” performance: “And in the myddis of the Garter the rede rose regall, and so in the numbre of both siddes were six smale tabernacles, uppon whoes toppes were six angelles ensensynd the Trynyte, Seint Ursula, and Seint Kateryn” (2/42-5). Once the details are fully described, the author pulls back his narrative focal point and gradually reinserts the entire pageant into his narrative frame: “The walis of the saide flours or loftes were peyntid with hangyng courteyns of cloth of tissue, blue and rede. And a party space bifore this pagent were ij great postes set, enpeyntid with … the armys of Englond, and all the hoole werke corvyn of tymbre gilte and peyntid with golde, byse, and asur” (2/45-52). The reader’s gaze is manipulated according to the details the author wishes to impart.

On the second night of the marriage banquet festivities a lantern pageant débuts at court. The pageant’s ingenuity lies in its manipulation of light and shadows, which presents a particularly challenging visual dynamic for the author to textualize. His translation from the visual to the textual is systematic. The description begins with a careful evaluation of each visual component: “and therwith cam in a goodly pagent made rounde aftir the fachyon of a lanterne, caste owte with many propir and goodly wyndowes, fenestrid with fyne lawne, wherein were more than an hundred great lightes” (4/326-9). The shape and structure of the pageant establishes its general form, while the textiles used to cover the windows, “fine lawne,” provide the reader with the texture of the light that
shines through the cloth. Contrasts between the “hundred great lightes” and the darkened banquet hall create the illusion of the lantern’s luminosity. Occupants of the lantern are identified next: “in the which lanterne were xij goodly ladies disguysid and right rychely beseen in the goodlyest maner and apparell that hath ben usid” (4/329-32). After all the components of the lantern pageant are described in isolation, their combination is even more striking for the reader: “This lanterne was made of so fyn stuf and so many lightes in hit that these ladies might perfeitly appiere and be known thorugh the seid lantern” (4/332-4). While the spectator present for the actual performance would take in the lantern pageant in one glance, the act of reading allows the whole to be constituted slowly. The extreme contrast between the darkened hall and the brilliance of shifting patterns of light and shade projected onto the window screens of the lantern pageant permit an experience akin to what Laura Mulvey describes as “an illusion of voyeuristic separation” (836). The reader-spectator is fashioned as a voyeur who peers through the text at the silhouettes of the women who dance for the textual audience’s visual and textual pleasures. The Receyt is therefore both performative and mediated, restaging and restating the spectacle to create a new textuality of performance through the act of reading and imaginative re-enactment. The relationship between reading and performance provides readers with intimacy and presence on one hand, and stability of meaning and reiteration on the other.

**Authorship**

Although the Receyt survives in manuscript form at the College of Arms, there is an overwhelming body of evidence that suggests the author was not a herald. In Book Four, the account of the marriage tournament is not thorough, and sometimes even inaccurate. Since tournaments were under the heralds’ jurisdiction, this account
demonstrates a level of interest in the hastiludes that is out of proportion with a typical herald’s professional interest. Significant details about the identity of participants, the scores, and the victors of the tournament, recorded in the extant jousting cheques and the two civic chronicles, are noticeably absent from the Receyt. Heraldic narratives are characterized by their interest in the roles and duties of the heralds, and the names of the heralds are almost always included. The Receyt, by contrast, mentions the presence of heralds only twice in the first four books. In fact, the author of the Receyt only acknowledges heraldic accounts to distance his text from this type of record. In Book Four he states, “such a feld and justes ryall so noble and valiayntly doon have not ben sen ne hard, the which goodly feates and therof the hooll discripcion appieryth weell pleyynner and more opyn in the bokys of the haroldes of armys” (4/122-6). The author of the Receyt declares his unwillingness to record the tournament minutiae that preoccupy contemporary heraldic texts. In the Receyt, chivalric display is only recorded to emphasize the magnificence of the king through his court. The abridged description of the tournament also demonstrates a marked departure from the narrative style present in civic chronicles, a genre that provided detailed accounts of individual knights’ clothing, armour, and performance in the lists. The Receyt distances itself from civic and heraldic historiography because they are no longer adequate to record sovereign spectacle. Traditional forms of record-keeping do not provide the necessary level of access to express fully Henry VII’s project of royal authority. Civic chroniclers and heralds are, for the most part, present for the public dimensions of cultural performance, and occupy a perspective similar to that of the commoner who lines the streets of London. The author of the Receyt, however, occupies a position very close to the king, and thus can offer his readers special access and new possibilities for textual pleasure. Henry VII’s style of
sovereignty capitalizes on the tension between transparency and transcendence, a style that requires a nuanced representation of sovereign specularity lacking in traditional historiographies. Henry VII commissioned a text that will fully convey these nuances overlooked by civic and heraldic recorders, who, as I argue in the third section of this chapter, have their own agenda and ideological foci.

Despite the lack of information surrounding the Receyt’s textual production, there are clear indications that the “pusant and little treatis” was produced by a member of the Henrician court, specifically someone within the “inner circle” of the royal retinue. Kipling ascribes authorship “almost certainly” to a member of the king’s household, “perhaps a gentleman usher or a groom,” because “the author consistently narrates … from the point of view of an attendant upon Henry VII” (1990, xlviii; xliii). The author recounts first-hand information from a position very close to the king and has access to certain events, like Henry VII’s first encounter with Katherine and the ceremonial blessing of the marriage bed, which would not have been available to civic historiographers, heralds, or the general public. When the king is not present, details about Katherine’s reception are vague and circumstantial. The textual lacunae lead Kipling to conclude that “the author sees what the King sees and fails to see what the King does not” (1990, xlv). The author’s close alignment to the king’s perspective throughout the marriage festivities invests the text with an intimate access to Henry VII’s visual field, replicating a position of royal spectatorship that is not present in contemporary civic chronicles or royal histories.

The author of the Receyt, moreover, gives a detailed description of Richmond, Henry’s newly built palace, from the point of view of a member of the king’s household. The account, which spans one hundred and thirty lines of prose, provides readers with
specific architectural details, layout, and décor of the court, galleries, private royal chambers, halls, and chapel. Richmond houses “pleasaunt dauncyng chambers and secret closettes … housis of pleasure to disporte inn at chesse, tables, dise, cardes, bylys, bowling aleys, buttes for archers, and goodly tenes plays, as well to use the seid plays and disportes as to behold them so disportyng” (4/855-872). The author reveals his familiarity with all the household offices when he describes “the pantry, buttry, selary, kechon, and squylery – right poletikly conveyed, and wisely their coles and fuell in the yardes without nyghe unto the said offices” (4/858-10). Even the view from the windows of Richmond is subject to narrative attention:

[U]nder the Kinges wyndowes, Quenes, and othir estates, moost faire and pleasaunt gardeyns with ryall knottes aleyed and herbid – many marvelous beastes, as lyons, dragons, and such othir of dyvers kynde, properly fachyoned and corved in the grownde, right well sondid and compassid with lede – with many vynys, sedis, and straunge frute right goodly besett, kept, and norisshid with motche labour and diligens. (4/861-7)

The king’s view from his chamber is listed first, then the queen’s, and finally the other estates’s perspectives in descending order of importance. In this account, Richmond functions as an architectural metaphor for England. The author calls the palace an “erthly and secunde paradise of oure region of Englond” and praises it as the “bewtyouse examplere of all proper lodgynges” (4/760-1; 763). The well-ordered household becomes a microcosm for the nation under Tudor governance. From the “glorious” state rooms to the “wisely” run kitchen and meticulously kept gardens, this palace represents all the offices in the realm working together in harmony to create an earthly paradise (4/825; 859). Special access shapes an unprecedented textual experience for the Receyt readers
because they are given admission to “secret closettes” and spaces that are normally private and even forbidden. Granted access to the spaces the king occupies, the reader becomes a textual voyeur.

The increasingly bureaucratic nature of governance in early sixteenth-century England creates new conceptual frameworks for sovereign-subject relations. According to John Guy, “Henry VII governed England through his household and Council” (67).\(^54\) Sean Cunningham states that Henry VII was the architect of his regime and was intent on shaping a new Tudor polity, noting his willingness to develop new methods of government to enforce his authority (23).\(^55\) Henry VII’s shift to this new administrative monarchy was a radical divergence from the norms of fifteenth-century royal authority (Watts 52).\(^56\) Christine Carpenter suggests that the Wars of the Roses precipitated political shifts that led to the rise of an early bureaucratic monarchy (6).\(^57\) The administrative monarchy in Tudor England required a growing number of bureaucrats to run the king’s household administration. One of these new bureaucrats may well have been the Receipt author; based on the author’s familiarity with Richmond, he was almost certainly a member of the newly reorganized household government, a position that would grant him access to the king in public, political, and private spheres. The parallel he draws between Richmond and Tudor England reveals a humanist tendency to highlight the moral significance of a material structure; he does so, arguably, in order to imagine for Henry VII the power to create harmony and stability not only in his palace, but in the nation as a whole. The Receipt author deploys a new medium to explore the subjectivity both of those under the authority of the state and sovereign authority itself. In the Receipt, we are invited (through various strategies of narration) to identify with the perspective of the king so that authorial mediation “disappears.” During these moments of sovereign
proximity, the view of the spectator and the view of the reader are fused, facilitating identification in order to promote allegiance to royal authority.

Since the model of sovereign specularity recorded in the *Receyt* promises a portrait of a stable royal image, this cultural performance cannot tolerate disruption. Measured steps are taken to reassure the reader that sovereign spectacle is impervious to destabilization. The *Receyt* makes a lengthy disclaimer about the potential risk in performance. This passage is worth quoting in its entirety because it exposes the author’s impulse to engender and then contain risk in royal performance:

No marvell though that matter to thefectes of felicite to be fynnally deducid and conceied, the which mediat grace and leafull purpose meoveth – ffirst to ther incepcions and begynnynge (thexperyence wherof might be evident and aproperyd in this present day to deme and juge Almighty God in this mariage content and pleasid), heraftir with great influens of strength and vertu to assiste the parties in ther weyes and intentes – that notwithstanding the wonderfull preye of the people, the cruelnes of their cursours and sterne horsis, the jeopardies, standynges in highe places, wyndowes, and housys of the stretes within the Cytie of London, yet there was that daye no myschaunces of oppressyng man, woman, ne childe, neithir stroke with hors nor infortunat fall, praysid and lovyd be Almighty God. (2/837-851)

This declaration, in a single sentence, is intent upon trying to control risk and maintaining a successful outcome. Risk is an essential element of performance and distinguishes it from other mediums of sovereign spectacle like portraits, tapestries, book illuminations, and poems. In the *Receyt*, risk, in the form of death or serious injury, is registered and
then contained as proof of God’s approval of Tudor kingship and Henry VII’s ultimate control. The *Receyt* glosses over several accidents, tensions, and missteps that happened in live performance because this version of sovereign spectacle must appear to be impervious. According to the author, the absence of death or bodily injury is nothing short of a miracle, adding further support to Henry VII’s discourse of divine authority.

**Circulation**

Henry VII took a keen interest in textualizing ephemeral events for posterity. In addition to the *Receyt*, he also commissioned descriptions of Katherine’s English reception for Ferdinand and Isabella. Book IV of the *Receyt* records the gifts Henry VII sent to Spain, including commemorative descriptions of the Anglo-Spanish marriage:

> Uppon the Monday folowyng, the Hispaynyardes, after that they had dynned, toke ther leve of the Kinges Grace, the Quene, my Lord Prince, my Lady the Kynges Modir, of dyvers other of the nobles of Englond bothe spirituall and temperall, toke their levys … with many goodly bokys, pictures, and examples of this moost excellent receyte and fynall conlucion of marriage, with his hooll commodite solempnities and apperteynnaunce exhibet and hadde of the behalve of the Realme of Englond in the premissid matier. (4/984-997)

The marriage between Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon was designed to enhance the Tudor image on an international stage. Producing and circulating art objects of the marriage festivities enabled Henry VII to disseminate his magnificence abroad in order to garner foreign praise and participate in the continental vogue for recording and publishing accounts of royal triumphal processions. While the “goodly bokys, pictures, and examples of this moost excellent receyte” were designed with an international audience in
mind, the 
Receyt was probably not among the gifts given to the international retinue. The document may well have been conceived with the same objective of “official memoriam” as the manuscripts and paintings the Spanish ambassadors received, but it is written in English, which means it was likely intended for a domestic audience. Furthermore, the 
Receyt was probably not finished in time to be presented as a gift since Book Four concludes with the Prince’s death, which occurred five months after the marriage festivities concluded.

The projected readership for the 
Receyt almost certainly would have included the king since Henry was not present, or at least not visible, for several events during the courtly festival. While it is very likely Henry VII shaped the larger figural narratives present in the courtly performances, as the host his experience was not complete. A written account would have provided him with a comprehensive overview of the marriage festivities.\(^{59}\) During Katherine’s royal entry, the king was situated in a private viewing gallery overlooking the penultimate pageant and therefore missed the performances preceding and following his fixed location.\(^{60}\) Henry VII was almost certainly familiar with the complex meaning of the pageantry well in advance, yet the logistics of live performance meant that he would not experience the excitement generated by the interaction of spectators and spectacle, or fully appreciate the impact of the spectacles once they entered public circulation. Although Henry VII was constructed a central figure in the civic entry, he did not have the opportunity to see iconic representations of himself circulating and therefore required a text to supplement his experience. The king commissioned an image of coherence which he could access repeatedly and privately whenever he desired to see himself, and see himself being seen, by the various groups of spectators depicted in the 
Receyt. Reading the text would have made Henry VII aware of
his place within a complex matrix of specularity, allowing him access to the various positions of spectatorship (female, civic, authorial, and readerly) present to reinforce narratives of dynastic, national, and divine authority.

Although the author’s primary concern was to produce a lasting record of the marriage festivities, the text also functioned as a template for future courtly spectacles. Heralds, pageant architects, the Master of the Revels, and various other collaborators responsible for producing courtly performances consulted sections of the *Receyt* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for ceremonial precedence, artistic inspiration, logistical support, and detailed technical information. In this light, the *Receyt* is not merely a record of a performance, but a script for future royal performances. This iterability adds a new generic dimension to the *Receyt* as a dramatic text and broadens its impact on late Tudor and Elizabethan cultural production. The process of textualization, which transforms performance into semiosis, is not linear since pageant producers consulted the *Receyt*, a semiotic text, to create new forms of representation. The *Receyt* has the ability to function as a template for other English monarchs who can access idioms circulating around Tudor sovereignty.

There is strong circumstantial evidence that *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne* may have been intended for print. The literary format of the *Receyt*, divided into books and further organized into chapters with descriptive headings, is similar in the format to other books, especially romances, William Caxton and Richard Pynson printed in England around the time the *Receyt* was produced. As well, Henry VII was an active patron of the printing press. Between 1487 and 1507, Henry VII employed the royal printing press, located at Westminster, several times to disseminate material he thought would ensure the success of his political and social agendas. In an early foray into print in November
1494, he commissioned a small publication of a tournament account to celebrate the creation of Prince Henry as the Duke of York. In December 1499, Henry VII published Perkin Warbeck’s written confession, which outlined his humble origins and his path to infamy, throughout England. The *Great Chronicle of London* suggests the motivation behind Henry VII’s publication was to consolidate the loyalty of his subjects: “The kyng therefore in avoydyng the fforther harm of his subjetis caused to be put into print the pedygrew and all the conveyaunce of the passe tyme of this unhappy Imp in taking upon hym to be enheritour unto the crowne of Engleland” (284). Warbeck’s confession had a large print run because Henry VII wanted to dispel persistent rumours and deter any other potential pretenders: “Of the which confession as before is Rehersid thus enpryntid many of theym were sent Into all placis of Engeland & ellis where that the trowth of such covyrd malice & ffalshode abhomyynable myght be knowyn, to the grete Rejoysyng of all the kyngis ffrendis & trewe subjectis, and utter discomfort & grete agony unto all his enemyes” (*GCL* 286). The king understood the power of this new technology to reach a wide audience. He participated in England’s burgeoning print culture to dispel “confucion” and reassure his people that the Tudor dynasty was stable and legitimate (*GCL* 284).

Henry VII used print technology to circulate more than just political pamphlets and tournament ordinances. In May 1500, the king commissioned Richard Pynson to print copies of the *Traduction and mariage of the Princesse*, a ten-page leaflet that outlined what festivities the Royal Household had planned for the Anglo-Spanish marriage, and to circulate the treatise to the citizens of London. Information about the expected order of nobles in processions exists alongside directives to the citizens of London to attend the civic entry, the wedding ceremony, and other public events. The instructions concerning
Katherine’s arrival to London decree that “attendance shall be made by the mayor of London and by the citizens of the same like as it is agreed between the said there and diverse of the king’s counsel to devise the manner thereof both all other solemnities and ceremonies necessary for the honour of the city and of the State” (Traduction 2). The Traduction informed citizens that attendance was mandatory, and that their presence reflected on the honour not only of the city, but the entire country. Print mobilized great numbers of the citizenry in a relatively cost-efficient manner, advantages Henry VII found particularly useful in his construction of sovereign spectacle.

The use of print to disseminate information about Katherine’s English reception is an innovative technique employed by the Henrician administration not only to generate interest in the upcoming nuptials but also to ensure that the audience was well aware of their dual role as consumers and producers of meaning. Although there is no concrete evidence that The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne ever made it to press, several tantalizing clues suggest it may have been designed for publication at some stage of production. Henry VII’s use of print to mark major events in his reign is suggestive, as is the European penchant for printing royal entries, a practice that became the vogue on the Continent in the sixteenth century. In fact, continental prologues regularly include authorial apologies for the haste in which their narratives were written due to the overwhelming demand for printed copies. The Great Chronicle of London, Chronicles of London, and the Receyt all reproduce excerpts of the pageant orations, suggesting that the civic entry speeches circulated widely in London after the performance, either in a limited print run or in manuscript publication. Henry VII’s investment in Katherine’s English reception, his commissioning of the Receyt, and his frequent use of the printing press strongly suggests that at some stage of production The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne
was considered for print. This technology of preservation would create a lasting text “sent into all placis of Engeland” that Henry could disseminate to promote his sovereign authority (GCL 286).

Commissioning a text that narrates the marriage festivities would allow Henry VII to exercise more control over the court performance by manipulating perspective, thereby fixing both meaning and intention. However, it would be a mistake to categorize the Receyt as an inert vehicle for authorial intention or royal authority because the process of textualization does not limit meaning. Nevertheless, while the Receyt fulfills various functions as a prestige-enhancing text, a domestic “souvenir,” a royal explication, and a script for future spectacles, each possible modality contributes to the text’s central goal, which was to provide access, and proximity, to sovereign spectacle. These various motivations for textual production create a text that is in places self-consciously literary and in other places self-consciously performative in order to create a model of sovereignty that is dynastic and divine, royal and inimitable. The text is not a static record of a past event but rather a hybrid historical narrative with elements of performative presence. The narrative shapes sovereignty, constructs specularity, and guides interpretation in a manner that has hitherto been overlooked.

Section III: Civic-Court Tensions around Sovereign Spectacle

The final section of this chapter analyzes the multiple levels of spectatorship and spectacle through the lens of class. While The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne provides a court-generated account of sovereign authority, The Great Chronicle of London and Chronicles of London offer a civic account of the marriage festivities and act as counterpart to the Receyt in terms of class participation, narrative style, and focus. Fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century civic chronicles incorporated a wide range of topics
from domestic affairs like the weather, fires, and arrests, to cultural events such as royal entries and Mayoral pageants, and demonstrate considerable knowledge of civic government. Their authors, nearly all of whom are anonymous, lived in London, belonged to the merchant class, and probably held office in the City (Gransden 230).

Civic chronicles suited the tastes of the civic oligarchy, and the numerous extant copies of both chronicles are evidence that they appealed to a considerable audience and enjoyed wide circulation (Gransden 222). These chronicle accounts, read alongside the Receyt, produce their own version of sovereignty, authority, and social identity. Class tension is expressed in new forms, adding depth to our understanding of the production, circulation, and interpretation of Henry VII’s sovereign spectacle. An analysis of the civic records exposes a high degree of sovereign manipulation in the recording of cultural performance in the Receyt and opens up fissures between ritual and representation. While the author of the Receyt provides his readers with a seamless performance of sovereign authority, the civic chronicles register conflicts and tensions that are not as easily dispelled.

In civic historiography, the civic role in the marriage festivities finds new expressions. The focus on Henry VII’s dynastic and divine authority in the Receyt reappears in the civic historiographies in economic terms. Sovereign magnificence is assessed in the latter through displays of conspicuous consumption and the king’s participation in the luxury economy in London. While female spectatorship is eclipsed altogether, Katherine is transformed from a desirable, fertile princess and an agent of the king’s divine authority into a foreign princess who is not the primary source of visual pleasure for the spectators or readers. Aristocratic spectacles garner more attention in these chronicle accounts than in the Receyt because knightly bodies are more valued in civic discourse for individual merit and displays of conspicuous consumption. Civic
spectatorship becomes a necessary component in the civic chronicles for the approbation of sovereignty. This section interrogates the role commoners play in the Anglo-Spanish marriage festivities, at their most visible during Katherine’s civic entry, in order to argue that the display of power dramatizes the social identity of king, courtier, and commoner in “complexly revoiced citations.”

Furthermore, I argue that the civic chronicle tradition is no longer adequate to convey sovereign authority from a courtly perspective, and therefore the Receyt is commissioned as a new type of text designed to disseminate an “official script” of sovereign authority.

**Civic Specularity**

In the civic records, Henry VII functions as a magnanimous host but proximity to his visual field is not available to the chronicle reader as it is in the Receyt. Instead, courtly festivities unfold in relation to the Mayor’s positionality in performance, such that readers of the civic historiographies “see” court spectacles through mayoral eyes rather than through the sovereign’s field of vision. Sovereign spectacle is only visible in the chronicles through its alignment with civic spectatorship. During the marriage at St. Paul’s, the Chronicles of London immediately places sovereign spectatorship within the same frame of civic spectatorship: “And almost foragayn the kynges closet was ordeyned for the Mair and his Brethren standing, where Sir John Shaw, than Mair, stode without sword shewyng, in Crymsyn velvet, And all his Brethern, the Aldermen, in Scarlet, beholding the said solemnity” (CL 248). In this account the Mayor occupies a visual perspective contiguous with Henry VII’s point of view, drawing a parallel between royal and civic authority. The aligned viewing positions privilege the relationship between the court and the city. The Mayor’s physical proximity to the king affirms the importance of
the subjects’ political and social role in court performances and the formation of royal authority.

The king’s position in the civic entry is also described in terms of civic participation: “In an hows wheryn that tyme dwelled wylliam Geffrey habyrddasser, The kyng and Quene my lady the kynys modyr, my lord Oxinford, with many other lordys & ladys & preys of this Realm” (GCL 306). The name and trade of the merchant who hosted the king is of the utmost importance to the civic chroniclers: the special consideration given to William Geffrey bestows honour upon the citizens as a social group. In stark contrast, civic contributions are marginalized in the Receyt as the king occupies an unnamed “merchaunt’s chamber” (2/646). Civic participation in courtly performance is carefully documented in the chronicles in order to demonstrate the crucial role the citizens play in the formation of royal authority. In the chronicles, readers are offered alignment with the civic spectators but are not able to access the performative presence of intra- and extra-diegetic gazes so important in the Receyt. Since chronicles do not provide readers with intimacy or proximity to the king’s position, Henry VII commissioned a new medium to express sovereign authority.

Civic spectatorship must be present for the social contract between sovereign and subject to be ratified. During Katherine’s civic entry, the streets of London were lined with commoners and the Receyt states that members of every guild were expected to “be goodly avauncyd and shewe their pleasaunt currages [appearances]” (1/264-5). Acknowledgment and approval of Henry VII’s choice of the Spanish Princess as the future queen of England is directly linked to approval for the king himself. The Receyt describes civic specularity in depth: “And for the seid great nombre of craftes were barrys made on every sid of the weys fro the myddys of Gracechurchs Strete unto the enteryng
of the church yard of Powlis that they might from the comers and comon people have ther space and ease and also be seen” (1/257-261, emphasis added). Viewing rails were installed to demarcate spaces of civic spectatorship, enabling the citizens of London to view spectacles with “ease.” However, the civic gaze is multi-directional, and civic spectatorship is in place not only to see but “also be seen,” creating an economy of mutual surveillance.

Royal authority requires civic spectators because their presence makes social approbation visible; however, English subjects also require the determining power of the sovereign gaze in order to ratify their social identity. Viewing stands were also erected for the tournament so that commoners could peruse royal and aristocratic specularity: “uppon the wallys, were double stages, very thyk and many, wilbyldid and plankyd, for the honest and comon people, the which by the greate price and coste of the seid comon people were hiryd” (4/36-8). Witnessing the hastiludes is a privilege provided to some commoners, in contrast to the public access granted in the civic entry. This “privilege” is infused with a commercial dimension because spectators could only gain access at a “great price and coste.” Here civic spectatorship is not merely a necessary component to ratify royal identity as in the civic entry; in this aristocratic space spectatorship becomes a desirable position for Londoners to occupy in terms of social status. Locating themselves within the visual matrix of aristocratic performance bestows prestige and cultural capital upon the viewer.

The “common people” are treated with a degree of anxiety in the court-generated record of performance. According to the author of the Receyt, a “great multitude” of people flocked to London from every “contreth, shire … town, holde, and border of the realme of Englon” to watch the civic entry (1/210; 212-14). Due to the great influx of
people, the *Receyt* assures its readers that every man was ordered to wear identifying livery “opynly worne, that every man might apparently perceyve and know every gentilman his servant, the oon of them from the other in that tyme” (1/220-2). An anxious conservatism around the permeability of class positions and the instability of visual markers to identify social identity underlies this statement. According to the author, the large presence of rural citizens in London threatens to elide divisions between social groups, thereby necessitating measures to mitigate the potentially slippery divisions between, and among, classes. This anxiety exposes the author’s systemic bias against the commoners and highlights the fraught position of civic spectatorship from the perspective of the court. The livery operates like the barriers put up between state and citizen in order to ensure that every subject has his or her place in society and is surveilled within it.

While the author of the *Receyt* values civic spectatorship as an intrinsic component of courtly performance, he is also suspicious of the potential disruption caused by the “common people.” In Book Four, the author explains that the commoners have limited access to the hastiludes because civic spectatorship threatens to disrupt aristocratic performance: “The feld nygh unto the tylte was barred to thexcheweng of the rudes and their discurse and wandryng amonge the sperys, horsys, and cursiours, as well for thease and regarde of ther hurte and jeopardies as the distroublyng and impedyment of the present goodly enacters of the noble feates of arms and werre” (4/39-44). The mobility of the “rudes” is restricted for their own safety, but also for the safety of the knights who may be “distroubled” by civic crowding. The author adopts a paternalistic attitude towards the “rudes” who are ignorant of tournament culture and, therefore, are represented as incongruous in a forum that privileges chivalric display. In this account, the commoners are dismissed as an annoyance rather than as agents who acknowledge
and enhance royal authority. The “rudes” can bring disruption, in both their “discurse” and “wandryng” since they do not respect the hierarchy upon which the structure of civic spectatorship is based. This necessitates their exclusion from the aristocratic domain because civic spectatorship does not display the appropriate reverence that chivalric performance demands. The *Receyt*, therefore, advocates for the containment and restriction of civic spectatorship, effectively asserting that divisions between classes in cultural performance are necessary and justified. In this court-generated document, civic spectatorship is only valuable if it is contained and demarcated appropriately. The point of view of the *Receyt* makes claims for the court’s superiority and anxiously registers the potential for civic class mobility.

Ambivalence thus informs the *Receyt*’s treatment of the “rudes” who on one hand are necessary because they recognize sovereign authority but, on the other, always pose a risk to royal performance because they constitute an interpretive community that may conflict with “official” court narratives. Apprehension about civic interpretations of royal spectacle colours the author’s account of an otherwise flawlessly executed marriage ceremony at St. Paul’s:

[W]hereupon in this chirch thus, as it is premisid, apprepared in is solemmpnites, was a great and a right pleasaunt puysauns of people to thentent of reverent awaytyng and diligent attendauns (hough be hit commonly it is seen great resorte often to be made for wonderyng and pleasure in their owne sightes, and in volgar speche called gasynges of the rudes and unlerndy persons). (3/97-103)

Although the description begins with a celebration of the solemn occasion and celebrates the size of the crowd present to mark the event, the authorial aside reveals mistrust of the
populace by highlighting the dichotomy of civic spectatorship. The “pleasaunt” crowd exhibits due reverence towards the sovereign and aristocratic spectacles that process in front of them; however, the “rudes and unlernyd persons” threaten the reverence of the formal ceremony with their “wonderyng and pleasure in their owne sightes.”

Syntactically, the author privileges the “pleasaunt” crowd but immediately qualifies civic spectatorship with a parenthetical insertion. The underlying fear is that the audience of commoners occupy an interpretive position that experiences visual “pleasure” from spectacles that are not royal or aristocratic. In this depiction, civic “gasynges” are not focused on expressions of royal power; instead, they direct an autonomous gaze to “their owne sightes” for pleasure and entertainment. While earlier the Receyt registered an anxiety about the wandering bodies of the commoners, here it reveals anxiety about their eyes wondering. The anxiety generated by the “wandering bodies” and “wondering eyes” expresses courtly anxiety around the lower class’s penchant for crossing boundaries. For the author of the Receyt, an ideal civic audience experiences awe and reverence during an occasion of great “solemnity”; thus, the civic spectators pose a threat to “official” court narratives because they exercise an interpretive power outside the jurisdiction of royal control. As Greenblatt states, “all kings are ‘decked’ out by the imaginary forces of the spectators” (64).73 Ambivalence around civic spectatorship permeates the Receyt, exposing aristocratic anxiety about the power of the people to ignore sovereign and aristocratic authority.

In order to contain the uncontrollable nature of civic specularity, the Receyt codes the civic gaze as a spectacle of allegiance. In Book Four the Receyt author describes civic spectatorship from the perspective of the king’s viewing gallery: “The stagis, wallys, batilmentes, and wyndowes were furnysshid and fullfilld with wondrefull multitude and
puysans of people, that unto sight and perceyvyng was no thinge to the yee but oonly visages and faces without apperans of their bodies” (4/59-63). Civic spectatorship, in this depiction, functions as a focalized object for the narrative, one that is subject to Henry VII’s intra-diegetic gaze. From the king’s position, the civic viewing stands are so full that the commoners become a disembodied wall of faces. Civic spectatorship is reduced to a single unit of meaning, present only to reflect back to Henry VII an image of a stable and supportive class. Through the courtly lens of the Receyt, the civic audience becomes, in Stephen Orgel’s words, a “living emblem of the social hierarchy” (37).  This account draws no distinction between tradesmen and merchants, men and women, the young and the old: civic spectatorship is coded as a stable spectacle available to the royal gaze.

Textual instances in the Receyt where readers can find an account of visual pleasure experienced by commoners are rare. There are concerted efforts made, however, to guide the civic gaze towards royal spectacles. Once Arthur and Katherine are married, they leave St. Paul’s through the south door,

… for thentent that the present multitude of people might see and behold their persones, the which people were so breme and many, that in the rodeloftes, vautes, wyndowes, and on the pavmentes were to conscidere and behold nothing but visages. Of this multitude were dyvers showghtes and noysys made, sum cryeng ‘King Henry’, sum in like wise cryeng ‘Prince Arthure.’ (3/189-96)

Civic spectatorship is represented again to “visages,” a term that privileges their position as audience in order to reflect back to the court a coherent image of social approbation. In the Receyt, pageant spectators are given artificial positions as spectators but are denied agency in order to make them representative of “English” identity and therefore “proof”
of unambiguous royal support. Civic specularity becomes a spectacle that is present to provide the king, and the readership of the Receyt, with evidence of social approbation.

The chronicles provide a very different account of the role commoners play in the formation of royal authority. In the chronicle accounts of the marriage festivities, unlike the Receyt, civic spectators have access to visual pleasure:

> Above this were other Justes and Tourneys in the same iij dayes, but not egall to these, for these were honourable persons and well beseyn: and many a noble Gentilman brought theym in, well horsed and well apparylled, and Richely, which was honourable and comfortable to the Kyng and the Quene and many other great estates there present to behold, and greate gladnesse to all the common people. (CL 201-3)

The chronicler asserts that the common people experience “gladnesse,” and the syntax suggests that they garner as much visual pleasure from gazing at the king as they do from the chivalric spectacles. Civic spectators experience “grete comfort,” “comfort and consolacion” and “grete pleasuyr” during the marriage festivities, in turn enabling civic readers to access pleasure from descriptions of aristocratic performance and royal power (GCL 315; 316; 255).

In the chronicles, civic value is firmly entrenched within material culture. The spectacles circulating in cultural performance are evaluated through the lens of economics. Aristocratic spectacle is the subject of narrative attention, perhaps because the City of London profits from their participation in the luxury economy:

> Wonderfull it was to behold the Riches of Garmentes and Cheynes of gold, that that day were worn by lords, kynghtes and gentilmen; among which iij specially were to be noted, that is to sey sir Thomas Brandon, kynght [sic].
and Master of the Kynges hors, the which that dey ware a Cheyne of gold valued at xiiij C. li; And that other was Guilliam de Ryvers, Breton, and Master of the kynges Hawkes, which ware a Cheyne of Gold valued at M. li. (CL 249)

Aristocratic apparel is isolated for special scrutiny because these accoutrements are in fact civic spectacles: goldsmiths, tailors, merchants, and countless other tradespeople contributed to the production of the luxury goods worn by noblemen. The account is as much a record of market value and a list of wealthy noble clients as it is a celebration of idealized aristocratic spectacle of chivalry or royal power. In civic discourse, masculinity is evaluated on individual merit rather than by the dynastic or divine legitimacy privileged in the Receyt. Since worth is grounded in skill, chivalric performance elicits a great deal of narrative attention in the chronicles.\textsuperscript{76} However, the true marker of individual performance is almost always evaluated in monetary terms. On the day of the marriage ceremony, the civic chronicler appraises aristocratic spectacle:

Alsoo that day the duke of Bukkyngham ware a goune wrowght of nedyll werk and sett upon cloth tissue ffuried with Sably, The which goun was valuyd at xvC li. or M & vC li., and Sir Nicholas Vaws knight that daye ware a goune of purpyll velvet the which was pygth or sett with pesis of gold soo thyk and massy, that yt was Reportid to be worth In gold beside the sylk and ffure M li. which Cheyns and Garmentys were not estemyd of these valuys by supposayll or conjecture of mennys mynds, but of Report of Goldsmyths & other werkmen that them wrought & delivered. (GCL 311)
The market value of every aristocratic spectacle is tabulated carefully as a measure of the noble’s magnificence. The chronicler asserts that his accounting is not hyperbolic or sensational, but well researched with information gleaned directly from the actual producers of these commodities. The narrative focus on jewellery, fabrics, and other luxury items offers civic readers visual pleasure because conspicuous displays of consumption participate in an economy fuelled by aristocratic demand and civic production.77

Although Katherine is briefly mentioned in the historiographies, she does not wield the same symbolic import as in the Receyt and in the civic pageantry. The Great Chronicle of London identifies female spectacle only to defer its description: “And fforthermore I here passe oovr the Rych apparayll of my said lady pryncesse with all hyr ffayer ladys syttyng in charys and upon ffayer white Palfreys with theyr amiableb demwyr lokys and countenauncys which hevynlych was to behold” (GCL 309). Even though Katherine’s visual spectacle produces a “heavenly” experience for the audience, Katherine and her ladies are marginalized by the authorial deferral. Female spectacle does not warrant intense narrative scrutiny, perhaps because Katherine’s display of conspicuous Spanish consumption lies outside the English economy. Her garments, jewellery, and other luxury goods were not produced in London and, therefore, the chronicles cannot evaluate her visual (monetary) worth. Henry VII’s magnificence preoccupies the civic chronicles and eclipses interest in the new princess and future queen of England:

And in the utter Chambyr next where the pryncesse dynyd was a Cupboard garnysshid with gold plate as fflagons potties and standing cuppis garnysshid with stoon and perlys, The which the mayer & othis expert In
valuing of such Joyallis preysid above xx M li., for the mayer soo soon as he had dynyd was desyrid by Master Wyat & othiyr to goo into the said chambyr to see with hys brethyr the said Cupbord & other thyngis which I passe over. (GCL 312)

Katherine is only mentioned in this description because her dining chamber houses richly ornate chests of plate and cups of English provenance. The Mayor and Alderman “desire” to see the jewels and gold plate but no desire is expressed to view Katherine, who is in many ways Henry’s new dynastic and international jewel.78

Class divisions are produced not by the symbolic hierarchies exerted in the Receyt, but by economic expenditure. The Receyt and the chronicles have markedly different economies. While the Receyt calls the newly completed Richmond Palace an “erthly and secunde paradyse,” the chronicle description of Richmond evaluates the palace based on the civic value system: “The reedifyyng of the said Manoir had cost … grete and notable summes of money, where before that season it was on es called or named Shene, ffom this tyme forward it was commaunded by the kyn that it shuld be called or named Rich mount” (CL 233). In the Receyt, Richmond represents social harmony and becomes an extension of Henry’s body politic since he was formerly the Earl of Richmond. However, the chronicles explain that the palace was named Rich Mount because the building cost such large sums of money. Richmond, the metonym of royal identity in the Receyt, reappears in the civic chronicles as a spectacle of royal wealth and, perhaps more insidiously, as a spectacle of royal waste.

Tensions

Despite the difference between royal and civic ideologies, a close working relationship was forged between the City and the court in preparation for the marriage
festivities. In November 1499, the City of London appointed a committee of eight civic dignitaries to have communication “from time to time with the king’s commissioners touching preparation to be made for receiving of the princess that by God’s grace shall come out of Spain” (Repertories i. 61-2). However, as preparations proceeded, controversy disrupted the civic-royal dynamic. There is evidence that the citizens believed that Henry VII treated the City of London as an extension of his household in order to fund Katherine’s civic entry. When Henry VII commissioned an extra pageant without consulting the City, and then tried to bill the Council of Aldermen for the expenses, the civic council was so outraged that they threatened to withhold the traditional gift of 500 marks they had intended to present to Katherine during her entry (Repertories i. 87). The Great Chronicle of London voices displeasure about this royal interference: “Here I lett passe the device of a pagend standing at the west dore of pawlys the which was ordeynyd & devysid by the kyngis commaundment the Cityzens thereof noo thing made of counsayll, But In the End, Sir Renoyld Bray & other of the kyngis counsayll had of the Chamberlyn ffor the charge of C li.” (GCL 310). The chronicler voices civic displeasure at the discourtesy the king displays towards the citizens of London. Tensions between civic and royal authorities emerge in the chronicle accounts. The clash between civic and court interests threatens to disrupt the harmony Henry VII and the author of the Receyt are so committed to staging and recording.

The chronicle accounts express displeasure around sovereign manipulation by enforcing their own interpretations. In the Receyt, the controversial extra pageant is described in detail as an allegorical representation of Henry VII’s largess and international diplomacy. The pageant is a fountain “runnyng with wynne all the tyme of the mariage and Masse, and was a goodly mountayne or mounte” (3/216-7). On the top of
this rich mount grew three trees, each paired with the king of France, the king of England, and the king of Spain. The monarchs are readily identifiable by their heraldic devices: Henry VII was recognizable as the “King of Englond” because his tree was emblazoned with Lancastrian red roses and topped by “a rede dragon dredfull,” an emblem of his Cadwaldrian ancestry” (3/233; 232). The pageant, according to the court-generated document, celebrates three sources of English royal power and unites these nations upon the Rich Mount of England. However, civic descriptions of the pageant fountain differ considerably, shifting the emphasis from a celebration of Henrician foreign policy to a pageant celebrating historical models of kingship:

This was lyke unto a Towyr whereupon stood iij Imagis whereof either of theym was lyke a kyng and being armyd ech of theym bare a schochun of Sundry armys, whereof the middylmest Representid kyng Arthur beryng In his schochun the armys of Bretayn with other dyvycis which I passe the Circumstaunce of, ffor lengthyng of the tyme. (GCL 310)

The rich mount is replaced by a tower and Henry VII is displaced in favour of King Arthur. Kipling speculates that the pageant, from this civic perspective, probably refers to “some variant of the Three Christian Worthies theme” (1990, 147). Different descriptions of the same pageant suggest that interpretation of cultural performance was fluid and subject to manipulation. While The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne privileges the king as the center of the marriage festivities, civic chronicles marginalize Henry VII’s role in performance in favour of other forms of royal power. Since civic historiography could not be relied upon to produce sovereign-centered accounts of performance, Henry VII may have commissioned the Receyt as a stable, coherent reflection of his version of sovereign authority.
Unlike the *Receyt*, the *Great Chronicle of London* records the tension around the production of civic spectacle. In addition to civic-court tensions, the guilds came into conflict over their roles in the marriage festivities. During the water pageants, designed to celebrate Katherine’s move from London to Richmond, civic tensions were especially fraught. According to the chronicler, each guild was responsible for decorating a barge with “baner & other conysauncis of theyr Craftis and all Instruments of Musik” (*GCL* 312). However, the Mercers created a great deal of controversy around their contribution:

> But ffor the Barge of the ffelyshypp of mercers was not garnysshid and apparaylid according to theyr worship, nor so well as othyr, which were of lasse auctoryte. The mayer being with the wardeyns grievously dyscontentyd Contrimaundyd theym hoom for that daye, and upon the next court day kept by the said mayer and Aldermen, the said wardyns of mercers were called before the bench to shewe what they coulde reasonably laye ffor theyr excuse, that theyr barge was not appointed accordingly as the othyr Bargis were … In example of other to be well ware how they shuld breke the mayers commaundement were condemned in x li. (*GCL* 312)

The Mercers used the cultural performance as a venue to protest their displeasure about Henry VII’s consistent interference with overseas trade agreements and voice their unhappiness concerning the king’s recent changes to custom charges. The Mercers were heavily penalized because they did not produce a barge “according to theyr worship” and therefore disrupted the social harmony the performance sought to celebrate. This conflict demonstrates how performance could be employed to promote or resist particular interests. While the chronicles register this tension, the *Receyt* cannot accommodate this
kind of breach in the plenitude of performance, revealing a consistent manipulation of representation in order to create an idealized version of social approbation.

Arthur’s Death

The greatest disruption to Henry VII’s sovereign spectacle occurred after the feasting had ended and the revellers departed. Five months after the marriage festivities concluded, Prince Arthur fell sick and died in Wales. The Chronicle of London states,

Also in the moneth of Aprill next following … died the noble prynce Arthure, the Eldest Sonne of our soueraign lord, at Ludlow. And all the honest inhabitauntes of euery parisshe warned to be there present, to pray for the said Soule. And the body was entred at Worcetir; vpon whose soule and all Christen Jhesu haue mercy! Amen! (CL 255).

A more sentimental account of the death of Prince Arthur is recorded in the final lines of Book Four of the Receyt: the author laments that the prince succumbed to a “moost petifull disease and sikenesse, that with so sore and great violens hedde battilid and driven in the singler partise of him inward; that cruell and fervent enemye of nature, the dedly corupcion, did utterly venquysshe and overcom e the pure and frendfull blod, without almoner of phisicall help and remedy” (4/1075-80). The inclusion of Arthur’s death at the end of Book Four indicates that the author of the Receyt had not yet finished his account of the marriage festivities by the time Arthur died five months later. This tragic development may have disrupted the original intention to mass produce the Receyt since the authorizing narratives of dynastic continuity and divine sanction were no longer as persuasive. Arthur’s death precipitated “dolour, sorrow, and great discompfort” in England, a national sentiment that almost certainly took the Receyt out of public circulation (4/1082).
Book Five is an account of the elaborate funeral procession and burial of Prince Arthur, yet this section was included in the *Receyt* was almost certainly an afterthought because the author draws his narrative to a close at the end of Book Four with his own description of Arthur’s death. Book Five was originally a separate heraldic account with a very different focus and narrative style, but modified and incorporated into *Receyt* at a later date in order to provide a memorial of the elaborate royal funeral. This final section differs from the first four books: Book five strongly resembles a heraldic record of courtly ceremonial, and therefore most of the narrative is devoted to the hierarchical order of processions, the various roles and expectations of each member of the court, and the established rituals around royal funerals. However, there are a few authorial insertions that shift the tone of the final book from a formal record of ceremonial order to a more personal description of royal grief.

The first chapter recounts Henry VII and Elizabeth of York’s reaction to the news of Arthur’s death from an insider’s perspective: “And whan His Grace undrestod that sorrowfull and hevy tydynges, [he] sent for the Que ne, sayng that he and his Quene wolde take the peynfull sorowes toguyders” (5/22-5). Henry VII is portrayed as a grieving father who experiences “naturall and peynfull sorowe” (5/26-7). Once Queen Elizabeth received the news, she comforted the “King hir lord and husb and” (5/26). However, as soon as she returned to her chambers a “naturall and modirly remembraunce of that great losse smote hir so sorrowfull to the hert that those that were abought her were fayn to send for the Kyng to compforte her” (5/40-3). This display of private grief humanizes the king and queen. In this account, King Henry is depicted as a father and husband, and Queen Elizabeth is a wife and mother. They express “naturall” emotions, aligning their affective experience with that of every parent who has lost a child. The *Receyt*’s account of
parental grief allows for such intimacy with the royals that circulation among a public readership seems unlikely. The focus on royal mourning distinguishes the Receyt from the sixteenth-century chronicle accounts of Arthur’s death; the intimate textual gaze into the Queen’s bedchamber suggests the Receyt did not have a public, civic readership. Instead, the intended reader was likely royal, aristocratic and heraldic. The remaining chapters of Book Five are much more functional, and include ordinances about how the coffin should be decorated, who should hold the banners, the role of the principal mourner, the ceremonial offerings, and other minutiae around royal funeral protocol. Book Five may have been included in the Receyt as another ritualized moment in England’s national identity.

As this chapter has demonstrated, Henry VII commissioned the Receyt because other modes of record do not adequately textualize sovereign spectacle and serve royal interests. The readership experience generated by the Receyt differs greatly from that produced by civic chronicles. In the Receyt, readers are positioned as spectators: their extra-diegetic gaze is aligned with the author’s, and often the king’s, intra-diegetic gaze. Readers occupy a position in relation to the text’s own performance, where they are both witnesses to spectatorship and spectators themselves. When the Receyt author tells his readers that civic spectatorship is contained and circumscribed by the state, the reassurance is most likely directed at an aristocratic audience. This document, commissioned by the king, recorded by a courtier, and possibly designed for print, places value on dynastic continuity and divine authority. The chronicles are a typical record that the Receyt author is aware of, and yet he sets himself against the values circulating in civic discourse, namely the focus on economic value, the narrative agency of civic spectatorship, and the desire to record civic-royal and intra-guild tensions.
Henry VII’s project of producing and recording sovereign spectacle invests his fledgling dynasty with enduring symbols of Tudor rule. He almost certainly commissioned the *Receyt* to provide what would otherwise be an ephemeral performance with permanence and prestige, showcasing the extravagance of the Tudor court, the ingenuity of the pageant architect, and his role as the benevolent patron. Henry VII’s role as the visible center of his court and his nation is textualized in the enduring form of the narrative, and the fascination of courtly spectacle is made available to a much larger audience. *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne* provides an enduring testament to sovereign power, a particularly attractive idea for the upstart Tudor dynasty.
Chapter Three
“A Mirror of Men”: Sovereignty and Chivalric Masculinity in the Great Tournament at Westminster (1511)

When Henry VII died at Richmond in 1509, the news was met with the general relief of his subjects who found the latter part of his reign an age of “sorrows dark” and oppressive through the “rigors of his law” (Hall 507; *Great Chronicle* 338-9). Henry VII had levied huge taxes, aimed predominantly at controlling the wealth of his nobles, and his fiscal policies garnered criticism from every estate. The *Great Chronicle of London* reveals that although Henry VII was widely admired, the monarch’s reign was not without criticism. The city chronicler writes:

> Than I must conclude that to him all virtue was allied and no vice in him took place, except only in avarice, the which was a blemish to his magnificence and more as it was lastly known than he deserved, for the ravyne of the forenamed Empson and Dudley with their adherents which pulled the people to their own lucre and advantage as it well appeared by the great substance which they had gathered, caused his Grace to bear the weight and blame of all their ill doings, for so much as all was done in his name, and yet much thereof neither his witting nor understanding, and God best knows. (338)

Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley were the agents under Henry VII responsible for levying royal taxes and their rapacious methods alienated most of the English nobility. Although the civic chronicler largely absolves Henry VII of “avarice,” the king is criticized for his ineptitude and mismanagement. The *Great Chronicle of London* also critiques the recently deceased king:
But and that vice had been clearly quenched and put from him, I doubt not, but he might have been peerless of all princes that reigned over England since the time of Edward the Third, accounting and considering the premise with many things more left out, and the inestimable substance that he left behind him, the which blemish notwithstanding yet may his Grace be compared with the best, to whose soul God grant his infinite mercy and rest, amen. (Great Chronicle 339)

Henry VIII was aware of the controversy surrounding his father’s policies: one of the first acts of his new reign was to imprison Empson and Dudley and grant a general pardon for all outstanding debts incurred under Henry VII. Moreover, Henry VIII spent the first few years of his reign reinstating patrimonies and absolving arrears. The new king inherited several challenges when he came to the throne, most notably a fractured and discontented nobility.²

Despite, or perhaps because of his father’s inept governance, Henry VIII’s accession was celebrated by humanists, nobles, and ambassadors as a beacon of hope. Thomas More wrote a long celebratory poem, “On the Coronation Day of Henry VIII, Most Glorious and Blessed King,” to celebrate the king’s accession in 1509. The poem opens with the assertion that England has been emancipated, declaring “This day is the limit of our slavery, the beginning of our freedom” (101). In this poem Henry VIII is portrayed as a saviour who will deliver England from the long distress it has been suffering as a result of his father’s fiscal rapacity and suppression of ancient rights: More exalts, “[we] are gaining our liberty, in that fear, harm, danger, grief have vanished, while peace, ease, joy, and laughter have returned” (105). For More, Henry VIII is the perfect humanist king because his “sacred majesty” is grounded in his royal lineage, while the
king’s “natural gifts are enhanced with a liberal education” (107). Lord Mountjoy echoes More’s elation in a letter to Erasmus on 27 May 1509. He sent his friend news of Henry VII’s death and encouraged Erasmus to make his way to the new, enlightened court of Henry VIII:

I have no fear but when you heard that our Prince, now Henry the Eighth, whom we may call our Octavius, had succeeded to his father’s throne, all your melancholy left you at once … If you could now see how all the world here is rejoicing in the possession of so great a Prince, how his life is all their desire, you could not contain your joy. The heavens laugh, the earth exults, all things are full of milk, of honey, of nectar! Avarice is expelled from the country. Liberality scatters wealth with bounteous hand. Our King does not desire gold or gems or precious metals, but virtue, glory, immortality. (Letters and Papers, I. 27)

According to Mountjoy, Henry VIII’s sovereign identity is infused with classical statesmanship, humanist learning, and English chivalry. The international community was also swept up in excitement around the succession of the new king. The Venetian ambassador assigned to the English court is hyperbolic in his description of Henry VIII:

This most serene king is not only very expert in arms, and of great valour, and most excellent in his personal endowments, but is likewise so gifted and adorned with mental accomplishments of every sort that we believe him to have few equals in the world. He speaks English, French, Latin; understands Italian well; plays almost every instrument, sings and composes fairly; is prudent and sage, and free from every vice. (qtd. in Brown, I. 760)
The Italian marvels at the sheer multiplicity of roles in which Henry excels. All three commentators portray Henry’s sovereign identity as an innovative model of kingship which incorporates roles of valiant knight, humanist scholar, and consummate politician.

Henry VIII capitalized on his widespread popularity and took steps to project an image of warrior prince and humanist scholar. The king debuted his royal image during his coronation festivities at Westminster in 1509, commissioning a pageant that would further his complex project of image construction. The Defenders’ pageant, the first to enter the hall, was a castle, from which emerged Lady Pallas bearing a crystal shield emblazoned with her name. She asked Henry VIII to “accept [the Defenders] as her scholars, who were desirous to serve him to the increase of their honours” (Hall 511).³ Pallas, or Minerva, is an ideal classical figure to govern Henry’s sovereign spectacle because she is aligned with both war and wisdom. The Challengers’ pageant represented a different facet of sovereign masculinity: a forest or “park” which contained “certain fallow deer” was brought in by men disguised as “Foresters or Keepers” (512).⁴ As soon as this pageant rested before the queen, “certain gates thereof opened, the deer ran out thereof into the Palace, the greyhounds were let slip and killed the deer, the which deer so killed were presented to the queen and her ladies by the foresaid knights” (512). Although the Challengers are identified as “servants of Diana,” the Actaeon myth of male dismemberment is qualified by the presence of the greyhounds. Greyhounds were a popular heraldic emblem that links the Tudor dynasty to Lancastrian ancestry and are employed in the pageant to link Henry VIII to hunting.⁵ The coronation banquets, tournaments, and disguisings used pageantry to magnify the various facets of Henry VIII’s sovereign identity as scholar, patron, knight, hunter, and lover. The pageantry
identifies the aspects of masculinity privileged by the young king and introduces a
innovations to the idiom of sovereignty to his court.

The pageantry in Henry VIII’s early reign is significant because it reveals that the
king’s process of image construction is motivated by his desire to centralize power
domestically and début his future foreign policy. Henry VIII used tournaments as a
political tool to train his nobles on the art of war through the deployment of romance
narratives. He generates enthusiasm around martial feats, ensures aristocratic loyalty,
and rallies support for his foreign campaigns through the use of the highly stylized
continental tournament structure. The political and performative value of chivalric
performance was not lost on Henry, who made his first of many personal appearances in
the lists on January 12th, 1510. Despite several close calls, Henry appeared as chief
challenger or answerer in every major tournament until his retirement from the lists in
1527. Hastiludes allow Henry to create a sovereign identity based on noblesse, grounding
his authority in the dyad of performativity and lineage. In the early years of his reign,
Henry VIII employs chivalric discourse to shape sovereign-subject relations. The king
appropriates knightly identity into his style of governance to demonstrate that he has the
ability to be like every nobleman, but also excel within each particular role so that he is
the best man. Louise Fradenberg states that “the king must be unlike – greater than – all
others, but he must also be like all others. If he fails to maintain his accessibility – which
links him to the community – his failure will be redressed by the power of the
community’s gaze to see him as an illusion” (162). Sovereign authority is magnified by
Henry VIII’s display of martial masculinity, demonstrating to his audience that he is
worthy of leading England to greatness both at home and abroad.
Great Tournament at Westminster

On January 1st, 1511, Katherine of Aragon gave birth to a son and all of England rejoiced. Edward Hall notes, “And on New Year’s Day, the first of January, the queen was delivered of a prince to the great gladness of the realm, for the honour of whom fires were made, and diverse vessels of wine set for such as would take thereof in certain streets in London, and general processions thereupon to laud God” (516). The young king successfully produced an heir within eighteen months of his coronation, promising dynastic continuity for the Tudor line. To celebrate, Henry VIII hosted a spectacular tournament on the 12th and 13th of February, 1511. This was the most important cultural performance in Henry’s early reign because it sought to consolidate his sovereign identity as warrior prince and dynastic king. The two-day tournament incorporated pageantry, disguisings, and banquets in an extravagant display of Tudor power. The first day featured a procession of nobles and officers of the royal household, the Challengers’ entry into the lists in a forest pageant-car titled the Four Knights of the Forest Saluigne, the jousts between the Challengers and the Defenders, and the exit procession out of the tilt-yard. The second day of the tournament staged the Defenders’ pageant entry, a procession of nobles, more jousting, and an exit procession. The tournament concluded with a magnificent banquet which included interludes, dancing, and the Challengers’ masked pageant named the Golden Arbour in the Archyard of Desire. The documentation for this elaborate tournament is particularly rich. In addition to the original articles of the challenge with the signatures of the combatants, there also survive Richard Gibson’s Revels Account, two first-hand narratives, the jousting cheques with the scores gained by the knights on both days, and the Great Tournament Roll of Westminster. The extensive
documentation of this singular event reveals its importance to Henry’s project of iconic representation and royal authority.

Henry VIII was intimately involved in the production of the pageantry for the Great Tournament at Westminster, meeting frequently with Richard Gibson, Master of the Revels, in the Privy Chamber to discuss the pageants necessary to communicate the king’s larger figural narratives. Henry VIII provided Gibson with detailed instructions “at the hy cvmmandment of ovr soveren lord the kyng for the akomplechehment and spedy makyng [of the pageants]” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 116). While Henry VIII was the sponsor of the tournament and was responsible for developing the allegorical framework, the practical details were handled by Richard Gibson, who helped produce virtually all revels, spectacles, and entertainments at Henry VIII’s court from 1510 to 1534. Gibson’s duties ranged from renting workspaces, hiring artists, arranging for transportation, to maintaining the inventory and attending performances. For the Great Tournament in 1511, Gibson made Henry’s conceptual framework material; his atelier worked tirelessly to produce the Challengers’ entry pageant, the Challengers’ jousting pavilions, and the Challengers’ banquet pageant. Gibson’s Revels Account documents the close working relationship between the Revels Office and the king, and reveals the unusually high level of sovereign participation in the production of meaning for the Great Tournament at Westminster. The tournament was sponsored by the king for his court, and the political stakes were high: Henry was heavily invested in this cultural performance because he needed to assert his authority and consolidate the loyalties of his nobles after the divisive final years of his father’s reign.

My purpose in this chapter is to explore the production, performance, and dissemination of sovereign authority in the early years of Henry VIII’s reign. The first
section provides a close reading of Henry VIII’s Great Tournament at Westminster in February, 1511 in order to explore the complex relationship between discourses of sovereignty, performance, and social identity. Each version of the tournament (the allegorical Challenge, the Revels Account, the two eye-witness chronicles, and the Great Tournament Roll of Westminster) reveals mechanisms behind the production of meaning in cultural performance. In particular, I consider the apparatus of power that governs the participants and spectators in this tournament and the tactics used to construct and disseminate sovereign specularity. Henry VIII generates fascination with his image through deferral and display. He codes his sovereign authority with romance, specifically the bel inconnu plot, in order to consolidate aristocratic loyalty and signal his maturity from prince to king.

Relations between Henry and his court find expression in allegory. Arthurian romance in particular provided members of the English court with guidance on codes of behaviour and tournament challenges, styles of rule and rules of combat. Romance texts, and to a lesser degree chivalric manuals, were used to import discourses of honour from the literary sphere into socio-political life. Allegory allows the aristocratic community and the king in particular to naturalize their social identities. However, the Great Tournament at Westminster was also an important venue for the nobility to promote foreign policy, voice their concerns about their position at court, and seek personal advancement. The dialogue established between sovereign and subject in the hastiludes has real consequences in the political milieu of the sixteenth century, exposing the mutually constitutive nature of performance and politics in Henry VIII’s court.

In the second section of this chapter, I examine the Great Tournament Roll of Westminster as a new medium for the display of sovereign spectacle. This remarkable
artefact restages the “liveness” of performance in order to provide the audience with a coherent display of Henry’s chivalric and dynastic worth. The form of the Roll generates anticipation of sovereign spectacle and unrolls to reveal the king as the epitome of noblesse, producing a model of sovereign identity that is both performative and dynastic. Henry VIII likely commissioned the Roll in order to manipulate his iconic representation and demonstrate his commitment to shaping a new model of sovereignty, one that places him at the centre of the court through active participation rather than passive spectatorship. The traditional modes of representation (which included historiography, heraldic records, tapestries, poems) are no longer sufficient for the display of sovereign specularity as these strategies of representation render spectacle static. A narrative strip creates a story which generates visual pleasure for the audience through deferral and display. While this type of access mirrors Henry’s strategies in actual performance, a new relationship between King and audience is forged in this pictorial narrative. I will analyze this new genre’s form, content, and dissemination in order to argue that The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster is committed to capturing performative presence and recording ephemerality as a monument to sovereign power.

Since every extant account of the tournament represents a distinct interpretive community (heraldic, administrative, courtly, civic, and royal), different modes of storytelling are employed to record sovereign spectacle. No one text offers a definitive or singular representation of sovereign spectacle because the various interpretive communities are subject to a range of pressures, expectations, and discourses which often overlap and even conflict. An analysis of the extant texts related to the Great Tournament at Westminster reveals that these records are governed by complex ideological forces that anticipate and fulfill desires for very different readerships. In section three I will argue
that although Henry VIII commissioned the *Roll* in order to lay claim to a stable sovereign identity that overcomes risk, performances are always subject to disruption, and the Great Tournament at Westminster is no exception. During the final banquet disguising, Henry VIII’s allegorical identity is literally dismantled by his audience. A close reading of the two extant eye-witness accounts, Hall’s chronicle and the *Great Chronicle of London*, reveals that social disorder is registered and contained in the two historiographies quite differently. While the *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*, Hall’s *Chronicles*, and the *Great Chronicle of London* provide different degrees of proximity for their audiences, locate sovereign authority in different registers, and ascribe different values to the role of the city and court to the ratification of sovereign identity, each version isolates different aspects of sovereign identity for further scrutiny. *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* differs from traditional methods of recording sovereign spectacle and reveals that for Henry VIII, these forms are no longer adequate vehicles for the dissemination of sovereign spectacle.

**Section I: Spectatorship and Subjectivity**

To the extent that identity is a matter of iterated performances, sovereign performance is vital to royal authority in Henry VIII’s court. It is in the courtly sphere of tournaments and pageantry that Henry performs as legitimate king. From the moment Henry VIII became king his specularity was strategically deployed to generate loyalty in his subjects. His visual signification was coded in an entirely different way from that of his father, and his manipulation of his image created new relations between sovereign and subject. According to Thomas More, Henry’s coronation procession generated frenzied devotion: “the rooftops strain to support the weight of spectators … Nor are the people satisfied to see the king just once; they change their vantage points time and time again in
Sovereign identity and chivalric masculinity are not necessarily mutually constitutive. Henry VII never participated in the lists, although he was always a central spectator and rewarded the victors generously. Royal authority does not require chivalric performance for legitimation: the divine right of kings and genealogical legitimacy were registers that did not depend upon performance for reification in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. However, Henry VIII incorporates chivalric masculinity into his sovereign identity for pragmatic and personal reasons. Symbolically, a king’s performance of “athletic” masculinity functions as a positive model for the body politic: the physical body of the king is vigorous and active and strong, just like the nation itself. In a challenge for a tournament in 1510, Henry VIII asserts that chivalric performance is important for “the eschewing of Idlenes the ground of all vice, and to exercise that thing that shalbe honourable and to the bodye healthfull and profitable, as to the whole nation” (qtd. in Cripps-Day, li). Performance in tournaments also lays claim to romance, and in particular the Arthurian legends circulating in late medieval texts like Malory’s *Le Morte*
D’Arthur. Tudor England generated discourses of nostalgia around Arthurian England. Henry VIII encouraged a return to the principles of chivalry that would privilege the collective over the individual, effectively stabilizing and consolidating his court. Henry invokes fantasized states of being from Arthurian discourses in order to “restore” English masculinity to its “original” state with the institution of chivalric ideology, and particularly tournaments.

Politically, the monarch achieves solidarity with his noble estate through chivalric orders, like the Order of the Garter in England, the Order of the Golden Fleece in Burgundy, and the Order of the Star in France. Institutionalizing chivalric masculinity enabled kings to create a brotherhood and ensure aristocratic loyalty. Sir Rowland de Vieilleville’s challenge to joust in 1507 stated that tournaments provide “exercise to them that honour desires and to make folks more apt to serve their prince when causes shall require” (Ceremonials II, fol.21). Institutionalizing allegiances ensures that the king can rally support from his noble estate for foreign campaigns and domestic security. Tournaments were not only useful for ratifying domestic alliances: in the sixteenth century, monarchs on the Continent were preoccupied by discourses of honour and codes of knightly behaviour. This international culture of chivalric revival in turn informed almost all of the diplomatic relations between England, France, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire in the first three decades of the sixteenth century. Henry VIII, as one of the initiators of this early modern model of sovereign masculinity, was a template upon which the European monarchs could model their own chivalric identities. Henry was certainly the most active of the monarchs and cultivated his own personal style that shaped the form and content of English and Continental martial contests. Unique to Henry VIII’s reign was his use of the bel inconnu plot, a romance narrative that emphasized
dramatic suspense and revelation. This performative strategy implicated the spectators as participants and ratified social relations between sovereign and subject in a different way than Henry VII. His innovative strategies in chivalric performance, outlined below, reveal a carefully crafted style of sovereign spectacle designed to be emulated by his continental peers and English courtiers alike.

When knights don their armour and enter the lists, they are not merely assuming a mask or semblance; instead, this performance ought to lend credence to the notion of a truth, of an authentic essence underlying appearances. According to a challenge issued for a tournament in 1467, feats of arms were necessary “to experient and enable noblesse to the deseruing of Cheuallerie. By the which our moder holy Chirch is defended, kynges and princes serued and contrays kept and mainteigne d in Justice and pease” (College of Arms MS. M.3, fol.8b). Henry VIII constructs himself as the template of masculinity for his courtiers, using every means possible to display himself as manifest authority not only as an absolute sovereign, also in the sphere of chivalric masculinity. In 1510, Henry participated in a tournament to demonstrate his martial skills:

[H]is Grace with two other with him challenged all comers to fight with them at the barriers with target and casting of spears of eight feet long, and that done, His Grace with the said two aides to fight every [one] of them. Twelve strokes with two handed swords, with and against all comers, none except being a gentleman, where the King behaved himself so well, and delivered himself so valiantly by his hardy prowess and great strength that the praise and laude was given to His Grace, and his aides, notwithstanding that diverse valiant and strong persons had assailed him and his aides. (Hall 515)
When the audience beholds the performance of Henry VIII as the dominant, masculine subject, the audience experiences the king as the material embodiment of legitimate authority. For Henry VIII, successful masculinity and performative authority are a mutually reinforcing dyad and require iteration in live performance.

Chivalric performance involves risk and reward. Every time the king performs in a tournament, his body is invested with significance and risk. The more his body is on display to be seen, the more labour is required of Henry to succeed. Edward Hall registers risk during his account of the Great Tournament at Westminster:

[Henry’s] noble courage, all young persons highly praised but the ancient fathers much doubted, considering the tender youth of the king and diverse chances of horses and armour: in so much that it was openly spoken that steel was not so strong but it might be broken, nor no horse could be so sure of foot but he may fall. Yet for all these doubts, the lusty prince proceeded in his challenge. (520)

The proliferation of spectacle is not given more security, but only opened up for more prospects for failure. However, the more risk involved in competing, the greater the reward. The Great Chronicle of London expresses apprehensions about the king’s participation, and asserts that risk is proof of Henry’s divine protection:

In that field was many a fearful and timorous heart for him, considering his excellency and his tenderness of age; after they had seen the said courses run and his manful and delivery charging and discharging, he rejoiced so the peoples’ hearts that a man might have seen a thousand weeping eyes for joy and then such as were in most fear saw by his martial feats that by the aid of God he was in no danger. (369)
Both chroniclers use the term “tender” to emphasize the vulnerability of the king’s body. However, while Hall argues that every performance is subject to “chance,” the city chronicler asserts that Henry defies risk because he is under God’s protection and therefore invests the king with divine authority. In both these accounts, risk, an essential part of performance, is taken, demonstrating the ultimate control of the king and his mastery over chance. Hall identifies Henry’s noble courage as the reason for his continued success and effectively aligns the king with the heroes of romance. The civic chronicler promotes a different version of sovereignty which can defy risk through divine protection. Henry’s continued success is coordinated and organized such that his participation always yielded victory in the lists and therefore reiterates proof of his dual authority as king and knight. The civic chronicler states, “for none that there was Challenger or Defender might attain to half the prowess that [the king] accomplished that day, so that the prize was given to him of all men as well of them that deputed Judges of those feats of arms for that day” (GCL 369). Henry VIII cultivated a chivalric court and then identified himself as the visible center of every cultural performance. His success proves that he is meritorious and dynastic, performative and genealogical, warrior prince and legitimate king. A close reading of the Great Tournament at Westminster reveals Henry’s intense commitment to producing a cultural performance that celebrates him as vir optimus.

### Allegorical Challenge

The allegorical letter of challenge, a literary narrative fashionable in Burgundy since the beginning of the fifteenth century, governs the overarching theme for the Great Tournament at Westminster and guides the complex symbolism present in the processions, pageants, hastiludes, and banquet revelry. The allegorical challenge states,
Be it knowen to all men, that where as certaine Lettres haue bene sent and directed vnto the moost high, noble, and excellent princesse, the Quene of England and of ffraunce, from her right dere and best beloued cousyn Noble Renome Quene of the Royalme named Cuer noble, having knowledge of the good and gracious fortune of the byrthe of a yong prync that it hath pleased god to send to her and to her make, which is the moost Joye and comfort that mought be to her and to the moost renomed Royalme of England, considering the vailliantenes, vertues, and expert nobles which highly aboundeth in her moost derest cousyn the king of the same, hath sent iiiij knights borne in the Roialme of Ceure noble, whose names foloweth that is to sey, Ceure loyall, Vailli aunt desyre, Bone voloyr, and Joyous panser, to accomplisshe certaine feates of Armes which at the Instaunce and desire of the said princesse hath goten and opteyned of the king, our souuerain lord, licence to furnysshe and accomplisshe thise articles folowing. (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 109-10)

The recipients of the challenge are aware that one of the four Challengers is the king, yet his identity is occluded in order to generate fascination. Spectators are drawn into the performance; they must differentiate and successfully identify the qualities that best represent their sovereign. Henry VIII almost certainly authored the allegorical challenge with the help of his heralds and Richard Gibson.¹⁹ The challenge provides the tournament audience (knightly participants, aristocratic spectators, the queen, civic authorities, and commoners) with a “social script” that makes spectators complicit with the theatrical illusion governing the cultural performance. The challenge discursively circumscribes the roles Henry expects his subjects to play and frames the invitations within an allegorical
framework. The fictional illusion created by the challenge erases the king’s stage management of the cultural performance, coding the hastiludes instead under the rubric of romance where the king is positioned as a participant rather than the engineer of this social drama.

The king achieves dynamic simultaneity between his “fictional” role and his kingly identity when he assumes the allegorical disguise of “Noble Coeur Loyal.” The only signifier necessary for this allegorical disguise is a phrase emblazoned onto the fabric of his outfit. This allegory produces a complex system of symbolic signification in which the relationship between “disguise” and “self” is not a paradigm for the relationship between self and “Other.” Instead, this is a relationship between “self” and “self.” The abstracted disguise, of “Noblesse” and “Loyalty,” does not efface Henry’s royal identity; rather, this representational strategy emphasizes qualities that already exist but are isolated for special scrutiny. On the first day of the tournament Henry’s horse bards and clothing were emblazoned with the title “Noble Coeur Loyal.” The abstraction of loyalty and noblesse demonstrates the king’s commitment to fashioning his sovereign self after chivalric masculinity because these qualities are privileged by the knightly caste. Ramon Llull’s Book of the Ordre of Chyualry, translated and printed by William Caxton in 1484, asserts that “Chivalry hath no regard to the multitude of number but loveth only them that be full of noblesse” (47). Llull further defines “noblesse” as a combination of “faith, hope, charity, justice, strength, temperance, [and] loyalty” (55).

Henry VIII assumed “Noblesse” as an allegorical disguise in several performances during the first decade of his reign. The reiteration of these traits has what Catherine Bell calls an “expressive, symbolical, or communicative aspect” that allows Henry VIII to emphasize the ontological correspondence between ideal self and kingly self (17).
appropriates ideal traits circulating in chivalric discourse to ritualize onto sovereign identity through public performance. An allegorical identity allows Henry VIII to collapse the boundary between ideal self and “authentic self” so that he becomes the embodiment of chivalry. As Noble Coeur Loyal, Henry VIII capitalizes on the dual nature of “noblesse” as an authorizing narrative of performativity and genealogy, where one trait always makes true the existence of the other.

When Henry VIII performs as a knight from the Land of Coeur Noble, he generates fascination around his sovereign spectacle through deferral and revelation. He strategically employs the bel inconnu narrative borrowed from medieval romance, where an illustrious knight goes to a tournament disguised as an unknown knight in order to win the combat on merit rather than reputation.22 Participating in a tournament as the Fair Unknown produces mystery around the king’s identity that draws the audience into the drama of identification.23 Susan Crane states that “chivalric incognito amounts to a particular kind of self-dramatization that invites rather than resists public scrutiny” (125).24 The bel inconnu plot invokes the traditional chivalric debate about whether honour is founded upon familial lineage or personal deeds, and answers the question definitively: the king dramatizes the dual nature of noblesse, authorizing his success as both dynastic and meritorious.25 The moment when the king’s “authentic” identity is exposed produces an affective charge for the audience, in turn ratifying social identity by dramatizing the equation of merit and lineage.26 The temporary occlusion of social identity allows the king to unveil his foundational kingly identity through the social force of performance. The ultimate revelation, that the unknown victor is actually the king, increases Henry VIII’s prestige more than the glory won simply by performing under his
own identity.\textsuperscript{27} The victory of the king validates the social hierarchy of the court and invests him with authority, since he is both like all men, but better than every man.

\textit{The Forest of Saluigne}

The pageantry on the first day of the Great Tournament at Westminster makes material the fictional narrative outlined in the letter of challenge. The \textit{Forest of Saluigne} combines allegorical tableaux, romance figures, literary persona, and heraldic emblems in order to produce larger figural narratives around kingship, queenship, and English identity. An analysis of the \textit{Forest of Saluigne} reveals that the rules that govern the enclosed world of allegory are also the rules that govern Henry’s court. Richard Gibson’s \textit{Revels Account} provides us with a detailed overview of how the pageant was structured:

\begin{quote}
[T]he sayd forest of xxvj foot long and xvj foot brood and in haythe ix foot of assyes, weche forest was garnechyd wyth trees and bowes artyfycall as hawthornes, okes, mapylles, hasylles, byrches, fern, broom, fyrs, with bestes and byrds in bosyd of svndry facyvn wyth fosters syttyng and goyng in the top of the sam, and a kastell vn the sayd forest wyth a mayden syttyng ther by makyng a garlond, and a lyvn of gret statevr and bygnes wyth an antelop of lyke proporcyvon after hys kynd drawyng the sayd pagent or forest, condevt wyth men in wodwoos apparell and ij maydyns syttyng vn the sayd ij bestes in the weche forest wer iiiij men of armes rydyng that yssevd ovt at tyem apoyntyd and vn every of the iiiij qvarters of the forest wer the armes of the iiiij knyghteschalengers. (qtd. In Anglo 1968, Appendix III 116)
\end{quote}

The distinctly English flora and fauna merge the “far away land” of Coeur Noble and the familiar landscape of England, allaying the “strangeness” of the foreign knight
challengers introduced in the allegorical challenge. In the *Forest of Saluigne* pageant, Henry VIII creates a self-enclosed system of meaning that presents the Land of Coeur Noble as an idealized version of England. He places himself at the visible centre of meaning since his allegorical title, Loyal Coeur Noble, codes him as the nation personified. This system of representation is participatory because the audience must engage in the act of interpretation, initiating English spectators into a community of shared meaning where each member is, to varying degrees, complicit with the larger figural narratives.

Henry VIII’s use of multiple identities, of the strange and the familiar, the foreign and the domestic, demonstrates his ability to harmonize seemingly competing systems under his rule. The king uses the *Forest of Saluigne* to dramatize his ability to master other models of masculinity that may appear uncontrollable but submit to his sovereign authority. The four “woodwoses” who are responsible for leading in the forest pageant are part of a much larger medieval tradition of wild men popular throughout Europe from the twelfth to the seventeenth century. The woodwose is traditionally depicted as a hairy man who is naked except for strand of twisted foliage worn around the loins, and he usually lives alone in a cave or forest (Bernheimer 1-2). The woodwoses who lead in the *Forest Saluigne* are costumed to emphasize their corporeal wildness: Hall states, “These beasts were led with certain men appareled like wild men or woodwoses, their bodies, heads, faces, hands, and legs covered with green silk flossed” (517). They are adorned with ivy on their heads, around their belts, and on their staves to emphasize their close affinity to nature. Richard Gibson designed their costumes to represent the wild men’s hairiness, noting “rvset sarsenet lvij yerds, spent and in ployed for the apparell of iiij woodwoos garmentes schred lyke lokes of heer or wol” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, Appendix...
Hair connects the wild man to physical power and bestial strength; their naked bodies are protected from penetration by their “natural” version of knightly armour.

The woodwose figure lacks clothing, language, and a moral conscience, the foundational features of social identity, and embodies an untamed, and in many ways unknowable, masculinity. The knightly culture is preoccupied with this model of wild masculinity because the woodwose represents an origin myth of masculinity before the civilizing influences of chivalry regulated men. Fradenberg asserts that the wild man is a nostalgic figure who symbolizes the “mourned body of freedom” (3). This “originary” model of masculinity has tremendous attraction for Henry and his knights, who are bound together in a complex web of courtly intrigue, political manoeuvres, and international diplomacy. However, rather than articulating a desire to return to a time immemorial where masculinity operated outside the confines of the social order, Henry deploys the wild man motif to demonstrate he has the power to master masculinity through his harmonizing rule. In this performance the king has the authority to control and contain unlawful masculinity under his socially unifying sovereign authority. During the entry procession into the lists the woodwoses draw the forest pageant by “silk string” to demonstrate their submission to the king (GCL 368).

The woodwose is also a crucial component of sovereign specularity because the four wild men are present as a foil for the four Challengers. Henry VIII purposefully stage-manages misinterpretation in order to provide sovereign spectacle with the drama of revelation. The banner on the forest pageant-car reads “The Four Knights of the Forest Saluigne” which creates the expectation the audience will view the king and his fellow Challengers (Hall 517). Once the pageant arrives, identification is deferred because these
four knights are absent. In their place are four woodwoses who wear visors to conceal their identities. The audience is led to believe that the four woodwoses will unmask to reveal the four knight Challengers, in part due to the tradition of monarchs performing as wild men but also because there were no other available candidates. Unbeknownst to the crowd, the “real” knights were concealed from view in the undercarriage of the forest pageant. Edward Hall narrates the dramatic climax of the pageant:

> When the pageant rested before the Queen, the forenamed foresters blew their horns, and then the device or pageant opened on all sides and out issued the foresaid four knights, armed at all pieces, every one of them a spear in his hand on horseback with great plumes on their heads, their bases and trappers of cloth of gold, every [one] of them his name embroidered on the base and trapper. (Hall 517)

The staged “misreading” of the four woodwoses is overturned in favour of an even more spectacular sovereign revelation. “True” identity is no longer in doubt because the Challengers’ allegorical titles are inscribed on their bodies, identifying them unequivocally as the Four Knights of the Forest Saluigne.

The risk embedded in Henry’s use of the *bel inconnu* narrative is that the king may not distinguish himself in the tiltyard, or be distinguished from other knights. If he is exposed as a man like every other man with no difference, he risks being perceived as an impostor. Therefore, Henry VIII’s participation as the Fair Unknown is always orchestrated so that his disguise is semi-transparent. In the *Great Chronicle of London*, sovereign spectacle is carefully demarcated from aristocratic spectacle. The king disembarks from the forest pageant first, distinguishing him from the other Challengers.
and marking him as the central figure in the dramatic space of the pageant. In performance, identification is also achieved through costume design:

All four Challengers had coats beneath the waist of blue silk garnished with portcullis of Venice gold without difference, save the King’s coat was of blue velvet and the others were blue satin, and where the King’s waiters were in coats of white and green, the others were in jackets of blue satin, and further the King had embroidered upon his coat for a sign or token of the King. (*Great Chronicle* 368-9)

The Challengers wear identical costumes “without difference,” except for the king, whose body is isolated for special attention. The strategic use of textiles, carefully documented in Richard Gibson’s *Revels Account*, highlights Henry VIII’s individuality and makes him identifiable to the tournament audience. The king also wears a “sign or token” that ensures successful identification in case the spectators failed to perceive the difference between velvet and satin. Although Henry VIII is one of four challengers, sovereign spectacle is differentiated from aristocratic spectacle in order to dramatize Henry VIII’s project of sovereignty, that he is like all other men, but better than every man. The moment of revelation, which exposes the king’s identity and asserts the superiority of sovereign performance over aristocratic spectacle, stages the simultaneity of sameness and difference. The king’s ability to represent alterity without destabilizing his foundational kingly identity makes it clear to his audience that he can occupy any identity position but he is always recognizable as the king.

The distinguishing feature of Henry VIII’s sovereign spectacle is his ability to appropriate various models of masculinity without destabilizing his foundational kingly identity. Henry VIII is always in the process of transcending his histrionic aspect. He
guards against this threat by orchestrating his specularity as a drama of deferral and revelation, which makes manifest to the world the fact of sovereign authority. When Henry produces a successful performance, his audience experiences an affective charge because they witness sovereign spectacle: “thus with all honor, joy, and triumphant acts, to the principal laude of this most excellent and Christian Prince, and after to the worship of all the others as well Challengers and Defenders and great comfort of all the beholders, ended this most excellent Joust that ever was before that day seen in England” (GCL 373). What distinguishes Henry VIII from other knights is that he can operate on a number of different representational planes and incorporates several, and sometimes competing, identities into a coherent whole. Henry VIII demonstrates that his body can contain and even shape representations, enacting a spectacle of rule through the spectacle of roles.

**Aristocratic Specularity**

Henry VIII uses the Great Tournament at Westminster to consolidate aristocratic loyalties and centralize his power. The allegorical challenge is directed primarily to English courtiers and instructs them that noble lineage is a prerequisite for participation in this tournament: “And forasmoche as after the order and honor of Armes, It is not lefull for any man to enterprise armes in soo high a presence withoute his stokke and name be of nobles descended” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 110). Chivalric masculinity is regulated by “the order and honour of arms,” and policed by the College of Arms.35 Although the allegorical challenge is fictional, the display of power has political force since it dramatizes lineage as a crucial component of knightly identity. When the knights sign their names to the challenge, they do not merely acknowledge their participation in the tournament, but also indicate their compliance with the rules governing Henry VIII’s allegorical fiction. The allegorical challenge is circumscribed by heraldic authority but the
larger power which governs the tournament is royal because the challenge asserts that “at the Instaunce and desire of the said princesse hath goten and opteyned of the king our souuerain lord licence to furnysshe and accomplishe thiese articles folowing” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 109-10). Even though the fictional challenge establishes a dynamic of obeisance between two queens, Queen Katherine and Queen Noble Renown, Henry VIII occupies the true apex of political and symbolic power. The Great Tournament at Westminster provides Henry VIII with the opportunity to depict the appearance of a stable hierarchical court governed by sovereign authority.

The institutionalization of the knightly class is so pervasive that in order to account for the allegorically coded Challengers, who are “strangers” to England, an elaborate process of identification must be implemented to ensure their lineage. The challenge states, “In consideracion thise iiij knig htes be of soo ferre and straunge parties they shall present theym self with theyr names port erid on theyr shyldes” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 110). Richard Gibson, in his *Revel Accounts*, records the presence of these heraldic shields in the Forest of Saluigne: “[I]n every of the iiij qvarters of the forest wer the armes of the iiij knyghtes chalengers” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 116). The allegorical coats of arms are authorized by the College of Arms because Gibson notes, “Item bowght by me rechard gybson iiiij schylldes of wayn skot wyth korovfen levys … in ployd vn the iiiij sydes of the forrest and *after delyverd to the havrads of armes*” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 129 emphasis added). Heralds, responsible for recording and regulating noble lineage, are implicated in the exercise of authenticating Henry VIII’s allegorical fiction. Fabricating lineages is problematic because it implies that heraldry may be a system of arbitrary signs subject to external manipulation or royal interference. The very system that legitimizes nobility is subject to destabilization with the importation of new and unidentifiable
models of aristocratic identity. However, the transgression of fictional lineages is mitigated by the true identities of the “strangers”: the king is both strange and familiar, and the revelation of sovereign spectacle reinforces the system of legitimization. Fictional lineages provide these foreign knights with crucial authentication. Aristocratic identity is made aware of itself as a social entity and membership in this group is strengthened by participating in this cultural performance.

Hastiludes enable Henry VIII to forge relationships with his courtiers. Gentlemen who were successful in the tiltyard and who shared Henry VIII’s love of hunting, dancing, and other courtly pastimes were often promoted and rewarded, sometimes disproportionately to their social rank. Henry VIII reshapes the roles of his courtiers and sovereign-subject relations are often ratified in the hastiludes. Although there are other ways of gaining royal favour (participating in hunting, disguisings, military campaigns, etc.), the tournament grounds were an especially productive venue for aristocratic men to flatter, counsel, and persuade the king about issues as diverse as foreign policy and marriage choices. On the second day of the Great Tournament at Westminster, the Defenders are provided a space to perform their individual spectacles during their entry procession. Unlike the Challengers’ sustained impersonation of the tournament’s allegorical narrative, the Defenders are afforded an opportunity to create their own individual projects. Each Defender seeks to differentiate himself from his counterparts and to advance his individual social or political position.

Charles Brandon, the first to enter the lists, was one of Henry VIII’s leading courtiers and closest friends. The Great Tournament at Westminster provided Brandon with an opportunity to impress the king with his performance and to seek social
advancement based on merit rather than on lineage. The *Great Chronicle of London* provides us with a detailed account of his entry into the lists:

Truth it is that Sir Charles Brandon first came into the field enclosed in a tower and led by a jailer holding a great key in his hand, the which pageant when it came again [in front of] the queen’s stand, the jailer with the key made a countenance as he opened the gate of the Tower, where after anon issued out a man on horseback clad in a long and coarse prisoner’s weed with a pilgrim’s long staff in his hand and a pilgrim’s hat upon his head with a long and foregrown beard reaching to his saddle bow; he also had hanging upon the hook of his staff a pair of beads of gold, and upon the top of the staff was fastened a letter, the which staff with beads and letter were sent and delivered unto the Queen’s Grace, upon the which when she had a while looked, she sent such answer that the prisoner cast from him hastily his clothing, beard, and hat and showed himself in bright harness, and forthwith smote his horse with the spurs and rode a lusty pace unto the tilt’s end, and from thence took his course and ran about the tilt in most lusty ways. (272)

Brandon uses the emblem of a prison to externalize anxieties about captivity and subjection in relation to his social position at court. His family lineage was dubious and he held only the title of esquire in 1511. Brandon was subsequently knighted in March 1512, elected a Knight of the Garter in April 1513, and made Duke of Suffolk in February 1514. However, his position in 1511 was far from stable and he had only just begun his meteoric rise through the social hierarchy of the English court. In his entry into the lists, Brandon combines the allegorical tableau of a prison with the romance figure of a pilgrim
in order to dramatize the disjunction in his social identity between merit and lineage. His position at court figuratively imprisons him and yet he aligns himself with a pilgrim, a figure who undertakes a perilous journey in order to seek fulfillment. Within the performative space of the tournament, Brandon constructs his body as the object of the queen’s gaze, who symbolizes royal authority: only her acknowledgement and her reward of his masculine performance in the tiltyard can release him from the bondage of his lowly social position. When Queen Katherine gives Brandon license to participate in the tournament, he casts off his hermit’s weeds and metamorphoses into a “lusty” knight. Brandon uses the space of the hastiludes to petition the court for promotion as a reward for his chivalric performance, endeavouring to fulfill Geoffroi de Charney’s formulation that “he who performs better is better esteemed” (208). Brandon’s promotions reveal that his aristocratic spectacles were indeed “better esteemed” by Henry VIII because by 1514 contemporaries recognized him as the king’s principal favourite, and by 1516 Margaret of Austria’s ambassador reported that Brandon was a “second king” (Gunn 18; Letters and Papers 1/2, no. 2171).

The next pageant to enter the lists is performed by Thomas Boleyn and Thomas Grey, the Marquis of Dorset, who enter the tournament grounds disguised as pilgrims from Santiago de Compostela to sway Henry VIII’s foreign policy in Spain. Ferdinand had recently requested aid from Henry VIII in his crusade against the Moors but the king had not yet made a decision. Boleyn and Grey employed the pilgrim motif, popular in romance and often aligned with crusading knights, in order to urge the young king to aid his Spanish ally. Hall describes the two men’s entry: “Then came next the Marquis Dorset and Sir Thomas Boleyn like two pilgrims from Saint James, in tabards of black velvet with palmers’ hats on their helmets, with long Jacob’s staves in their hands, their horse
trappers of black velvet” (518). When they discard their pilgrims’ robes they reveal “their tabards, hats and trappers [are] set with scallop shells of fine gold, and strips of black velvet, every strip set with a scallop shell, their servants all in black satin with scallop shells of gold in their breasts” (518). Boleyn and Dorset strategically align themselves with the Spanish Moor-slayer St. James, using the saint’s emblem (the scallop shell) to ensure the political motivations of their performance are clear. This performance may well have influenced Henry’s foreign policy because he acquiesced and in May 1511 he sent one thousand archers to aid Ferdinand on his crusade against the infidel.

Henry Guildford followed Boleyn and Dorset into the lists in a pageant designed to secure a key military posting. While Boleyn and Dorset promote Spanish aid, Guildford petitions the king for a commission to participate in the proposed Spanish campaign:

Next after came in alone young Henry Guilford, Esquire, himself and his horse in russet cloth of gold and cloth of silver enclosed in a device or a pageant made like a castle or a turret, wrought of russet sarsenet Florence, wrought and set out in gold with his words or posye – and all his men in russet satin and white with hose the same [color], and their bonnets of like colors – demanding also license of the queen to run, which [when] it was granted [to him], [he] took his place at the end of the tilt. (Hall 518)

The castle may have been designed to represent Castile, which would effectively dramatize Guildford’s suitability for the international endeavour. Shortly after the tournament, he was awarded a post to lead troops to Spain in support of Ferdinand, a posting which led to further promotions. Although Ferdinand cancelled his crusade and the English forces thoroughly disgraced themselves by getting drunk and running amok in
Cadiz, Guildford remained in Spain for several months and was knighted by Ferdinand at Burgos (Hall 522). When Guildford returned to England he received the honour of knighthood from Henry VIII at Westminster on 30 March 1512. He continued his social advancement at Henry VIII’s court, moving from Master of the Revels to Master of the Horse to a position in the Privy Council, and finally became the Comptroller of the Royal Household. Guildford even became a knight of the Garter in 1523, a position usually restricted to members of the titled nobility. In Henry VIII’s court, one road to social advancement lay in the successful performance of chivalric masculinity, and Guildford exploited this venue masterfully.

The final pageant was presented by Henry Stafford, Earl of Wiltshire, who used the performance space to dramatize his allegiance to the king. Stafford’s position at court was precarious because his older brother, the Duke of Buckingham, was a direct descendent of Edward III, a genealogical fact that, according to Keith Dockray, “negatively impacted on Stafford’s courtly prospects” (3). This explains why, on Henry VIII’s succession, both brothers were immediately imprisoned in the Tower on suspicion of treason. They were eventually released and the king made Henry Stafford Earl of Wiltshire on 27 January 1510. Thereafter he was one of a group of courtiers who enjoyed Henry VIII’s particular favour because he shared his king’s taste for lavish entertainments, tournaments, and hunting (Dockray 1). Wiltshire’s success at court depended also on producing an allegorical performance that articulated his royal allegiance, an opportunity afforded by the Great Tournament at Westminster:

Soon after came in the Lord Henry of Buckingham, Earl of Wiltshire, himself and his horse apparelled in cloth of silver embroidered with a posye, or his words and arrows of gold in a posye called *La maison de*
refuge, made of crimson damask embroidered with roses and arrows of gold, on the top a greyhound of silver bearing a tree of pomegranates of gold, the branches were so large that it overspread the pageant in all parts.

(Hall 518)

Wiltshire emblazons his body with the Tudor rose in order to code himself as the king’s subject, while the “house of refuge” motif reassures Henry VIII that he can be counted upon for help in domestic and foreign campaigns. The Earl of Wiltshire fulfills his promise when Henry launches an aggressive invasion of France in 1513. Henry Stafford raised an army of seven hundred men and was an important leader in the siege of Thérouanne. By 1520 Wiltshire had become a privy counsellor and had considerable political clout in the court. In the same year Henry VIII ordered Wolsey to keep “good watch” on Buckingham, Wiltshire and three others, but Wiltshire managed to escape his brother’s fate of execution as a traitor in May 1521 (Harris 37). Henry Stafford’s very survival may have depended on performances that dramatized his allegiance to the king.

Each model of aristocratic masculinity uses strategic performative identities that are contiguous with royal ideology while also promoting self-interests. Many of the courtiers in the Defenders’ entry are in precarious positions either financially or socially. A successful performance in the tournament’s representational space enabled many courtiers to achieve social advancement, and in the case of Henry Stafford, to survive in the perilous political climate of Henry VIII’s reign. Aristocratic performance employs romance figures, heraldic emblems, and allegorical tableaux to compliment the king, allows knights to differentiate themselves from other aristocratic males, and advance individual agendas. In the performative space of the entry pageantry, the male body becomes the field in which a knight’s institutional and ideological identity finds
expression. A common thread that runs throughout the Defenders’ pageants is the discourse of confinement and release: aristocratic masculinity dramatizes anxieties of social obscurity and the desire to find signification in the field of the king’s gaze.

When Henry VIII débuts to his court a new sovereign idiom that favours chivalric discourses and active participation in athletic endeavours, he shapes the role of an ideal courtier. However, Charles Brandon and the other Defenders in the Great Tournament at Westminster are given agency to shape their identities through allegory. According to Stephen Greenblatt, “in the sixteenth century, there appears to be an increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process” (1980, 2).42 There are competing lines of authority at work in these chivalric performances. A new focus on performance shifts the balance between merit and lineage, which in turn informs the political and social milieu in England. As the noble estate is consolidated and England emerges as an early bureaucratic state, the expectations around social identity and masculinity are shaped anew. A new man is privileged in Henry’s court, one who, while noble, can distinguish himself equally on the tournament grounds and in the Privy Council Chamber. Henry VIII employs the tournament as a venue to ritualize his own sovereign spectacle as chivalric and royal, meritorious and dynastic, and also mark a shift in sovereign-subject relations.

The common estates are noticeably absent in the accounts of The Great Tournament at Westminster, and indeed in the chronicle accounts in Henry VIII’s early reign. The young king does not require the same element of social approbation as his father as he represents the union of the houses of York and Lancaster. While Henry VII endeavoured to implement performance strategies to solidify support from the commoners, Henry VIII is more interested in ratifying relationships with his nobles, due
perhaps in part to his father’s alienation of this caste in the latter part of his reign with heavy taxes and “avarice” (GCL 338). Henry VIII shapes his sovereign identity through performance, appropriating chivalric masculinity in order to prove that he is not only like all men, but the best man. His use of deferral and display, the bel inconnu plot, the semi-transparent nature of his disguises, and his incorporation of risk all mark him as the dominant masculine subject and dynastic authoritative king. The circularity of his authority – that a successful performance represents legitimate authority, and that his lineage authorizes his success – codes him as the epitome of noblesse. His nobles are expected to identify with him, but they are always aware of their difference. Successful performance in the tiltyard, both in the use of pageantry and the display of marital skills, signalled a successful performance in the social and political milieu of Henry VIII’s court.

Section II: Sovereign Self-Representation in The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster

Henry VIII circulates narratives in the Great Tournament at Westminster that promote a stable hierarchical court and emphasize his position as one of the central producers of meaning. He uses the tournament to stage a performance of authority as a lived social experience. As the visible center of this performance, Henry VIII relies on the vitality of the live audience and requires elements of risk for the reification of his chivalric identity. The indeterminacy of performance provides him with the opportunity to demonstrate his ability to overcome or incorporate risk into something coherent and socially unifying. Risk is always an essential element of performance that makes sovereign spectacle live and distinguishes it from other mediums like historiography, portraits, tapestries, book illuminations, which are bereft of performative presence. Although spectacle is inherently ephemeral, The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster is
a pictorial narrative that generates a cinematic, “lived” experience of sovereign spectacle. *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* depicts a visual matrix where bodies are organized in space and time, creating a proto-filmic event that celebrates royal authority. While these narratives are contiguous with those circulating in the actual cultural performance, the *Roll* innovates a medium to transmit sovereign spectacle that is performative and live, forging a new social contract between sovereign and audience that ratifies social identities.

Performance is a key site of subject constitution, and the *Roll* is a new medium that shapes sovereign-subject specularity through its form, content, and dissemination. Firstly, the format encourages proximity to sovereign authority through the act of viewing and re-viewing. *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* borrows from a long history of the pictorial tradition but employs a new representational mode that stages deferral and display in order to generate fascination around sovereign spectacle. Secondly, the performance transforms the reader into a spectator and restages the immediacy of the moment when the king expresses his successful appropriation of chivalric masculinity. Thirdly, the dissemination of the text to the king (and perhaps also his courtiers) promotes a version of spectacle of sovereignty Henry VIII sought to achieve in performance. Three modalities – form, content, and circulation – shape a representation of sovereign spectacle that differs significantly from traditional generic models that record kingship, both in textual records such as English historiography, heraldic accounts, pageant books, and pictorial artefacts which include tapestries, portraits, murals, engravings, and heraldic rolls. Traditional modes for recording cultural performance lose performative presence when mimesis is translated into semiosis. Therefore, Henry VIII almost certainly commissioned the *Roll* as a dynamic text that portrays him performing successfully in
front of a “live” audience. An analysis of *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* exposes the high level of sovereign manipulation in the production, recording, and dissemination of Tudor projects. I will argue that the chiastic relationship between reading performance through texts and producing performances via texts is important to the investigation of Tudor sovereignty.

Scholars have examined the *Roll* as a record of a performance and looked for clues about the identities of the various participants through a comparison with the extant historiographies. Many, like Sydney Anglo and Roy Strong, believe that the value of the *Roll* lies in its record of a court ceremonial; they study the order of the procession for clues about ceremonial patterns, the role of the heralds, clothing and horse barding design.\(^44\) Anglo argues that the production of the *Roll* was motivated by a “desire to record ceremonial for practical purposes of precedent” (79).\(^45\) Roy Strong is interested in the *Roll* in terms of the history of costume, stating that “this must be the first document in English history to record what people wore for a particular occasion” (3).\(^46\) Dale Hoak calls *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* “sixteenth-century politico-cultural propaganda” and states that “illumination preserves a unique visual record of the politico-cultural purposes of the Tudor tournament-as-spectacle: here is the staged, chivalric magnificence meant to rival that of the Burgundian court from which the forms of such martial pageantry were derived” (6; 79).\(^47\) Until now, no one has examined the *Roll* in terms of its relationship between performance and textuality. This study seeks to remedy this oversight. I argue that the chiastic relationship between text and performance is crucial to understanding the performative strategies Henry VIII deployed in his early reign, and provides insights into how these performances shaped other spheres of his rule,
including relationships with members of his court, his international policy, and his promotion of Tudor policies.

**Format**

The *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* is a large illuminated vellum roll which uncoils horizontally from left to right to reveal three separate but continuous scenes. The first section presents the procession of the nobles into the tiltyard and the entry of the four Knight Challengers under their pavilions. The second frame provides a view of the tiltyard in action: the Challengers, Answerers, and spectators in the tilt gallery watch as Henry VIII jousts against an unknown opponent, breaking his lance on the knight’s helm. The final scene shows an exit procession from the tiltyard which reaches its dramatic climax when the victorious king appears in front of the queen’s viewing gallery wielding his broken lance. The Roll opens with a heraldic design that combines Henry and Katherine’s personal badges, and ends with a variation on this emblem following the exit procession. The final vellum membrane contains five verses which praise Henry as the “flower of all men” and the “Tenth Worthy.” Aside from the concluding poem, the Roll is almost purely visual except for titles which identify the official titles of the various participants, such as “Le pages Du Roy” and “Les Officiers Darmes.” The king and his fellow Challengers are identified only by the allegorical titles emblazoned on their horse bards and no proper names of any participants are listed. The *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* is the first of its kind in England to organize bodies into a visual space in order to create a narrative. This is not a record of a performance in the same way the other extant texts record the Great Tournament at Westminster. Instead, the very act of unravelling the Roll produces dramatic suspense and invites the audience to participate in the unfolding events. The three major scenes (the
entry procession, a joust, and the exit procession) have parallels to the events and participants in the Great Tournament of Westminster. However, the artist who produced the Roll makes no attempt to provide an accurate representation of the sophisticated two-day festival. There is no illustration of the Forest Saluigne or visual representations of the Defenders’ individual pageants, and the dramatic action depicts only one chivalric feat. The Roll loosely interprets the many facets of the cultural performance, excludes material extraneous to sovereign spectacle, consolidates the visual matrix, and creates an independent performance that showcases Henry VIII as a meritorious and dynastic king.

Genre

The narrative strip became a popular form in the visual arts during the sixteenth century, both in England and on the Continent. The subject matter was often some great state occasion like a royal entry, a triumph, or a noble funeral. However, there is little evidence of this kind of representation in manuscripts anterior to The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster. Three major traditions of pictorial narrative (late medieval tapestries, biographical engravings, and heraldic rolls of arms) influenced the production of the Roll. The iconographic form most frequently encountered in the fifteenth and sixteenth century was the tapestry tradition. Dora Heinz asserts that the Tudor court favoured Burgundian tapestries, characterized as secular pictorial narratives, which exalted knightly ideals and combined heroes of antiquity and medieval romance to deploy new allegories “aimed at the glorification of the ruling house” (10). Henry VIII commissioned tapestries that usually “read” from left to right, combined visual and textual symbols, and featured one dominant narrative, often with additional marginal narratives that commented on the main theme. According to Heinz, late fifteenth-century tapestries featured multipartite structures that created “frames” in order to divide the action into main and subsidiary
scenes (12). Tapestries, ubiquitous in great halls and churches throughout Europe, produced narratives that celebrated dynasties, promoted imperial claims, and provided the European elite with spectacles of conspicuous consumption. The format of *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* differs from tapestries because the *Roll* draws the audience into the drama of deferral and revelation. Fascination around sovereign spectacle is generated by the act of unrolling, creating a dynamic relationship between artefact and audience. This offers a very different experience than tapestries which, although they encourage interpretive engagement, are ultimately static.

The pictorial narrative most closely aligned to *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* in theme is *The Triumph of Maximilian I.* In 1510, Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor, commissioned Hans Burgkmair to create 137 woodcuts to celebrate Maximilian’s political and dynastic projects. Hunts, tournaments, and courtly entertainments are showcased alongside Maximilian’s inventions in artillery and siege craft. There is also a procession of knights, courtiers, musicians, royal administrators, and allegorical figures. *The Triumph* was produced in two separate representational forms: Maximilian arranged for a painted vellum version of the *Triumph* for his own personal use while a woodcut version “would belong to the world” (qtd. in Applebaum, vi). The huge, mural-scale productions were designed, in Maximilian’s words, to “grace the walls of council chambers and great halls of the empire, proclaiming for posterity the noble aims of their erstwhile leader” (qtd. in Stiber, 8). The prints were mounted horizontally in narrative sequence on the walls of town halls and noble houses. Henry VIII was probably aware of the ongoing production of Maximilian’s pictorial narrative; the *Triumph* is contemporaneous to *The Great Tournament Roll* and may have furnished Henry with the idea to produce his own visual record of sovereign spectacle. Gerhard Benecke argues
that the Emperor was the “real creator of the Hapsburg ancestor myth of early modern European absolutism” (23). Maximilian I’s motivation for commissioning a monument to his sovereignty may have aligned with Henry VIII’s, who was actively involved in promoting his Tudor dynasty upon the international stage. However, the Roll differs in scope and circulation because it creates a continuous performance with unities of time and place and provides its audience with a sense of a lived experience, in contrast to the episodic nature of Maximilian I’s engravings. Maximilian I’s project was designed to circulate widely because he used vellum illumination and woodcuts; in the first medium he created a unique artefact for Habsburg glorification, while the second allowed him to capitalize on print technology to ensure his royal magnificence was made apparent to the widest possible audience, both courtly and civic. As far as we know, The Great Tournament Roll was not designed for mass reproduction, making its audience much smaller and more elite.

An English pictorial narrative that predates Maximilian’s large-scale mural is The Pageant of the Birth, Life, and Death of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, 1389-1439. This mid-fifteenth-century text by antiquarian John Rous is comprised of fifty-three line drawings that recount the life of Richard Beauchamp, a knight of great renown during the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V. The series of episodes in Beauchamp’s life, which include illustrations of his birth, childhood, tournament successes, death bed, and funeral, produce a portrait of the life cycle of one of England’s most famous knights. Each picture in the book is in chronological order and is accompanied by one or two lines of text that explain the context. This pictorial narrative is, in many ways, an English antecedent to The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster, yet the two texts differ both in the motivations behind their commission and in content.
Pageant of the Birth, Life, and Death of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, 1389-1439 is a chronological, diachronic biographical picture book which portrays a successful model of chivalric masculinity, while the Roll is a synchronic account of an isolated event that nevertheless makes claims about the tournament’s wider implications. The Beauchamp text was commissioned by his daughter as a lasting record of his chivalric achievements. Richard Beauchamp was never the intended audience; Henry, however, almost certainly commissioned the Roll in order to see himself performing in the tournament. While the Pageant of the Birth, Life, and Death of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, 1389-1439 is a retrospective (and nostalgic) portrait of an ideal knight, The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster is a contemporary mirror for Henry VIII and his court.

The third major visual arts movement that influenced the production of the Great Tournament Roll of Westminster was the English heraldic roll tradition. “Rolls of arms” is the generic name given to medieval manuscript records either in the form of a roll or, more frequently in the sixteenth century, in book form. Only seventeen English manuscripts survive in their original roll format from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. Rolls of arms are heraldic documents that functioned predominantly as a reference text for armorial bearings. The horizontal roll is less common than vertical rolls, and rarer still are illustrative rolls which feature figure drawings. However, a handful of late medieval English heraldic texts, including the Bruges Garter Book, the Salisbury Roll and the Warwick Roll, incorporate figural drawings. Bruges Garter Book (c.1430) contains twenty-six full page coloured drawings of the Founder Knights of the Garter, which begins with a portrait of Edward III and an illustration of the Garter King of Arms kneeling before St. George. The book was produced by Sir William Bruges, Garter King
of Arms, to celebrate the history of the Order of the Garter and to commemorate his instalment as English chivalry’s chief herald. The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster marks a significant innovation in the heraldic roll tradition because it is made up of a series of individual images or frames that provide the viewer with the illusion that motion is occurring. Bodies are organized into a three-dimensional space, complete with spectators, participants, and scenery. The Roll functions as a particularly rich type of social performativity because it draws attention to the visual matrices of identity formation.

Medieval tapestries, biographical engravings, and rolls of arms are genres within a graphic arts culture that influenced the production of The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster. The scope of the tapestry tradition, which consolidates ruling dynasties, promotes imperial claims, and provides the European elite with spectacles of conspicuous consumption, informed Henry VIII’s project to celebrate the Tudor dynasty. Visual narratives that encouraged chivalric self-fashioning, invented by Maximilian I and Richard Beauchamp, inspired Henry VIII to create an account of his own successful knightly performance. The heraldic roll tradition provided the form necessary to generate immediacy and liveness for Henry VIII’s performance. While The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster takes its place within a larger tradition of pictorial narratives, it is not indebted to any one category. Instead, the Roll creates its own iconographic genre that creates a unique depth of field, stages a relationship between spectacles and spectatorship, and creates kinetic, spatial, and visual dimensions of dramatic performance.

Production

The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster has been in the possession of the College of Arms since its creation in 1511. The conditions of production are unknown,
and scholars like Anthony Wagner and Anglo can only speculate that Thomas Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms, oversaw the production of the *Roll* and intended to present it to Henry VIII as an official memoriam of the magnificent tournament.\(^{59}\)

Although the identity of the artist responsible for the execution of the *Roll* is not known, the subject matter, form, and style of the manuscript, together with the fact of its survival at the College of Arms, indicates the artist was a herald or in the heralds’ employ. There appears to be a great deal of heraldic work in this period and Wriothesley, at the time of the Westminster Tournament, was himself a great copyist and collector of armorial records (Anglo 1997, 75). There is no record of Henry ever receiving the *Roll*: perhaps the king’s grief over the loss of his newborn son two weeks after the Great Tournament at Westminster rendered the *Roll* “untimely.”

However, it is likely that Henry VIII commissioned *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*. A crucial piece of evidence is that another pictorial roll was created to commemorate Henry VIII’s ceremonial entry into Parliament in 1512. The *Parliament Procession Roll* is an illuminated vellum roll that consists of eight membranes and is twenty-four feet in length. The inscription on the first membrane reads “The Parliament held at Westminster the fourth day of February the third year of our sovereign lord King Henry VIII.”\(^{60}\) The parallels between the two rolls, in form and content, are striking. The *Parliament Procession Roll* begins with a procession of abbots, bishops accompanied by officers of arms, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and then the Garter King of Arms. Two figures follow the chief herald: one bears the crown on a golden baton and the other carries the sword of state. Henry VIII appears almost exactly halfway through the roll following his crown and sword. The king walks under a canopy and the Lords Temporal, thirty figures in total, trail behind him. The abbots, bishops, and Lords Temporal are all
identified with their names and their family emblems illustrated on shields of arms beneath each figure. While the *Parliament Procession Roll* is not as elaborate in scope or design, the drawings and other stylistic features suggest that both rolls were produced at the same atelier. The manuscript is held at Trinity College, Cambridge. The existence of a second roll and its location outside the College of Arms suggest that Henry VIII was presented with the *Parliament Procession Roll* to mark the occasion of his first parliament. While we can only speculate about the conditions of Henry VIII’s commission, there is certainly ample evidence to suggest that the king was likely the patron of, and the intended audience for both pictorial narratives. Henry VIII’s familiarity with Continental and English traditions of pictorial narratives – including those commissioned by Maximilian I contemporaneously to the production of his own rolls – indicate that the king authorized *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* and the *Parliament Procession Roll* as lasting monuments to his reign.

**Content**

*The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* uses strategies similar to those Henry VIII deployed in courtly performance to produce sovereign spectacle. In all three scenes, anticipation is generated around Henry VIII; his appearance is deferred until a moment of revelation, generating an affective charge for the *Roll* audience similar to the visual experience spectators would have had in the actual tournament. The first scene, the entry procession into the lists, provides the *Roll* audience with a “visual emblem of the social hierarchy” (Orgel 7). The Master of the Armoury, the Sergeant of Arms, the royal trumpets, the heralds and pursuivants, and a group of nobles appear in order of their rank within the court. This type of representation reifies social identity because it makes visible the offices, roles, and identities of each member of the court. The *Roll*’s intended
audience, who almost certainly comprised the king, could see his court represented in a coherent, ordered narrative.

The *Roll* manipulates the gaze of the audience because it defers sovereign spectacle. The imminent arrival of the king is signalled with strategic visual signs, deployed in order to create suspense: Guildford, the Master of the Armoury and the central administrative authority of the hastiludes, is accompanied by the parade of the tournament lances that will be used in the lists, generating anticipation around the impending feat of arms. The Sergeant of Arms follows Guildford carrying the mace of gold surmounted by a crown, a symbol of the king’s authority *in absentia*. The gaze of the *Roll* audience is drawn towards this iconic representation of Henry VIII and suspense mounts. Six trumpeters follow, wearing tabards decorated with the royal quartering to indicate their corporate identity and royal allegiance. The trumpeters’ traditional role in the hastiludes was to announce the arrival of the king; therefore, their presence in the *Tournament Roll* signals an impending royal entrance. The audience of the *Roll* views a tantalizing opening sequence of royal officials that heightens the anticipation around the display of sovereign spectacle. In doing so, the artist of the *Roll* manipulated the audience’s desire to see, to know, and to occupy the position of spectator in this cultural performance.

As I have argued, the nobility provide the king with an image of a unified, hierarchical court, and aristocratic spectacle, which follows the procession of officials, is an important component in the *Tournament Roll*. The nobles wear status-enhancing symbols such as gold chains, furs, and decorated horse bards to designate their importance and social value within the visual economy of the *Roll*. In the performative space of the tournament, aristocratic spectacles require a royal audience to differentiate,
evaluate, and reward “successful” spectacles of chivalric masculinity. However, the Roll does not identify the gentlemen other than by a corporate label, Les Gorgyas de la Court. The depiction of the noble estate in the Roll differs sharply from the civic chronicle, which identifies and differentiates aristocratic spectacles based on sartorial signification:

Among the which were specially noted: the Lord of Burgevenny and the Lord Fitzwater, which were in one suit of cloth of gold with their trappers like and two large and massy baldrics about their necks which were esteemed at one thousand mark a piece or more money. Then also here Sir Henry Boleyn and one other Baronet which that day rode in purple velvet garnished with plates of gold exceeding in value. And among them rode also Sir Nicholas Vaux in a gown of goldsmith’s work to the knees and therein a fur of right brown and fine sables of great value. (Great Chronicle 371)

While the gentlemen in the Roll are clad in sumptuous robes and are adorned with heavy gold chains, the pictorial narrative fails to ascribe aristocratic spectacle individual identities. The gentlemen are present to enhance the magnificence of Henry’s court, but not to detract from the primary individuality of the king. Aristocratic displays of conspicuous consumption, however, provide Henry with a courtly milieu suitable for his sovereign spectacle.

Anticipation grows as, one by one, the Challengers process under the gaze of the Roll audience. The first three Challengers are virtually indistinguishable from one another except for their allegorical identities emblazoned on the bottom of their horse bards, the same identities outlined in the allegorical challenge for the Great Tournament at Westminster. Each knight is dressed in armour, mounted on a horse with floor length
bardings, framed under a portable pavilion, and accompanied by five esquires. Large
golden letter Ks decorate the pavilions and horse bards in order to emphasize the
assignment laid out in the allegorical challenge, which is to pay homage to the queen.
Little or no space divides the three Challengers and continuity is visually established with
matching color schemes and identical pavilions. The Roll audience is presented with these
images in preparation for the startling display of sovereign spectacle that follows.

When Henry VIII finally appears in the Roll, after an extensive introductory
procession of court officials, nobles, and his three fellow challengers, his appearance is
markedly different than any other element in the procession. Noble Coeur Royal arrives
with a train of twenty-two esquires who are wearing a different set of livery from the
attendants who accompany the other three Challengers. Since Henry VIII’s project of
identity construction requires that sovereign spectacle is never confused with aristocratic
spectacle, his spectacle must be coded in a way that makes him readily identifiable. The
Roll artist establishes continuity with the actual performance when he registers the visible
differences between the Challengers. According to the civic account, the “king’s waiters
were in coats of white and green, the others were in jackets of blue satin, and further the
king had embroidered upon his coat for a sign or token of the king” (GCL 369). In both
the performance and the Roll, great pains are taken to ensure that Henry VIII’s allegorical
identity is transparent enough for the spectators to recognize him. The Great Tournament
Roll of Westminster strategically deploys visual markers: while the letter “K” is
emblazoned on all four Challengers’ horse bards and pavilions, Henry VIII’s horse bards
are also decorated with the letter “H.” The apex of the king’s pavilion is capped with a
crown and the letters “H” and a “K” while the other three pavilions are surmounted by a
golden ball with rays emitting from the letter K. Henry’s horse bard is also more elaborate
because both halves are embroidered with a golden arm holding a scroll inscribed with
the word “loyal” and at the end of each scroll hangs a heart in gold. The choice of livery,
the size of the retinue, the pavilion design, and strategically placed emblems ensure there
is no mistaking sovereign spectacle. After an extended delay, pleasure is generated for the
audience that gazes upon the king. The audience can control the speed in which the
artefact is unrolled, creating a drama of deferral that makes the audience active
participants. The Roll also provides proximity to sovereign spectacle and facilitates an
extra-diegetic gaze, thereby allowing the viewer to linger over sovereign spectacle, a
luxury not afforded to spectators in actual performance.

The Joust

The Tournament Roll shifts seamlessly from the entry procession to the jousting
scene, creating an experience of temporal and spatial continuity for the audience. The
gaze is drawn to the pavilions of the four Challengers which are set down at the near end
of what is subsequently revealed as the tiltyard. Three of these pavilions stand open, each
revealing a mounted knight within. However, the fourth pavilion, clearly recognizable as
the king’s, stands in the foreground, dramatically closed and inaccessible. Meg Twycross,
suggests that each of the pavilions function as a “full body mask which drew even more
spectacular attention to the hidden defenders inside” (125). Henry’s conspicuous absence
differentiates himself from the three other Challengers and defers sovereign spectacle,
creating a visual tableau that produces anticipation and accelerates the unravelling of the
Roll. “Where is the king?” the viewer is forced to ask, implying the audience’s desire to
access sovereign spectacle.

Once the next “frame” is displayed, the visual complexity of the scene becomes
overwhelming. After the minimalism of the entry procession, where the parade of static
bodies exists in a space evacuated of social or spatial landmarks, the jousting scene is visually stimulating because it dramatizes a three-dimensional space complete with spectators, participants, a tiltyard and viewing stands. The jousting scene creates what Laura Mulvey calls “a hermetically sealed world which unwinds magically, indifferent to the presence of the audience, producing for them a sense of separation and playing on their voyeuristic phantasy” (836). Mulvey is referring here to the cinematic experience, but her formulation is productive in my discussion because the jousting scene stages the interplay between the diegesis and the position of the Roll audience, generating voyeuristic pleasure not available in the entry procession. In the entry procession, bodies are displayed solely for the visual pleasure of the Roll audience, but in the jousting scene the Roll audience experiences a shift in their experience of spectatorship. The visual matrix of spectators and spectacle displaces the Roll audience from their singular viewing position and draws attention to the extra-diegetic gaze. The jousting scene introduces what Jacques Lacan calls “geometral space of vision” which maps images into space and creates correspondences between objects within the spatial field (86). This complex visual field provides the spectator with an illusion of looking in on a world, offering separation in order to intensify the process of identification and fascination with Henry VIII’s quintessential chivalric performance.

The climax in The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster occurs when Henry VIII breaks his lance on his opponent’s helm, an action rewarded with the highest score a knight can achieve in the tiltyard. The moment of impact is frozen, forever immortalizing the king’s victory over his opponent, and acting as a lasting monument to his supremacy in the tiltyard. Incidentally, the extant jousting cheques for the Great Tournament at Westminster reveal that the king did not break a single lance on either day of the
Henry VIII’s model of sovereign selfhood requires that he outperform all other men, which may explain why the *Roll* fictionalizes royal victory. Henry VIII is represented as the epitome of chivalric masculinity in motion. Clad in armour – what Fradenberg calls the “aristocratic ideal body image” (184) – Henry’s body generates action and pushes the narrative forward. The performative presence of the king generates interest in his spectacle and implicates the audience of the *Roll* in his project of sovereign self-fashioning. The process of identification and the visual pleasure gained from gazing at the king’s performance naturalizes the relationship between chivalric masculinity and royal authority.

**Spectatorship**

The depth of field in the jousting scene institutes a visual economy where Henry’s performance is witnessed, evaluated, and deemed successful. The viewing gallery is partitioned, effectively gendering spectatorship: the males stand and look on from one side while Katherine and her ladies occupy a much larger section. The viewing stands are constructed to look like a castle in order to implicate its inhabitants into the allegorical framework of the tournament. Continuity with the actual performance is invoked, and Katherine, the central spectator within the diegesis of the *Roll*, is simultaneously the queen of Coeur Noble and the queen of England. Katherine’s viewing gallery doubles as a stage and she is marked off from the other ladies by her gold throne. The backdrop of golden stars in the female gallery draws the eye, in contrast with the solid blue backdrop in the male section; this representational strategy invites the *Roll* audience to interpret female spectatorship as spectacle. The queen is an object of visual pleasure for the extra-diegetic gaze because she connotes, in Mulvey’s formulation, a “to-be-looked-at-ness” when she is “isolated, glamorous, on display, sexualized” (840). In performance, female
spectators are invested with power as arbiters of masculine deportment. However, the jousting scene iconicizes female spectatorship and subjects the women to the curious gaze of the Roll audience. The Roll audience is elevated to a position of voyeur, whereby the queen and her ladies are a source of visual pleasure.

The men who occupy the viewing gallery represent social approbation. They gaze appreciatively at the king’s achievement of chivalric supremacy. The men in the viewing gallery are grouped together in homosocial solidarity: only four bodies are depicted even though there are seven heads, in contrast to the women in the queen’s gallery where at least three of the women are isolated from one another. The grouping of males in this manner makes it difficult to view them as individuals, which enables the men to watch the joust without attracting the extra-diegetic gaze. While the Roll audience is encouraged to treat female spectatorship as a passive spectacle that elicits visual pleasure, one of the males in the viewing gallery stares directly out of the frame, making the Roll audience conscious of their extra-diegetic gaze. The Roll fulfills the viewer’s desire to see, to know, and to access the position of Henry VIII, and, by extention, the three-dimensional performance space he inhabits. However, the diegesis is framed by a context where the difference between viewer and king is repeatedly re-established. The Roll offers its audience a degree of proximity where identification is encouraged on one hand, but on the other the audience is reminded of its own position as voyeurs.

In addition to female and male spectatorship in the viewing gallery, there is an additional intra-diegetic gaze which only comes into focus as the Roll unravels. The assembly of Defenders, grouped together at the far side of the tilt, function simultaneously as aristocratic spectacles and spectators. As spectators, the armoured knights are present in order to watch the king perform his knightly identity. In the Roll,
only Henry VIII wields the narrative agency to propel the story forward, coding the kingly body as the ideal representation of chivalric masculinity, and superior to the stationary knights. The Defenders are represented as static spectacles, present in the “geometrical space of vision” to provide the illusion of competition and camaraderie for the king. The composition of this scene denotes a unified aristocratic community, an appropriate setting for Henry VIII to prove his exemplary individual merit as a man at once like all others, but better than all others. In this scene, Henry’s victory is witnessed by tripartite spectatorship, providing him with legitimacy grounded in individual merit and success, circularly proving his legitimate authority.

Although the knights are largely denied narrative agency, the Roll artist designs the Defenders’ horse bards to commemorate the pageantry that the Defenders had used to promote their individual agendas in the actual tournament. At the far end of the tilt eight Defenders are assembled and five horse bards are visible. Two knights are distinguished by the scallop shells on their horse bards: they are easily identifiable as Thomas Boleyn and Thomas Grey, who disguised themselves as St. James’s pilgrims to sway foreign policy in the actual performance. In the foreground, one Defender is mounted on a horse decorated with a single golden pomegranate and a single golden castle or tower. The artist of the Roll synthesizes Charles Brandon and Henry Stafford’s conceits (of a pilgrim imprisoned in a tower and an emblem of Castile) as a single image that has continuity with their ephemeral courtly performances. The other two horse bards represent the recurring rose and pomegranate images in the tournament. The artist of the Roll records residual traces of actual courtly performances to suggest that aristocratic spectacle has the power to promote various personal interests. However, the Roll cannot
portray aristocratic individuality, perhaps because this may detract from the central spectacle, Henry VIII.

**Exit procession**

The multiple layers of spectatorship present in the jousting scene disappear and the *Roll* reasserts the empty backdrop for the exit procession. The change in scene is marked by a rare textual note, “Lyssue du champ,” or the “coming out of the field,” in order to mark explicitly the transition from the jousting scene to the exit procession. Sixteen gentlemen follow the trumpets in pairs of two. The three challengers are differentiated from the procession of sixteen gentlemen because their legs are encased in armour and they ride fully-barded coursers. The final two mounted figures in the *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* are the king’s helm bearer and the king himself. The helm is a synecdochic marker of Henry VIII’s chivalric identity and produces fascination because the symbol simultaneously defers the king’s appearance and announces his imminent arrival. This procession of the helm also suggests that the king has discarded his armour in favour of his foundational sovereign identity.

Once Henry VIII appears at the end of the exit procession, the “geometral space” of performance is reasserted and spectators are re-introduced. This time, however, Katherine and her ladies occupy a different viewing gallery, one which no longer resembles a castle; perhaps allegorical representation is no longer necessary once the king has discarded his fictional “disguise” and reasserted his “authentic” kingly identity. The parade of the helm signals Henry III’s transformation from knightly to kingly identity, dramatizing his dual claims to merit and lineage. As a Challenger, Henry assumes an allegorical identity that allows him to be a “strange” knight and a familiar king who participates alongside and against his courtiers in the lists. In the jousting scene, victory
ensures he is the best man in the field, while in the exit procession the revelation of
Henry’s “authentic” identity asserts his inimitable status as the dynastic and meritorious
king. The Roll identifies Henry as “Le Roy Desarmey,” a textual label which signals the
shift in Henry’s ontological status. The “authentic” Henry bears visual markers that
identify him as king in both the entry procession and the jousting scene, creating a drama
of revelation that is grounded in transformation rather than surprise. The previous
identities are not discarded, but rather assimilated into this final appearance: Henry VIII
rides his fully barded courser from the entry procession emblazoned with his allegorical
title and he clutches the broken spear he shattered during the jousting scene. The three
performances, of Noble Coeur Loyal, victorious knight, and dynastic king, intersect in the
final representation of Henry VIII. His final revelation signals the end of the narrative,
leaving the audience satisfied because the Roll provides them with intimate access to
sovereign spectacle.

Mirror of Men

The motivations behind Henry VIII’s commission of the Roll are closely tied to
his objectives in performance. As I have argued earlier, Henry VIII relies on a live
audience in order display himself as the manifestation of authority not only in the sphere
of sovereignty, but also in the sphere of English masculinity. When the audience beholds
Henry VIII as the dominant, masculine subject, the king becomes the material
embodiment of legitimate authority. Henry VIII’s continued success in the face of
increasing odds reiterates proof of his dual authority as king and knight. The only risk to
Henry’s chivalric performance is the possibility of defeat at the hands of an aristocratic
opponent, an event that would disrupt his circular model of dynastic and meritorious
identity. In the Roll, Henry’s victory is a necessary fiction because the image of the joust
constructs a mirror of a king. As Fradenberg points out, “when the king wins, he proves himself to be both son and father, knight and king, deserving and inheriting, meritorious and dynastic” (219). The Roll ensures that Henry’s success is unequivocal. Part of its performance-text imperative is that the Roll must contain this element of risk in order to reinforce that Henry competes against all men, but his performance is always better than that of every man. The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster provides the liveness of performance but also contains and controls risk so that Henry VIII is victorious with every unrolling.

The poem which concludes the Roll glorifies Henry as the tenth worthy and hails the king as the “mirror of men” (m.36). In the sixteenth century, a mirror had two functions. On one hand it provided the viewer with a faithful reflection of reality, while on the other hand it provided a representation that should stand as an exemplar or a model of excellence worthy of imitation.70 This dual function articulates the central preoccupation of the Roll, which offers the court a mirror of exemplary masculinity and allows the king to repeatedly access a record of himself within the “geometral space” of the tournament. Henry VIII commissioned a repeatable performance which he can access privately whenever he desires to see himself, and see himself being seen, by the various groups of spectators constructed in the Roll. If Henry VIII was indeed the intended recipient of the Roll, the artefact also operates as a “status-enhancing sign of conspicuous consumption” and functions as a “social spectacle [of] self-presentation.”71 Henry VIII can display the artefact to his court not only as a monument to his chivalric success but also as a symbol of his patronage, benevolence, and magnificence well after the tournament has ended.
The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster and the Great Tournament at Westminster produce contiguous sources of legitimacy for Henry VIII. The Roll uses strategies of differentiation, display and disguise, and dramatic revelation to produce an overall performance of sovereign spectacle that elevates the king above all other men. The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster is a new form that exposes how Henry’s specularity structures ways of seeing and pleasure in looking in order to transmit his project of royal authority. The Roll does not create a “live” experience, nor is it a record of a past performance. Rather, it is a “lived” performance that, in the words of Philip Auslander, “remediates[s] theatre at the ontological level through its claim to immediacy” (13). Auslander uses this phrase to describe the phenomenon he calls the “mediatization” of live performance, yet the concept is applicable to the Tournament Roll. At first glance, a sixteenth-century vellum roll would seem remote from the technological world of narrative cinema. However, the technology of the Roll, the manipulation of the audience’s gaze, and the creation of a geometral space generate performative presence in order to offer its audience a lived experience of sovereign spectacle well before the advent of the cinema. 

Henry VIII employs the roll form in order to record the ephemeral performance without losing the vitality of liveness. Many performance theorists have argued that once live performance succumbs to mediatization, it loses its value and becomes reproduction without representation. However, Auslander resists the polarization of live and recorded performance, suggesting instead that the “mediatized, repetitive economy” is itself a performance, one which has immense cultural power to produce and reproduce representation (56). The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster has continuities with the historical tournament but produces a new mode of performance for sovereign spectacle.
The pictorial narrative creates a montage of visual and figural symbols that consolidates the sovereign’s political power through the dramatization of Henry VIII’s royal authority. The innovative form of the *Tournament Roll* reveals the king’s desire to produce and perhaps circulate a courtly performance that resists the ephemerality of other types of drama. As I will argue in the next section, other traditional forms of recording performance, especially historiographies, was no longer deemed adequate vehicles for the transmission of sovereignty.

**Section III: Interpretive Communities and Sovereign Spectacle**

Henry VIII’s active participation in shaping the allegorical framework that governs the Great Tournament at Westminster and his commission of *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* demonstrate his desire to control the production and dissemination of sovereign spectacle. He takes measured steps to circulate a new idiom of sovereignty, one that places him at the visible center of the court as a unifying force that consolidates loyalties and promotes royal authority. The king requires a live audience to witness the vitality of his chivalric masculinity, which in turn “proves” his dynastic legitimacy. However, the relationship between signifier and signified is always unstable in performance. The two eye-witness reports for the Great Tournament at Westminster highlight the impossibility of controlling reception once spectacle enters circulation. Close readings of these accounts, Edward Hall’s *The Union of the Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York* (generally called *Hall’s Chronicle*), and the *Great Chronicle of London*, reveal that the idiom of sovereignty is also shaped by interpretive communities. Spectators are not passive consumers of sovereign spectacle. Rather, the process of viewing, recording, and reading about a cultural performance is dynamic. Analyzing historiography along with other documents, including Richard Gibson’s *Revels*
Account and The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster, demonstrates that audiences can become participants and even producers of meaning. Michel de Certeau argues that consumers have the ability to become producers because consumption has the potential to be a creative process rather than a passive position. At the Great Tournament of Westminster the historiographers interpret Henry VIII’s sovereign spectacle and then mediate the king’s specularity for their readers.

With the advent of the printing press at the end of the fifteenth century, English chronicles reached a wider and more diverse readership. Henry VIII, intent on promoting the Tudor dynasty and his own sovereign authority, employed historiography to ensure that his model of kingship was disseminated in England and on the Continent. Henry VIII used chronicles differently than Henry VII. Henry VII’s desire for dynastic legitimization found expression in the patronage of Continental humanist writers like Vergil and Bernard André. However, Henry VIII, who had a more legitimate claim to the throne, did not require the legitimizing force of providential historiography that his father was so heavily invested in disseminating. Instead of retaining classical historians to celebrate England’s glorious past, Henry VIII employed Edward Hall to record contemporary events and gave him direct access to his court. In doing so, Henry VIII ensured that his spectacular sovereignty, ephemeral in performance, would find permanence in Hall’s Chronicle.

Henry VIII invited Edward Hall to court for pageants, interludes, and courtly performances. Hall also accompanied the king on his royal progresses, enjoying relatively unprecedented access for a civic chronicler. While the king does not instruct Hall on the form or content of his chronicle, he certainly invited and encouraged access. As I discussed earlier in the chapter, Henry VIII sought to promote a model of sovereignty that
aligned him with all men in order to assert his superiority through the registers of merit and genealogy. Enthusiastically patriotic, Hall recorded the skills his sovereign demonstrated as royal host and chivalric participant. Hall’s narrative expresses his awe in the seemingly indefatigable stores of energy that radiated from the young king. On Henry VIII’s first public progress Hall writes:

[The king] exercise[ed] himself daily in shooting, singing, dancing, wrestling, casting of the bar, playing at the recorders, flute, virginals, and in setting of songs, making of ballads, and did set two goodly masses, every one of them in five parts, which were sung oftentimes in his chapel, and afterwards in diverse other places. And when he came to Woking, there were kept both Jousts and Tourneys, the rest of this progress was spent in hunting, hawking, and shooting. (515)

According to Peter Herman, “Hall’s text represents an important confluence of humanist and vernacular historical writing. He did not produce a raw chronology of events; rather, he absorbed the lessons of humanist historiography both in giving his history a narrative shape and in concerning himself with political rather than divine causes” (3). While Hall was influenced by the London chronicle tradition, his level of access and elite education gave him a markedly different ideological focus. He was much less interested in the merchant class and London, preferring instead to elicit national pride in the accomplishments of king and court.

Chronicles are not inert sources of documentary evidence, but rather dynamic processes that create, modify, and disseminate sovereign spectacle. Hall’s Chronicle shares some similarities with the Great Chronicle of London. Both accounts, written in the vernacular, are concerned with local history and, in part, the relationship between
sovereign and subject. While the anonymous civic chronicler and Hall were both present for the pageantry, hastiludes, and banquet for the Great Tournament at Westminster, they offer interpretations of the cultural performance from their own ideological perspectives. The city chronicle is interested in the impact of royal performance on the merchant elite. Sovereign and aristocratic spectacle is admired for its displays of conspicuous consumption and evaluated based on their participation in London’s luxury economy. The *Great Chronicle of London* also emphasizes the special individuality of the king. Since civic masculinity is defined by individual skills and the ability to produce material artefacts, worth is grounded in the body. The civic chronicler produces a version of sovereign spectacle that civic masculinity can use as a model of personal achievement and individual prowess based on merit.

However, civic chroniclers lacked the necessary court access to mediate Henry’s innovated idiom of sovereignty and invest their histories with the degree of liveness that fully represented Henry’s project to contain and conquer risk. Nor was civic historiography traditionally concerned with dynastic lineage and genealogy as foundational authorizing narratives for sovereignty, preferring to focus on sovereign-subject relations and the importance of the City to the Court. Perhaps this is why the king cultivated a relationship with Edward Hall, a gentleman educated at Eton College, Cambridge University, and Gray’s Inn, and allowed him access to privileged information and private spaces not normally afforded a civic chronicler. Hall’s historical narrative values the harmonizing effects of courtly magnificence and the dynastic birth of the young prince. He acts as a translator for spectacle because he describes the components of pageantry and then interprets the symbols for his readers. For example, during a tournament at Greenwich in 1515 Henry VIII disguised himself as a white hermit in
“scopelary mantel” and the Duke of Suffolk was “apparelled like a black hermit, all of black velvet, both their beards were of damask silver” (Hall 568). Hall recounts that both men held black staves with the phrase “who can hold that will away.” “The posye,” says Hall, “was judged to be made for the Duke of Suffolk and the Duchess of Savoy” in order to prove that Brandon was a good match for Margaret, the king’s sister (568). Edward Hall has special knowledge of the complex narratives inherent in cultural performance and educates his audience on the political and social implications of a sometimes inaccessible cultural idiom. Hall, in the employ of the king, looks through a Tudor lens and provides his readers with proximity to Henry VIII that encourages identification. Although Henry VIII worked closely with Hall, chronicle accounts were not an ideal medium to recreate performative presence, a necessary element to dramatize moments when the king outperforms his nobles. The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster provides Henry VIII with liveness not available in historical narratives.

The dynamic relation between the chronicles, the Roll, and the other extant narratives from the Great Tournament at Westminster reveal that the mechanisms for recording sovereign spectacle are subject to the pressures, expectations, and desires of various interpretive communities. Although these texts produce variations of sovereign spectacle for their own projects and purposes, they do not contradict Henry VIII’s sovereign performance, nor are these royal, aristocratic, and civic models are not in opposition to one another. Rather, different components are isolated for further scrutiny and magnification to fulfill the needs of their intended audiences. I will analyze three sites of tension in order to illustrate that the reception of sovereignty in performance is always subject to interpretation and manipulation: female specularity, conspicuous consumption, and the final pageant titled The Arbour of Pleasure and the Archyard of Delight.
Female Specularity

The Great Tournament at Westminster ostensibly celebrates the birth of the new heir to the Tudor throne, and yet the young prince is conspicuously absent from the festivities. Instead, Katherine occupies the central place of honour in the allegorical challenge, the *Forest of Saluinge*, and the feats of arms. Edward Hall states “The queen being churched or purified, the king and she removed from Richmond to Westminster, where [there] was preparation for a solemn Joust *in the honour of the Queen*” (517, emphasis added). The tournament is orchestrated as a tribute to Katherine of Aragon because Henry VIII’s mature kingly image was made complete by his marriage and successful production of an heir. J.L. Laynesmith argues that queenship is such an “integral part of mature kingship that any assessment of the latter must consider the political and ideological relationship between king and queen if it is to achieve the fullest possible understanding of the exercise of sovereignty in this period” (22). Laynesmith asserts that in “the fifteenth-century royal marriage was most obviously a means of asserting mature kingship when the king had ascended the throne” (29). In the Great Tournament of Westminster, Katherine provides material and symbolic weight to Henry’s sovereign authority. She is constructed as chief spectator, established as the arbiter of masculinity, is the producer of Tudor heirs, provides crucial international alliances with Spain, and reveals the king’s more “human” side. Although Katherine was actively involved in creating and enacting these roles, the chronicle accounts do not afford her narrative agency. Hall focuses on the birth of the young prince while the *Great Chronicle* locates sovereign authority in the special individuality of the king. Queenship is a site of tension for the various interpretive communities and a struggle is enacted.
between Katherine’s political and social significance on one hand, and fictions of legitimacy on the other.

Henry VIII requires the female gaze to situate his chivalric identity within a culture of courtly love and medieval romance. Therefore, he developed an infrastructure to support this new focus. Hall notes, “The king – not minded to see young gentlemen inexpert in martial feats – caused a place to be prepared within the park of Greenwich for the Queen and the ladies to stand and see the fight with battle axes that should be done there, where the king himself armed, fought with one Gyot, a gentleman of Almayne, a tall man, and a good man of arms” (515, emphasis added). Henry shapes his court through the practice of “marital feats,” and the carefully planned addition of a female audience ensures that the chivalric competition is circumscribed by the female gaze. The gaze of approbation rewards erotic desire in the homosocial sphere of chivalric performance. Henry VIII’s model of chivalric masculinity requires the female audience for its formation and maintenance. The tournament challenge carefully delineates female spectatorship, revealing its role as the arbiter of masculinity: “Item, it is the pleasure of the king, our moost dradde souuerain lord, that the quenes grace and the ladies with the aduice of the noble & discrete Juges, to gyve prizes after their deseruyngs vnto both the parties” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, Appendix I, 110). Female spectatorship, and its central role in identifying, differentiating, and rewarding masculine spectacle, is integrated into the tournament ordinances in order to institutionalize the female gaze.

In the tournament challenge, Katherine’s pleasure is an essential component to the success of the tournament. The allegorical framework establishes a dialogue between two queens, the “excellent princesse, the Quene of England and of ffraunce” and “her right dere and best beloued cousyn Noble Renome Quene of the Royalme named Cuer
noble” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, Appendix I, 110). The allegorical queen sends her knights to the English court in order to do Katherine obeisance and provide her with “joye and pleasure” (*ibid.*). The challenge places the desire for masculine spectacle firmly within the (visual) jurisdiction of women. Female pleasure is also discursively encoded in the articles of the challenge: the tournament challenge states, “Item, it is the humble request of thise iiiij gentilmen that if in theyr articles be comprised more or lasse then honnor and curtesie requireth euer to submytte theim to the quene and the ladies and they alweyes to adde and mynysshe at theyr noble pleasures” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, Appendix I, 111).

According to the challenge, the allegorical queen fulfills her desire when she initiates the tournament, while Katherine in turn experiences pleasure in the role of spectator. The challenge elevates Katherine to the highest position within the tournament’s symbolic structure on the condition that she provides an appropriate, “pleasurable” reaction to masculine performance.  

Henry VIII employs allegory and ordinances to regulate the female gaze. The carefully constructed allegorical framework invests the female gaze with a degree of power in the formation of chivalric masculinity. However, Katherine’s autonomy is undermined by the assertion that the queen of Noble Renown has already sought out and received license from Henry VIII to initiate the challenge. “Desire” may be assigned to the queen of Noble Renown, but real authority remains firmly under the jurisdiction of the king. He alone has the power to sanction the symbolic shift of power and he can therefore circumscribe the conditions of that shift. The challenge makes it clear that the king has full control over the articles of the joust because his signature appears at the bottom of the letter. Henry VIII requests that the queen and the ladies of the court act as judges, with the help of the heralds, in order to recognize and reward chivalric
masculinity. Female spectatorship, expressed within the framework of allegory, is manufactured and sustained through the discursive apparatus of the challenge.

Female spectatorship appears in the civic chronicle only as it relates to sovereign spectacle. Since the Great Chronicle of London privileges the male body as the site of masculine power, Katherine has value when she beholds Henry VIII in performance: “when [Henry] came again before the queen’s Tent, he then began anew and leapt and coursed the horse up and down in a wonderful manner and then he turned the feat of the horse again the tilt and caused him to fling and kick the boards with his feet that it resounded about the place as it had been sounds of guns” (368). The king’s “wonderful” display of horsemanship is enthusiastically recorded; this version of sovereign spectacle illustrates Henry’s individual skill within the chivalric economy. Royal spontaneity creates intimacy with his audience because they share in an “unscripted,” and therefore “natural” moment. The immediacy of Henry’s display provides the spectators with “living truth” of his special individuality as a man and as a king. For the civic chronicler, Henry VIII’s feats are privileged over the historical lineage so revered in Hall’s account because each performance offers “proof,” constituting and re-constituting the king’s meritorious sovereign self with every performance. Although Henry VIII is situated within a chivalric community of men and is as valiant “as any man of arms,” he is superior because he receives blows without any outward indication of discomposure. Behaviour rather than dynastic continuity is the primary focus for the civic chronicler and his audience. In the Great Chronicle of London, Henry is judged within the chivalric economy, differentiated from other men through merit, and evaluated as the most successful model of masculinity. Katherine is valued as the central spectator for the king’s performance, but her gaze wields only symbolic power.
The Forest of Saluigne

A central preoccupation in the Great Tournament at Westminster was to celebrate Henry VIII’s ability to produce a new heir for the Tudor dynasty; fittingly, the pageantry that accompanied the tournament dramatizes the king’s virility. The Forest of Saluigne employs the “maiden and castle” motif in order to stage the domestication of Katherine’s body and ritualize her new identity as mother and queen after the birth of Prince Henry.89 The “maiden and castle” motif invokes complex systems of signification which crystallize around the body of Katherine. Ontologically, the maiden in the forest pageant embodies Katherine’s Spanish lineage because the castle represents Castile. The castle, however, appears in the middle of an English forest in a symbolic act of appropriation and domestication. Katherine, like the maiden and castle, has been transplanted from her country of origin onto English soil. Allegorically, the maiden represents the queen of Noble Renown and the castle represents her kingdom in the land of Coeur Noble. The scenic apparatus has a long history in the romance tradition and is a popular theme for pageantry in both English and Continental tournaments; Henry VIII was particularly interested in the emblem’s narrative potential, incorporating it into a number of his courtly performances.90 This motif celebrates the virility of English masculinity because the assault of the castle is a symbolic penetration of the female body.91 The ensuing masculine victory represents sexual conquest likely derived from the medieval French allegory, The Romance of the Rose, in which Lover penetrates the defences of the Castle of Jealousy to attain his Rose. Although there is no assault on the castle in the Forest Saluigne, the tradition of representation behind the popular pageant motif provides the visual tableau with interpretive depth. The maiden-as-Katherine does not require a long siege because her “castle” has already been penetrated by Henry VIII.
Katherine’s reproductive capacity is emphasized by the maiden sitting next to the castle who weaves together a garland of roses, the heraldic symbol of Tudor dynasty. In the *Revels Account* Gibson states, “Item bowght by me rechard gybson of rosys of syllke vj dosen, the pees iijd, wech wer by a maydyn syttyng vn the sayd forrest wrowght in to a garlond and after the justes be gvn the sayd garlond was delyverd to the qvynes graas” (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 125). The maiden joins each rose together in an unbroken chain that represents the continuity of the Tudor line. She presents Katherine with the chain as a reward for the queen’s reproductive achievement, yet the garland is also a reminder to Katherine that her primary role is to produce Henry VIII’s heirs. Various discourses intersect around the “maiden and castle” motif to dramatize the domestication of the queenly body. Katherine’s representation as a maiden of Castile symbolizes the importation of a foreign princess onto English soil; the castle’s tradition of conquest celebrates Henry’s masculine supremacy and his ability to consummate the marriage; and the maiden’s task of creating a rose garland celebrates Katherine’s reproductive role and her ability to produce English heirs. The allegorical tableau creates a complex narrative that signals the transition of Katherine’s identity from princess to queen, Spanish to English, and Virgin to Mother.

The *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* echoes the domestication of Katherine’s body and emblematizes the transformation her identity undergoes once she produces an heir. The first image in the *Roll* is a tree that sprouts a red Tudor rose dimidiated with a golden pomegranate, Katherine’s personal heraldic badge. Two golden letters, “H” and “K,” are tethered to either side of the tree with cords of green and accompanied by an inscription “*Vive le noble Roy Henry VIII.*” The Tudor rose is a vibrant red color with green shoots emerging from its petals, while the pomegranate is
gold with no sign of natural growth. A golden crown sits atop both the rose and the pomegranate, unifying the two symbols as an emblem of the international marriage alliance between Henry and Katherine, England and Spain. The Roll ends with the same device, but the symbol has transformed dramatically over the course of the pictorial narrative. The pomegranate has been replaced by a rose with green shoots emerging from the petals. The rose that replaces the pomegranate is darker in color than Henry’s Tudor rose, which remains unaltered in both versions. The pomegranate, a symbol of Katherine’s Spanish otherness, has been exchanged for a symbol of English royalty. Once Katherine produces an heir, her body and her personal heraldic marker undergo a transformation. The gold pomegranate is exchanged for a fertile and budding variation of the Tudor rose. In the “Ten Worthies” poem at the end of the Great Tournament Roll of Westminster, the poet address Henry as “Owre Ryall Rose now Reignyng Rede and Whyte/ Sure graftyd is on grounde of nobylnes” (m.36 1-2). Katherine “grafts” the Tudor rose even more firmly onto the English “ground of noblesse” when she provides England with the future king. The dramatized domestication of Katherine is one of the major figural narratives in the tournament. Not only does this narrative signal her ontological shift from a Spanish princess into an English queen; it also celebrates Henry VIII’s dynastic continuity and mature kingship.

Since Edward Hall privileges genealogy as the fabric of sovereign power, the birth of the new prince informs Hall’s interpretation of sovereign spectacle. The Forest of Saluinge becomes a site of interpretive tension: the “maiden and castle” motif that occupies the allegorical forest, documented carefully in Gibson’s Revels Account and the Great Chronicle, is transformed to suit Hall’s account. Hall states, “In the middle of this forest was a castle standing, made of gold, and before the castle gate sat a gentleman
freshly apparelled, making a garland of roses for the prince” (517 emphasis added). A young man replaces the maiden, shifting the pageant’s purpose from Katherine’s domestication to a celebration of the young prince. The recipient of the garland also changes from Katherine to Prince Henry. Hall demotes Katherine from the symbolic center of the cultural performance and recasts the social script, imposing an alternative form of cultural production which privileges his goals of dynastic continuity. He interprets the cultural performances through an aristocratic lens, strategically appropriating and shaping visual symbols in order to fulfill the desires of his readers to the detriment of Katherine’s symbolic significance.

In the Great Chronicle of London, sovereign authority is located in individual merit rather than dynastic continuity. While a significant amount of narrative energy is devoted to Henry VIII’s personal achievements during the tournament, Katherine’s presence garners only cursory attention. The civic chronicler is much more interested in the special individuality of the king. When the city chronicler describes the entry procession on the second day of the tournament, he constructs Henry as the central spectacle in the cultural performance and eclipses Katherine’s role in the festivities altogether:

Then when all this lusty company was thus passed by, immediately ensued a pavilion or a tent of blue and purple satin paled and after that two other of the same fashion, all three being garnished with letters of embroidery work; and the last came in the fourth tent made of cloth of gold and purple velvet paled, whereof the panes of velvet were powdered with these letters H and K, as “h” for Henry and “k” for king, and the skirts of the said
pavilion was borne up round about with 36 or 40 gentlemen as esquires for
the body. (271)

The civic chronicler interprets the visual emblems that identify the king, so that the “K”
on the royal pavilion becomes “King” rather than “Katherine.” “H” and “K” are
symbols which circulate widely in the tournament to celebrate the union between
Katherine and Henry and the product of that union, Prince Henry. However, the *Great
Chronicle* displaces Katherine’s role in order to promote Henry as the central governing
force behind the tournament’s signification. This strategic re-interpretation illustrates that
symbols are not straightforward vehicles of meaning; rather, “H” and “K” can be
deployed to celebrate royal power and eclipse the role of the queen altogether.

The centrality of queenship to the nature of sovereignty can not be understated. In
the Great Tournament at Westminster, Katherine was a romance heroine, Noble Renown
Queen of the Realm named Coeur Noble, mother, wife, and the keystone of the Tudor
dynasty. She provides Henry VIII with authority conceptually and materially. However,
er her importance in the cultural performance is subject to interpretation. For Hall, history is
the basis of identity formation, which means that the dynastic continuity has central
significance. However, once Katherine has produced an heir her significance in Hall’s
narrative is diminished in favour of that of her son. The civic account acknowledges
Katherine’s gaze in relation to Henry VIII and she only becomes visible as a passive
spectator of the king’s chivalric masculinity. *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*
emblematises Katherine’s reproductive body and asserts that Katherine is now entirely
English because she is the progenitor of English kings. These three interpretations
provide continuities with the narratives Henry commissioned for the actual performance.
However, the differing levels of focus on Katherine’s reproductive body reveal the
dynamic process of watching, recording, and reading cultural performance is determined by the lenses of interpretive communities, most explicitly demarcated by class.

**Conspicuous Consumption**

An analysis of the two chronicle accounts reveals that different components of spectacle are isolated for special scrutiny based on the class interests of the historiographer and the desires of the intended audiences. While Hall interprets sovereign performance as a manifestation of legitimate authority, the civic chronicle focuses on the sovereign-subject relations forged by participation in the luxury economy of London. Each author anticipates the desires of his intended audience and produces narratives designed to elicit textual pleasure. While Hall interprets the conceptual framework of the pageantry as the theatricalization of courtly politics, the *Great Chronicle of London* is much more interested in the materiality of power. Harmonizing narratives of social cohesion promoted in the court-generated document contrasts with the emphasis on the king’s special individuality present in the civic account. Both chroniclers translate meaning for their readers, but while Hall interprets the allegorical symbols which govern the pageants, the civic chronicler evaluates signs for their monetary value. Sovereign authority is celebrated in both eye-witness accounts, but the mechanisms which assert Henry VIII’s superiority vary depending on the economy which governs the record. These differing accounts reinforce that sovereign spectacle is subject to interpretation once it circulates in performance: the images, emblems, and actions are magnified, scrutinized, or disregarded in order to fulfill different versions of sovereign spectacle.

For Hall, spectacle conveys the essence of legitimate authority. His account is devoid of the economic dimension that governs the *Great Chronicle*. Instead, his interpretation of spectacle is dependent on symbolic values which circulate within the
cultural performance. He provides detailed accounts of the pageants that enter the tiltyard and banqueting hall to ensure that his audience could access the allegorical message(s) underlying each performance. When the Defenders presented their individual pageants, Hall is careful to gloss the meaning of each symbol: “Then came next the Marquis Dorset and Sir Thomas Boleyn like two pilgrims from Saint James, in tabards of black velvet with palmers hats on their helmets, with long Jacob’s staves in their hands … every strip set with a scallop shell, their servants all in black satin with scallop shells of gold in their breasts” (518). The specificity of the disguise enables Hall’s readers to access the underlying message behind each performance.

In sharp contrast to the detailed tournament account provided in the *Great Chronicle of London*, Hall does not provide any specifics about martial feats, stating simply, “And thus began the Jousts which was valiantly achieved by the king and his aides, among whom his Grace attained the prize” (518). Interest in the hastiludes does not extend beyond an acknowledgement that the king wins the highest honour for his performance. The scope of Hall’s narrative makes the chivalric combat incidental to the courtly drama staged in the pageants. Immediacy and “lived truth” have no value in Hall’s chronicle because sovereign authority has already been determined by lineage, which means that Henry’s spontaneous and daring displays of chivalric valour are of little interest to Hall. While Henry VIII’s appropriation of chivalric masculinity is evidence of his superiority, it is not the central focus for the court chronicler. Hall prefers instead to highlight the pleasure experienced by the pageant audiences as proof of the harmonizing effects of courtly performance. He variously states, “[the audience] took much pleasure to behold [the king]”; “[the pageant] was goodly to behold”; “[the forest] was curiously made and pleasant to behold”; “[the king’s apparel] was a pleasure to behold”; “[the
king’s dancing] was marvellous to behold” (516-520). Hall locates visual pleasure in the experience of “ beholding” Henry VIII as a representation of a socially unified court.

In contrast, the Great Chronicle of London is preoccupied with the cost of sovereign and aristocratic spectacle because its readers operate within the market economy that produced the luxury items on display in civic and courtly performance. The city chronicler states, “[T]he Lords many of them rode in long gowns of cloth of gold exceedingly rich of the new making wherein is most substance of gold and little silk, so that where in old times they were used to buying the best and richest tissue for £5 a yard, now they pay £10 and 10 marks for the richest, and over their horses some trapped in cloth of gold to the ground” (371). Sartorial signification is described in terms of the current market value. Of special interest to the chronicler is the trend of economic inflation for luxury goods, especially textiles. His level of knowledge aligns him with the merchant elite and suggests he was a member of the Mercer’s guild. The civic chronicler offers an implicit criticism that the aristocratic customers overpay for luxury fabrics because trade is subject to royal policy.  

In May 1510, the wardens of the Mercers went to Greenwich to petition Henry VIII and the royal council to reinstate statutes of 1467 and 1487 that controlled the import and export of cloths above a certain value. They argued the purchase of export licenses and custom taxes increased the costs for cloth workers, and these conditions resulted in the inflation of luxury goods (Sutton 337). The chronicler’s commentary on the cost of aristocratic spectacle reveals that relations among king, nobles, and commoner are shaped by economic forces: Henry’s trade policies drive up the price of luxury items that his nobles then consume at his courtly performances. The civic chronicler knows exactly what nobles spend, providing a level of scrutiny that demystifies the transcendental and symbolic meaning behind aristocratic spectacle.
Conspicuous consumption does not indicate an essence of truth or legitimate authority as it does in Hall’s account. Nevertheless, the aristocratic spectacle of self-presentation is valued because civic masculinity is defined by skills and the ability to produce artefacts. Since worth is grounded in the body, civic readers can appreciate the nobles’ participation in this mode of self-fashioning. The magnificent display of the peerage showcases the artistry of the London citizens, eliciting the possibility of pleasure in the reading process.

In contrast to Hall’s account, the city chronicler consistently disregards allegorical narratives in favour of martial action. In fact, he draws attention to Hall’s focus on the pageantry only to distance himself from this narrative focus: “Then the foresaid gentlemen which before had brought in rode for the Defenders, the which now came in at the west gate of the Palace in sundry pageants and goodly devices which here I will overpass here much as upon the day following they far exceeded whereof the declaration will ask a long leisure” (369). Civic interest in performance lies in the materiality rather than the abstraction of royal power. In the Great Chronicle of London, gentlemen are distinguished by their material worth rather than their allegorical or political projects. The city chronicler describes the procession of conspicuous consumption on the first day of the tournament and singles out those nobles whose spectacles are especially successful:

Among the which were specially noted: the Lord of Burgevenny and the Lord Fitzwater, which were in one suit of cloth of gold with their trappers like and two large and massy baldrics about their necks which were esteemed at one thousand mark a piece or more money. Then also here Sir Henry Boleyn and one other Baronet which that day rode in purple velvet garnished with plates of gold exceeding in value. And among them rode also Sir Nicholas Vaux in a gown of goldsmith’s work to the knees and
therein a fur of right brown and fine sables of great value. Then among
them that rode next to the king came my Lord Henry of Buckingham
riding in a gown of needlework which was more costly than some of the
cloth of gold and more allowed for the curiosity of the work thereof.

(Great Chronicle 371)

The civic chronicler functions as a translator for his readers because he describes
aristocratic apparel and then assigns their clothing and jewellery a monetary value. While
Hall records the structure and meaning of each individual pageant and its relationship to
sovereign authority, the Great Chronicle uses apparel to illustrate the relationship
between the king and his nobles: “And then [Henry] was changed into a demy gown of
cloth of gold furred with sables, the which when they were showed defaced so the others
that Sir Nicholas Vaux wore that they seemed martens on comparison of the other” (373).
Marten fur is inferior, less expensive, and often dyed to resemble sable, the most
luxurious and expensive fur (Cudlipp 9). In the city chronicler’s account, the king
displays his superiority over the noble estate through sartorial signification. According to
the civic chronicler, sovereign spectacle “defaces” aristocratic spectacle and renders
Nicholas Vaux’s display a counterfeit compared to Henry’s magnificence. Within this
economy, nobles may strive to be like the king, but Henry VIII demonstrates that he is
better than every man through his choice of clothing. This invests royal authority with the
power to self-fashion, but also reveals the theatrical nature of power: if Vaux wore sable
rather than marten, would he risk outfacing the king’s spectacle? Yet, Henry VIII’s
behaviour in the tiltyard confirms his merit: the king “break many spears and gave so
many attaints that every man marvelled at his wonderful feats, for none that there was
Challenger or Defender might attain to half the prowess that he accomplished that day, so
that the prize was given to him of all men as well of them that deputed Judges of those feats of arms for that day” (369). According to the civic chronicler, Henry VIII distinguishes himself on the tournament grounds, proof of the king’s special individuality and superiority over his nobles.

Courtly performance is a site of conspicuous consumption for both chroniclers. Henry VIII’s court must be a place of magnificence and largess in order to make the conceptual narratives around sovereign authority material. The “Ten Worthies” poem, which concludes *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*, asserts that the king is the “ffowntayne of honer exsampler of larges” (m.36). Henry VIII displays power through expenditure: the civic chronicler exclaims, “the exceeding cost of apparel which those two days was showing with other manifold charges of pageants and other sumptuous things, the which by wise mean estimations cost not so little by the space of these two days £20,000” (*GCL* 374). The city chronicler grossly overestimated the budget; sources reveal that John Daunce, who acted as paymaster for the event, received a Chamber payment for £4371 11s 2d (Streitberger 81). Nevertheless, the exorbitant amount of money would probably astound his audience, considering the king’s recent acquisition of a 99-ton warship, the *Great Elizabeth*, cost £2300 (Young 23). Conspicuous consumption in the two chronicle accounts is interpreted differently. While the spectacle of self-display is a narrative thread in both the court-generated and civic chronicles, Hall values display as a manifestation of legitimate authority while the civic chronicler contextualizes display within London’s market economy.

**The Arbour of Pleasure and the Archyard of Delight**

Tension between sovereign and subject is registered at the concluding banquet when the audience decides to become active participants in the drama of sovereign
largess. However, just as risk is registered, strategies are in place to control the threat to sovereign coherence. The *Arbour of Pleasure and the Archyard of Delight* was staged on the final night of the two-day tournament festivities. Hall’s description of the second evening’s disguisings is detailed: “when all persons were most attentive to behold the dancing, the king was suddenly gone unknown to the most part of the people apparently unnoticed” (518). A short time later, a “device or a pageant upon wheels” was brought in to the Banqueting Hall at which time a man, likely Richard Gibson, introduced the purpose of the pageant: “he showed how in a garden of pleasure there was an arbour of gold, wherein were lords and ladies, much desirous to show pleasure and pastime to the queen and ladies if they might be licensed to do so” (ibid). After the queen gave her permission, a great cloth of arras that concealed the pageant was drawn aside to reveal a garden “curiously made and pleasant to behold” (ibid). The *Arbour of Pleasure* was designed as an ideal representation of England, filled with “trees of hawthorn, Eglantines, Rosiers, Vines, and other pleasant flowers of diverse colors, with gillyflowers and other herbs all made of satin, damask, silk, silver and gold, accordingly as the natural trees, herbs, or flowers ought to be” (Hall 519). The *Arbour of Pleasure and the Archyard of Delight* is the final “act” in a complex allegorical drama that produces narratives about courtly life, models of queenship, and sovereign spectacle. Streitberger suggests that “the garden itself is a *hortus deliciarum* which could be used to symbolize court life” (80). The garden, drawn from the romance tradition, provides a backdrop for the concluding dance which celebrates marital harmony after the martial feats.

The festivities to this point have been performed predominantly by men for female spectators. However, the *Arbour of Pleasure* introduces female performers. In the golden arbour stood “six ladies all apparelled in white satin and green, set and embroidered full
of H and K of gold knit together with laces of gold” (Hall 519). The king and five others were in the Archyard of Delight, “apparelled in garments of purple satin, all of cuts with H and K every edge garnished with frysed gold and every garment full of posyes made of letters of fine gold in bullion as thick as they might be, and every person had his name in like letters of massy gold” (519). In addition to the four knight Challengers, two more characters named “Bon Espoir” and “Amour Loyal” are added to the allegorical fellowship. Their costumes tie the Archyard of Delight into the allegorical framework that governs the Great Tournament at Westminster. In the pageant, the “strange knights” from the realm of Coeur Noble discover a golden arbour filled with beautiful maidens. These men, who are idealized characteristics of chivalric masculinity (noblesse, valor, loyalty, courtly love) find pleasure through the love of ladies once they penetrate the feminized arbour. The spectacularly clad lords and ladies descended from the pageant in pairs and danced “so that it was a pleasure to behold” (Hall 519). Dancing in pairs creates gendered amity which, in turn, produces social cohesion and naturalizes marital harmony between the lords and ladies. The union of Katherine and Henry becomes the larger unifying force because their abstracted initials, emblazoned on the bodies of the pageant performers, pair men and women together; the dance consummates courtly love and celebrates dynastic continuity.

The Archyard of Delight is also a drama of conspicuous consumption. Henry’s jacket, hose, and bonnet were decorated with 887 pieces of gold in the shape of the letters “H” and “K” as well as his allegorical name “Loyal.” Knyvet was just as dazzlingly arrayed with 893 gold pieces spelling his allegorical title “Valiant Desire” several times over his body, although it was probably not a coincidence that his cod piece was, according to Gibson’s accounts, adorned with the sole word “Desire” (qtd. in Anglo 1968.
Appendix III, 133). The dazzling display of conspicuous consumption was overwhelming for Hall, who notes “Their hose could scare appear and yet was in every void placed spangles of gold” (519). However, this dual display of social cohesion and royal expenditure is disrupted when the spectators assume the role of participants in an unscripted social drama. Hall writes,

After the king and his companions had danced, he appointed the ladies, gentlewomen, and the ambassadors to take the letters of their garments in token of liberality, which thing the common people ran to the King and stripped him of his hose and doublet, and all his companions in likewise. Sir Thomas Knyvet stood on a stage, and for all his defence he lost his apparel. The ladies likewise were spoiled, wherefore the King’s guard came suddenly, and put the people back, or else as it was supposed more inconvenience had ensued. (519)

The king’s allegorical identity is literally stripped from his body and the masquers are subjected to violence at the hands of the “common people.” The King’s Guard intervenes, but not before much destruction was wreaked and the ladies were “spoiled.” Although Anglo dismisses this disruption as “festive,” the episode stages a moment when the social boundary between spectacle and spectator collapses. Spectators become consumers, exposing the vulnerability of Henry’s performance to disruption. In this account, the audience members are active producers of sovereign spectacle. The interruption to Henry’s performance demonstrates that Henry’s allegorical identity, and by extension his sovereign authority, is subject to construction, or even destruction, by the “common people.”
The “common people” are treated with a degree of apprehension in the court-generated record of performance. Hall fears the incident would have escalated because “it was supposed more inconvenience had ensued.” “Inconvenience” suggests a range of possible transgressions that could be committed by the “common people,” including further violence directed towards the king’s body. Underlying this statement is an anxiety about the unpredictability of the commoners and their potentially dangerous power to read sovereign spectacle through their own interpretive lens. The *Archyard of Desire* pageant was also destroyed in the fracas and Hall exclaims, “suddenly the rude people ran to the pageant and rent, tore, and spoiled the pageant so that the Lord Steward nor the head officers could not cause them to abstain, except they should have fought and drawn blood, and so was this pageant broken” (518). Hall’s testimony is corroborated by Gibson, who notes:

> Thys forrest or pagent after the ewsans had in to westmester great hall by and the kynges cvmmandment gard and other gentleymen rent brokyn and by fors karried away and the poor men that wer set to kep yt ther hedes brokyn ij of them, and the remnant pvt ther from wyth foors so that noon ther of byt the baar tymbyr cvm near to the kynges ews nor stoor. (qtd. in Anglo 1968, 133)

Gibson’s account is more anxious about the preservation of his carefully constructed pageant than the king’s well-being. Hall, on the other hand, views the disruption as a potentially subversive assault on the king’s identity because the “rude people” deface the royal body and destroy the *Archyard of Desire*, the allegorical symbol of harmonious courtly life. In Hall’s account, licensed liberality quickly degenerates into lawless looting.
because the commoners vandalize not only the king’s apparel and the pageant, but sovereign spectacle itself.

Allegory, the representation of a coherent order, is dismantled; Henry VIII’s allegorical disguise is literally torn from his physical body. The potential for mob violence remains outside discourse as a potential trauma which ruptures Henry VIII’s orchestrated performance. However, order is restored when the nobles leave the Banqueting Hall in favour of more private quarters. Hall notes, “So the king with the queen and the ladies returned to his chamber where they had a great banquet, and all these hurts were turned into laughing and game, and thought that all that was taken away was but for honour and largess; and so this triumph ended with mirth and gladness” (518). The nobles withdraw from the communal space shared with the “common people” in order to recover their composure and reinforce their social exclusivity. The king and his court are able to transform “hurts” into “laughing” and “game” only when they withdrawing to a more private setting.

In Hall’s account, the common people represent disruption because they do not respect the barriers of hierarchy upon which the structure of civic spectatorship is based. This necessitates their exclusion from the aristocratic domain because commoners do not display the appropriate reverence that sovereign performance demands. In this court-generated document, Hall bolsters the court’s superiority and anxiety about the lower classes. Although the disruption staged by the “common people” is merely a temporary rift in the plenitude courtly pageants construct, performance has the capacity to reveal the vulnerability of the sovereign spectacle to destabilization. The restoration of order legitimizes sovereignty’s reproduction and continuation of itself, but the incident demonstrates that the king is always in part a projection and therefore a product of his
subjects’ gaze. Through performance he risks revealing that the royal identity being performed is an illusion and therefore vulnerable to deconstruction. Ambivalence around civic spectatorship permeates *Hall’s Chronicle*, exposing aristocratic anxiety about the power of the people to destabilize sovereign authority. However, Hall champions the ultimate stability of sovereign authority because Henry VIII has the power to reinterpret civic motivations: the king “thought that all that was taken away was but for honour and largess.” A potentially subversive encounter between sovereign and subject is reconstrued so that the “inconvenience” and “spoiling” is recoded as a gesture of civic obeisance and social approbation. For Hall, the power of interpretation lies firmly in the hands of the king.

The *Great Chronicle of London* recounts the banquet’s disruption from a different perspective. In this version, the city chronicler maintains the coherence of sovereign spectacle and focuses instead on the king’s liberality. The description in the *Great Chronicle* is worth quoting at length because it produces a version of sovereign spectacle impervious to discomposure:

> And this royal joust thus passed, upon the night following, the king held a sumptuous banquet at the which was present the French ambassadors and other strangers, which before had beholden the said Jousts. In which banquet the king was disguised in a garment of sarsenet powdered with roses and other devices of massy gold, the which garment for the king would that it should be divided among the ambassadors’ servants. He commanded the Gentlemen Ushers of his Chamber that they should set the said servants at a certain place where he should pass by; when the disguising ended … they should not fear to pull and tear the said garment
from his body. Among the which strangers, were it by favour of the said 
ushers or otherwise, a poor Sherman of the city got in with them where 
they were so tarrying. When the king came they spared not but tore it off at 
the gaynest, among them this said Sherman took his part, so that he tore a 
piece with seven powderings, for the which he had of a goldsmith 74 
shillings 8 d., whereby it might be considered that the said garment was of 
a good value. (374)

The civic chronicler’s version of sovereign spectacle provides readers with an 
orchestrated social drama that celebrates the king’s liberality. According to the *Great 
Chronicle*, Henry licensed a select audience to “pull and tear” the emblems from his body, 
suggesting that the audience’s actions followed a pre-existing script. The only 
transgressive moment in this version is when a “poor Sherman” bribes the ushers in order 
to join the ambassadors’ servants, the authorized beneficiaries of the king’s largess. This 
version does not register anxiety around the artisanal classes; the chronicle caters to a 
civic readership, in contrast to Hall’s *Chronicle* which is directed to a more elite audience. 
Just as the civic account celebrates the special individuality of the king as a source of 
largess and liberality, the Sherman’s transgression is not overtly censured because he 
demonstrates initiative and entrepreneurial spirit, characteristics valued by the merchant 
class.100

The gold pieces torn from Henry’s clothing are valuable currency in both the 
symbolic and monetary economies. In performance, Henry VIII offers pieces of his 
apparel in order to foster a culture of fetishization of sovereign spectacle. The golden 
letters function as a synecdochic extension of the royal body whereby Henry constructs a 
system of souvenir distribution where owning a piece of the king is a sought-after
honour. However, once the sovereign souvenirs are appropriated by “common people” and circulate in London’s economy, the artefacts are subject to market pressures. The city chronicler states that the Sherman’s pageant spoils, seven “powderings,” were appraised by a goldsmith at over 74s. Hall also records the resale value of the souvenirs: “At this banquet, a shipman of London caught certain letters which he sold to a goldsmith for £3 14s 8d by reason whereof it appeared that the garments were of a great value” (519). Both chronicle accounts end their description of the Great Tournament at Westminster with the same idea, and virtually the same wording, that the king’s garment must have been of great value (GCL 374; Hall 519). Sovereign authority in both accounts is located in the display of conspicuous consumption. Value, however, means different things to Edward Hall and the city chronicler.

Tudor pageantry and hastiludes have traditionally been read as straightforward vehicles for civic flattery and royal propaganda. Vale, Keen, Barker, and Young argue that courtly performance is an ideological instrument of control produced by a “singular, monocentric, sovereign gaze” (Young 25). In the critical milieu of Tudor courtly performance, many contemporary scholars, such as Peter Hadorn, Skiles Howard, and Meg Twycross, quote the Great Chronicle’s version of the banquet disruption and disregard Hall’s account in order to make claims about the relationship between pageantry and propaganda. Hadorn reads the pageant as a “show of universal harmony” and he argues that the civic participation allows the king to “stand revealed in all his newly gained splendour for all to admire” (33). Hadorn argues that stripping the king of his costume is a scripted act of revelation for Henry VIII because his argument relies on the premise that tournaments produce “idealized worlds” in order to “disseminate
Tudor propaganda” (40). Howard believes that the banquet disruption is positive because it asserts social hierarchies:

[T]his pageant opposes the “unlettered” masses – rude people who run, rend, tear, and spoil – with the lords and ladies who are orderly enough to descend by couples, civil enough to dance sufficiently well to be ‘a pleasure to behold,’ liberal enough to give away their golden letters, powerful enough to withstand the uprising, and good-natured enough to laugh it away. The lords and ladies give a performance that naturalizes a system of dominance and aristocratic entitlement. (28)\textsuperscript{104}

Howard suggests that the social disorder is scripted action designed to consolidate aristocratic power and assert the coherence of sovereign spectacle. Twycross disregards Hall’s account entirely, stating, “The king deliberately celebrated himself in his spectacular disguise as reified emblem of magnificent liberality, giving away parts of his own performing self” (132).\textsuperscript{105} In Twycross’ formulation, the king’s identity is so stable it can afford to disassemble itself without loss of meaning. Twycross, Hadorn, and Howard produce interpretations of sovereign spectacle that fit into their larger figural narratives about courtly performance as a vehicle for Tudor propaganda.

What these scholars overlook is that Henry VIII’s model of sovereign spectacle \textit{relies} upon the very contingencies performance entails. Each scholar imposes closure in order to assert Henry’s coherence because their interpretations of sovereign spectacle cannot account for the moment when the script ventures onto the stage of cultural action, a performative space fraught with danger and indeterminacy. Henry VIII makes courtly performance central to his production and dissemination of royal ideology because the risk provides him with a “liveness” that constitutes his sovereign selfhood. Modes of
representation in Henry VIII’s court, such as tournaments, pageants, historiographies, and pictorial narratives, have traditionally been read as components of a sustained and coherent project of Tudor propaganda. However, an analysis of the dynamics between textuality and performativity exposes propaganda as an uninflected account that oversimplifies what are in fact complex, dialogic relationships between sovereign and subject, spectacle and interpretive community, text and performance. Sovereign spectacle is dynamic rather than monolithic, and it achieves various states of equilibrium, adjusting to uneven and overlapping pressures. Henry VIII’s performative strategies can contain risks and disruptions that lived experience might entail because the king combines dynastic legitimacy with special individuality to produce an inimitable model of masculinity.

When Henry VIII commissioned *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* he demonstrated his belief in the power of representation. The Roll provides Henry VII with a “living picture” of himself in performance. Lawrence Manley argues that there is a “systemic relationships” between literary genres and “the myths, motifs, and mental structures that sustain these genres and change with them” (11). Although Manley is primarily concerned with non-dramatic prose pamphlets, his analysis of literary forms, especially his argument that the “inter-orientation” of genres is inflected by processes of historical change, informs my discussion of the *Roll* and its relationship to Henry VIII (12). Henry’s need for a new hybrid genre that fully captures his dynamic relationship to live performance suggests that strategies for the performance and recording of sovereign authority shift to account for the change in England’s political structure and the attendant needs of the monarch in power. Sovereign optics change significantly between the reigns of Henry VII and Henry the VII, a shift that is also reflected in, and shaped by, genre.
Death of Prince Henry

The only true disruption to Henry’s sovereign authority occurs after the pieces of the broken pageant have been swept up and the lists dismantled. On 22 February, nine days after the concluding festivities for the Great Tournament at Westminster, the young prince Henry died at Richmond. The jubilation Henry expressed when he produced an heir for the Tudor dynasty was transformed into great sorrow. The civic chronicle treats the death in a cursory manner: “Upon the evening of Saint Matthew or the 23rd day of February died at Richmond my Lord Prince Henry by name which was born there upon New Year’s Day last past as before his shortly touched and was buried at Westminster” (GCL 375). Perhaps because the civic chronicle locates sovereign authority in the king’s special individuality rather than in dynastic continuity, little attention is paid to the death of the young prince. Hall, much more invested in the perpetuation of the Tudor dynasty, provides a level of proximity to royal grief not found in the civic chronicle:

After this great joy came sorrowful chance, for the young Prince, which was born upon New Year’s Day last past, upon the 22nd of February being then the Eve of Saint Matthew, departed this world at Richmond and from thence was carried to Westminster and buried. The king, like a wise prince, took this dolorous chance wondrous wisely, and the more to comfort the queen he dismissed the matter and made no great mourning outwardly; but the queen, like a natural woman, made much lamentation. How be it, by the king’s good persuasion and behaviour, her sorrow was mitigated, but not shortly. (Hall 520)

Henry VIII’s grief over the death of his son and the comfort he provides his wife codes the king and queen as father and mother, husband and wife. The reader is allowed a
glimpse into the domestic sphere where Henry and Katherine express their “natural” grief. Hall’s account humanizes the royal couple and encourages his readers to identify with them through affectivity. Although Hall constructs genealogy as the fabric of sovereign power, the death of the young prince only strengthens Hall’s faith in royal authority because Henry VIII is first and foremost “a wise prince.” The king suppresses his personal emotions in favour of his public role, demonstrating “behaviour” that not only reassures the queen, but by extension the whole nation. The differing levels of interest around the death of Prince Henry in the civic and court-generated chronicles reveal that the mechanisms which govern sovereign authority differ between interpretive communities.

As Henry’s style of rule shifts, so does the composition of his performances. While he continues to employ tournaments and courtly revels to theatricalize politics, the large scale pageantry featured in the Great Tournament at Westminster moves out of the lists and into the banquet halls after 1515. The French war of 1512-14 affected the frequency and nature of courtly performance. Henry, intent on martial glory, led his army to France and debuted his sovereign spectacle on the Continent with triumphal entries into cities such as Calais, Thérouanne, Lille, and Tournai. War transformed Henry’s sovereign spectacle from a chivalric knight modeled on the romance tradition to a kingly warrior shaped by the practice of war. Interestingly, Henry’s pageantry infrastructure experiences a parallel transformation: the pavilions Richard Gibson constructs for the Challengers’ entry procession in the Great Tournament at Westminster were altered to house officers at Calais and Thérouanne, and Gibson himself was promoted from Master of the Revels to Master of the King’s Tents.107
The Great Tournament at Westminster stages Katherine’s apex of symbolic currency in the English court. Her importance in the Anglo-Spanish alliance decreases considerably in the next few years as Spain becomes less significant in Henry’s foreign policy and he shifts his focus to a French campaign. Katherine’s inability to produce another male heir also reduced her social value, and her infertility became a potent symbol of Henry’s overt failure to consolidate his Tudor dynasty. When Eustache Chapuys, the Imperial Ambassador, suggests that perhaps God had ordained the succession to remain in the female line, Henry shouted three times “Am I not a man like all others?” (638). Henry’s self-conception connects virile masculinity with the ability to produce a male heir. Because Henry VIII bound his identity in a circular dyad between performance and legitimacy, his inability to create an heir is a failure of authority. Henry’s greatest risk may have been in placing so much of his authority in the physical body (whether in martial feats or virility) that ultimately eludes ideological control.
Chapter Four
“[O]n every side she cast her countenance” (QMP 85):
Sovereignty and Subjecthood in Elizabeth’s Coronation Entry into London (1559)

Elizabeth began her reign with a very dubious legacy; the rapid regime changes from Edward VI to Mary I, Protestantism to Catholicism, masculine sovereignty to female governance, left the idiom of sovereignty in a state of crisis. Motifs, emblems, and tropes that circulated in Henry VII’s, Henry VIII’s, and Edward VI’s reigns were destabilized significantly in Marian England. Her Catholicism and marriage to a foreign king, Philip of Spain, made it necessary her to rehabilitate symbols of sovereign authority for her own purposes. The queen, her counsellors, and other Catholic interest groups attempted to reclaim symbols that had become associated with Protestant kingship and remediate them to serve Catholic agendas. Tracing the modality of one symbol, the Verbum Dei motif, from Edward’s to Mary’s reign provides insight into the profound confusion an early modern audience must have experienced when they tried to decipher the continually shifting visual codes present in performance in the decade preceding Elizabeth’s coronation.

Originally conceived of in Henrician iconography as a symbol of religious justification for the break with Rome, Verbum Dei (literally the Word of God) was used extensively during Edward VI’s reign in pageantry, frontispieces, poems, and paintings. Edward adopts the symbol as a strong statement of filial devotion and an unequivocal declaration of Protestant religious policy. Marian sovereignty made attempts to imbue the motif with Catholic meaning in order to exculpate Rome and reclaim a position of moral and religious authority. However, Mary’s failure to consolidate meaning and reclaim “truth” for the Catholic religion reveals that royal manipulation of images, symbols, and motifs was subject to contestation.
The instability of sovereign symbology is brought to the surface most clearly during Mary and Philip’s royal entry into London in 1554. The *Verbum Dei* motif appears twice in Mary and Philip’s royal entry, but with very different purposes. The first instance is at a pageant located at the Conduit on Fleet Street that dramatized the Four Daughters of God, a pageant that was also used in Edward’s entry. Mary and Philip were surrounded by four allegorical figures: Justica with a sword, Equitas with a scale, Misericordia with a heart of gold, and Veritas with a book titled *Verbum Dei*. Pageant devisors used an almost identical pageant for both Edward’s and Mary’s entries; the repetition of the Four Daughters of God demonstrates the eagerness of Marian pageant devisors to recover Catholicism’s claim to God’s true teachings. Pairing the Latin Bible with Truth was a strong message to the English people that Mary intended to reinstate pre-Reformation doctrines and “restore” the Bible to its Latin form and England to its Catholic state.

The second appearance of *Verbum Dei* in Mary and Philip’s royal entry undermines the very principles the first pageant intended to promote. At Gracechurch Street the “Nine Worthies” Pageant greeted Philip and Mary. This pageant repeated a popular Tudor conceit of celebrating the nine most exemplary men in history, three each from classical, biblical, and English ages. A statue of Philip dressed in armour surmounted the mural, a montage that visually aligned the Spanish king with the Nine Worthies with the aim of flattering him. At the base of the pageant, however, a powerful image stealthily eroded the authority of the king-consort and, by extension, the Marian regime. Henry VIII appears in this painted mural as the final “tenth” Worthy; he is depicted in the act of presenting a book with the inscription “*Verbum Dei*” to Edward VI. This scenic tableau was not a part of the original design and the image generated a maelstrom of controversy. According to a contemporary account,
…after the king was passed, the Bishop of Winchester, noting the book in Henry VIII’s hand, shortly afterwards called the painter before him, and with vile words calling him traitor, asked why and who bade him describe King Henry with a book in his hand, as is aforesaid, threatening him therefore to go to Fleet. And the painter made answer, that he thought he had done well, and that no man bade him do the contrary, for, sayeth he, “If I had known the same had been against your lordship’s pleasure, I would not so have made him.” “Nay,” said the Bishop, “it is against the Queen’s Catholic proceedings.” And so he painted him shortly after, the stead of the book of *Verbum Dei*, to have in his hands a new pair of gloves.

*(Chronicle of Queen Jane and Mary 78-9)*

The painter’s protestations of innocence are likely disingenuous: the *Verbum Dei* motif was a widespread Henrician symbol that is made especially potent when paired with the two Protestant kings. Whether the subversive image was the product of a discontented individual or a larger conspiracy to undermine Marian authority is uncertain. However, when the *Verbum Dei* motif becomes adequate grounds for incarceration, this suggests that images have the power to both promote and subvert sovereign authority.

*Verbum Dei* is employed in pageants during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I as a vehicle for that particular sovereign’s religious policies. However, because those policies change significantly between monarchs, the visual symbol becomes so contradictory that the integrity of the message collapses upon itself. Manipulation of motifs, emblems, and conceits by different sovereigns renders what was once shared cultural meaning incomprehensible. When Elizabeth came to the throne she
inherited a set of symbols, images, and tropes that were no longer transparent or easily identifiable.

Elizabeth’s entry procession on the day before her coronation was the most important courtly performance in her early reign. The very public nature of the entry provided Elizabeth with an essential venue in which she could début her spectacle of sovereignty. For the first time Elizabeth was on display as the nation’s sovereign. Every symbol, allegorical reference, and gesture associated with her was scrutinized for evidence of her religious platforms, political policies, and social agendas since, as Susan Frye has argued, the queen’s “domestic and foreign policies were still largely unformulated” at the time of her succession (23).²

A number of scholars have noted the importance of Elizabeth’s civic entry as a crucial venue for the dramatization of sovereign power. Clifford Geertz argues that Elizabeth’s passage through London débuted the “locus of charisma” for the Elizabethan regime.³ Steven Mullaney investigates the relationship between sovereign power and London’s cultural topography, while Mark Breitenberg asserts that the civic entry was a coherent project that naturalized power relations through metaphors of similitude.⁴ The conflict between Catholic ceremony and Protestant reform informs Richard McCoy’s analysis of the coronation festivities, whereby he suggests that Elizabeth’s coronation marks an important moment when religious ceremony is “subordinated” in favour of secular social drama (243).⁵ Jonathan Goldberg interprets the civic entry as “a coherent, mutually reflective whole, and Elizabeth acted within the limits of its design” (31).⁶ Louis Montrose claims Elizabeth’s entry is a rite of passage that promotes a “coherent program of allegorical pageants” designed to distinguish the new Protestant queen as the “antithesis” of her predecessor, all under the auspices of “English Protestant propaganda”
While Elizabeth’s civic entry into London the day before her coronation has garnered much attention in the last twenty years, most scholars have largely agreed that representations of Elizabeth I were the product of a monolithic project aimed at promoting “militant” Protestant propaganda (Montrose 2006, 41). Frye argues that the claim of propaganda “eliminates the struggle for meaning” in early modern England and suggests that the “ongoing struggle for the control of the queen’s image [was] central to its production” (1992, 10). Taking Frye’s assertion as a point of departure, this chapter will address the process of textualizing sovereign spectacle, both in performance and in Richard Mulcaster’s account of the civic entry in The Quenes Maiesties Passage, in order to argue that discursive mediations of sovereign spectacle not only reflect but also shape relations between sovereign and subject. No attention has been paid to how the performance space of the civic entry was textually mediated, nor has there been any sustained analysis of Mulcaster’s translation of performance into textual form. This study will attempt to fill this critical gap and attempt to expose the tensions animating the relationships among the Queen, her nobility, and the civic populace.

The royal entry, organized by the City of London, was a singular opportunity for civic interest groups to express their needs, desires, and opinions concerning the state of the nation and their role within it. According to Sydney Anglo, “[t]he queen was not merely greeted with joy and praise by her subjects; she was also instructed in the art of governing a realm which had, until recently, suffered from religious persecution and foreign interference” (347). Although the pageantry was ostensibly designed to display civic obeisance, the coronation entry afforded the City a legitimate performative space to début its version(s) of sovereignty. For the length of the procession Elizabeth was the City’s captive audience, and the pageant-dramatists capitalized on this rare occasion to
promote particular agendas. In the two mile journey from the Tower to Westminster, Elizabeth was subjected to a number of competing versions of sovereignty that she variously embraced, contemplated, or rejected according to their degree of alignment with her own ideological project.

Performance at the courts of Henry VII and Henry VIII relied heavily on a set of visual symbols that were easily identifiable, such as heraldic devices, allegorical figures, emblematic costumes, and romance narratives. Repetition of these symbols offered audiences access to larger figural narratives about kingship, nationhood, and the Tudor dynasty. In late medieval England, symbols were frequently deployed with little or no discursive mediation. In civic and courtly drama, for example, Justice was easily identifiable by her sword and Pallas by her shield without name-tags or oral explication. However, the tumultuous political upheavals between Edward VI’s and Mary I’s reigns precipitated a crisis around the image as a vehicle of meaning. Beginning in the 1530s and continuing into the early reign of Elizabeth, symbols were aggressively appropriated, co-opted, transformed, and rendered unstable in a widespread campaign, first under the auspices of Protestantism, and then under the Marian regime’s attempt to recuperate Catholicism. Manipulation of motifs, emblems, and allegory by different monarchs renders what was once shared cultural meaning largely incomprehensible. This process profoundly destabilized the cultural idiom so carefully constructed in early Tudor England, forcing Elizabethan interest groups to rehabilitate images and reconstruct the idiom of sovereignty with a new emphasis on textualization.

New strategies of representation in performance, particularly the textualization of the performance space, were deployed by pageant producers who aimed for increased comprehensibility for both spectators and monarch. Elizabeth’s civic entry was also
recorded in several generic forms (civic chronicles, diplomatic letters, diary accounts, pamphlets); the various modes in which performance was recorded, and the overlapping and sometimes contested interpretations, indicate that the idiom of sovereignty was produced by multiple agents. As Louis Montrose argues, “[Elizabeth’s] power to shape her own strategies was itself shaped – at once enables and constrained – by the existing repertoire of values, institutions, and practices (including the artistic and literary conventions) specific to Elizabethan society and to Elizabeth’s position within it” (1986, 310).

Several eye-witness accounts survive of Elizabeth’s coronation celebrations, and each one produces its own version of sovereign spectacle based on the author’s class, profession, religion, and intended audience. Richard Mulcaster, a Cambridge-educated Member of Parliament, was commissioned by the city of London to provide an account of the festivities. His text, *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, is by far the most extensive document extant for Elizabeth’s civic entry. Henry Machyn, a citizen of London and member of the Merchant Taylor guild, recorded his experience at Elizabeth’s civic entry in his diary. Charles Wriothesley, in *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, from A.D. 1485 to 1559*, briefly mentions the festivities surrounding Elizabeth’s coronation in his heraldic-focused historiography. Richard Grafton, one of the four men responsible for overseeing the production of the civic entry, summarizes the intentions behind each pageant in his chronicle published in 1563. While the civic and heraldic accounts of Elizabeth’s civic entry provide an English perspective, there is also extant a diplomatic dispatch written by Aloisio Schivenoglia and sent to Sabino Calandra, Castellan of Mantua, on 23 January 1559. Schivenoglia provides a court-centered perspective of the civic entry that differs from the English accounts: his letter focuses on
the role the court played in the civic entry, with a particular investment in rank, dress, and order in the procession through the streets of London. While Henry Machyn’s interest lies in the figural narratives in each pageant, Charles Wriothesley gives the entry only cursory mention in favour of Mary’s funeral and Elizabeth’s coronation rituals. Richard Grafton, the person most closely aligned with the production of the civic pageants, provides what he believed to be the central argument of every pageant but does not mention Elizabeth’s role in the entry. Also extant are the *Revels Accounts* and the records from the Court of Alderman who called several common councils in the months and weeks leading up to the civic entry. This collection of documents provides a rich perspective on the wide range of interest groups who participated in, and experienced, the civic entry. Extensive documentation around Elizabeth’s coronation and the ensuing festivities reflects the importance of performance for both the Tudor court and the City of London.

London’s City Council, the official sponsor of the civic entry, had experience hosting ritual social dramas. In twelve years the citizens produced four royal entries: Edward VI’s coronation entry in 1547, Mary I’s coronation entry in 1553, Mary and Philip’s joint entry to celebrate their marriage in 1554, and finally Elizabeth’s coronation entry in 1559. The costs incurred were staggering. Props, stage machinery, and costumes, therefore, were stored carefully for future use. After Mary’s coronation, civic documents record the careful preservation of the entry’s infrastructure: the Court of Aldermen ordered that all props should be “saulfeley leyd up together, every pageaunte by itself that they may serve agayne if need shalbe hereafter” (*Repertories* xiii part j, fol. 191v). Frugality and efficiency motivated the civic authorities to recycle pageants, emblems, and allegorical figures from one royal entry to the next. The repertoire of
images that circumscribed sovereignty was renovated for Elizabeth’s coronation, enabling the court and the city to repeat certain narratives.

The Tudor dynasty in particular generated a complex emblematic vocabulary that informed the idiom of sovereignty in the sixteenth century. Courtly performances in Henry VII’s, Henry VIII’s, and Edward VI’s reigns repeatedly employed certain iconographic symbols, training their subjects to “read” the relationship between sovereignty and subjecthood through a particular ideological lens. However, the very nature of sovereignty was disrupted by female accession and profoundly reshaped by Elizabeth’s reign. Masculinity was no longer a normative precondition for sovereignty. The queen’s gender placed sovereignty under intense scrutiny, which in turn challenged the legitimacy of the categories which underpinned authority in England. Female accession precipitated a revision of notions of kingship, nationalism, and subjecthood, warranting a new system of representation to account for this shift in social identity for sovereigns and subjects alike.

The process of creating an Elizabethan idiom of sovereignty was determined by several interest groups, informed by class, religion, and politics, who competed for attention in Elizabeth’s royal entry. Multiple advisors, architects, actors, and artists collaborated on this spectacle. However, there are clues about the identities of the most senior devisors: on December 13, 1558, the Court of Aldermen commissioned Richard Grafton, Francis Robinson, Richard Hilles, and Lionel Duckett to oversee the pageant production. These four men were probably not responsible for creating the meaning behind each pageant since responsibilities for individual stations had already been delegated and preparations were underway. However, the four men were responsible for ensuring that the larger figural narratives were aligned with civic interests and they were
granted the power “to reforme alter or adde vnto the same as they with thadvyse of suche as they shall call vnto them, shall think good” (qtd. in Anglo Spectacle, 346 n.3).\textsuperscript{21}

The Court of Aldermen required Grafton, Robinson, Hilles, and Duckett to submit “a platte of all there opynyons and doynges therin” (ibid.). While this template of the pageants in civic entry is not extant, it is likely that Elizabeth, her secretary William Cecil, and members of the Privy Council were aware of the themes and order of the pageants before the day of the civic entry. Elizabeth may well have prepared speeches and even appropriate reactions beforehand to ensure she took full advantage of her début performance as queen of England.\textsuperscript{22} Ten days before her procession Elizabeth wrote a letter in her own hand to the Master of the Revels, Thomas Cawarden, instructing him to “cause to be delivered unto John Gresham and John Elyot, citizens of our city of London such and insomuch of the said apparel” for the royal entry pageants (qtd. in Bergeron 2003, 22).\textsuperscript{23} David Bergeron suggests that Elizabeth was concerned with the details of her royal entry and, therefore, actively involved the Revels Office to aid in the civic preparations (21).\textsuperscript{24} Elizabeth’s keen interest in the festivities demonstrates her role as a partial patron of the civic entry, a dramatic form that was usually the jurisdiction of guilds and the City of London. Bergeron argues that her participation “points the way to the eventual active patronizing of acting companies at court” (26). Furthermore, he asserts that “the interrelationship between the civic pageant and the court masque is unmistakable, suggesting that if costumes can be exchanged, then the two kinds of drama are not alien or mutually exclusive dramatic forms or experiences” (31). Both queen and City took a keen interest in the civic entry, a performative space that shaped relations between sovereign and subject. While Elizabeth débuts her sovereign spectacle in order to solidify
social approbation, the City débuts their version of sovereign authority through a
Protestant and civic lens.

When Elizabeth came to the throne, she inherited a dubious legacy from her two
siblings: an idiom of sovereignty that was deeply conflicted and contradictory. This crisis
of representation, precipitated by the rapid shifts between monarchs, governments, and
religions, had to be reconciled for Elizabeth’s spectacle of sovereignty to have coherence
in performance. The instability of symbols and meaning made it imperative for producers
of spectacle to introduce discursive mediation to every level of performance in an attempt
to stabilize meaning. This trend toward textualization informs the production of meaning
in Elizabeth’s royal entry. In the first section of this chapter, I analyze the narratives
produced by the pageantry and argue that the civic pageants provide spectators with a
sustained contemplation on the nature of sovereign authority. Pageant-dramatists
employed innovative strategies of representation to contain contradiction, dispel
ambiguity, and promote their model of queenship. Visual representation, in the form of
allegorical costumes, symbols, and heraldic emblems, provided spectators with clues
about the pageant’s message. The civic entry also accompanied iconographic symbols
with oral explication. Children were posted at each pageant as interpretive guides for the
audience. The third layer of representation was an innovative addition to civic and royal
processions: the pageant-dramatists commissioned explanatory tablets in Latin and
English to flank each pageant.25 The visual, aural, and textual narratives were an attempt
to contain the crisis of representation precipitated by the rapid regime changes. However,
the intersections between these representational strategies shape different interpretive
communities based on the level of access and therefore vex claims of coherence. I argue
that the English and Latin tablets which accompany each pageant create two authorizing
narratives around sovereignty, revealing the dichotomous nature of royal power in the mid-sixteenth century.

In the second section, I analyze *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, a pageant book commissioned by the civic authorities to document the Elizabeth’s coronation entry and create an eternal monument to civic largess. While Richard Mulcaster reproduces the dramatic speeches, orations, poems, mottoes, titles, and paratheatrical texts present on the day of the performance, he also shapes his own version of sovereign authority outside the parameters established by the pageant dramatists. The *Quenes Maiesties Passage* is a new type of record that offers readers proximity to Elizabeth’s special individuality. Mulcaster invests his narrative with performative presence, textualizing a three-dimensional space for sovereign spectacle that is in many ways richer and more complex than the “original” performance. The depth of the textual field provides readers with a level of intimacy that created an unprecedented readership experience. Mulcaster reflects and shapes a set of beliefs that underlie English social identity in order to make queenship legitimate and universally accepted.

Although Mulcaster attempts to stabilize meaning in a culture where female sovereignty is fraught with contradiction and anxiety, an analysis of the extant eye-witness accounts reveals that meaning is never stable in performance. In the third section of this chapter, I argue that several interpretive audiences (civic, aristocratic, foreign, Catholic) contribute to the repertoire of images, values, and narratives that determined Elizabeth’s model of sovereignty. Analyzing Mulcaster’s text alongside the extant accounts exposes the mechanisms behind the production and circulation of early modern conceptions of sovereignty and subjecthood. I argue that the tension generated between
performance and textuality is essential to the formation of the new Elizabethan cultural idiom.

**Section I: Performance & Textuality**

Tudor models of sovereignty repeatedly lay claims to universals and appear to maintain timeless values. While reiteration has a naturalizing function, sovereignty is inherently labile. In the first half of the sixteenth century, the repetition of the same motifs in performance is crucial to the formation of sovereign authority. However, several factors (such as the Reformation, the establishment of Protestantism, the return to Catholicism and the introduction of female sovereignty in the Marian regime) destabilized the meaning behind visual symbols, allegorical tableaus, and emblems that comprised the cultural idiom of sovereignty in Tudor England. Sovereignty, without the necessary ritualizing functions in performance, risked being exposed as local, contingent, and tenuous rather than universal, preordained, and permanent. By the time of Elizabeth’s coronation, symbols were accompanied by discursive mediation and elaborate explications. The pageant devisers, appointed to produce Elizabeth’s civic entry into London on the day before her coronation, were faced with a difficult challenge: they had to develop new mediums of representation that stabilize the way information is received and interpreted. As Mary and Philip discovered in their marriage entry, ambiguity around visual symbols had the potential to lead to dissident readings and subversion. The success of Elizabeth’s sovereign spectacle, and by extension her authority, hinged on the pageant devisors’ abilities to rehabilitate a semiotics of sovereignty.

Pageant organizers had to devise specific solutions to ensure Elizabeth’s subjects had the necessary tools with which to re-establish their fluency in the idiom of sovereignty. The particular solution for the queen’s royal entry was to textualize
performance in a way that reasserted clear, corresponding relationships between units of content and units of expression. At the top of every pageant was a title explaining the allegorical meaning. The theme of the first pageant was clearly identifiable: “at the forefront of the same pageant in a fair wreath was written the name and title of the same, which was The Uniting of the Two Houses of Lancaster and York” (QMP 79). In addition to the pageant titles, all allegorical figures wore their names on their chests so that the literate members of the audience could properly identify them:

Each of these personages, according to their proper names and properties, had not only their names in plain and perfect writing set upon their breasts easily to be read of all, but also every one of them was aptly and properly appareled, so that his apparel and name did agree to express the same person that in title he represented. (QMP 82)

Systems of meaning were produced and then reinforced on every level of representation. Since access to information was crucial to dispelling ambiguity, the pageant devisors equipped each pageant with oral explication. An interpretive guide was stationed at every pageant to explain the significance of the pageant to the audience: “a convenient place appointed for one child, which did interpret and apply the said pageant as shall be declared” (QMP 82, emphasis added). These explications instructed the audience on how to “read” the visual signs to access the pageant’s larger meaning. Each oration engaged in a process of translation that mediated between performance and reception. However, knowing that the noise of the crowds made the orations difficult to hear, the pageant devisors reinforced the oral explications with textual versions: “The same verses were fastened up in a table upon the scaffold, and the Latin thereof likewise in Latin verses, in another table as hereafter ensueth” (77). Members of the audience, depending on their
viewing position and literacy level, could see the allegorical motifs, read the titles and nametags, hear the orations, and consult the English-Latin tablets which accompanied every pageant.

The organizing committee ensured that the citizens of London had adequate time to fully appreciate the messages promoted in the royal entry; the pageants remained standing, complete with English-Latin explanations, for several days after the festivities. The citizens were afforded the opportunity to survey the pageants at their leisure without the crowds, noise, and distractions present on the day of performance. Pragmatically, it would have been in the City’s best interests to disassemble the pageants immediately after the queen’s procession to preserve them from the weather, souvenir seekers, and other threats to the integrity of the props. When the Court of Aldermen finally delivered the order to remove the pageants, the instructions were to “save as moche of the stufe of them as may be to serve at an other tyme” (*Repertories*, XIV, fol. 110). However, it appears that the desire to circulate the narratives present in civic pageantry to the widest possible audience supplanted the more practical desire to preserve the pageants for future use.

The English and Latin “tables” play a major role in reinstating access to figural narratives around sovereignty by offering a textual guide for the audience. These texts provide insights into the models of sovereign authority the City wished to produce and disseminate during Elizabeth’s royal entry into London. Difficult to categorize since they are neither exclusively scripts for performance, nor are they poems for contemplation, these texts represent a series of works with dramatic origins and literary aspirations. The English verses have traces of liveness because in performance they functioned in tandem with the spoken word to enhance comprehension. These captions functioned like modern day subtitles because they translated the orations and explained the action that was
occurring simultaneously in performance. Yet this relationship to “liveness” is somewhat problematic since the texts were designed to mediate between meaning and performance. Not only do these captions augment performance; they also replace the need for liveness because the verses outlive the ephemeral pageantry in new generic forms. The English and Latin “tables” are recorded in sixteenth-century historiographies, including the chronicles of Holinshed, Wriothesley, and Stow.28 Richard Mulcaster, in *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, also reproduced the English and Latin tablets, as did Aloisio Schivenoglia in his diplomatic dispatch to Sabino Calandra, Castellan of Mantua a week after the civic entry. The available generic models (play scripts, orations, poetry, historiographies, pamphlets, and letters) are overly restrictive and fail to take into account the potential for the “tables” to produce meaning as a result of the interplay between various modes of reading and performance. For my purposes I will refer to these “tables” as “paratheatrical texts” since they occupy the margins of the theatrical space but are not subordinate components in the production of meaning. Instead, they comment upon, inflect, and sometimes contradict the narratives circulating in performance.

These paratheatrical texts are ostensibly devised to summarize the larger figural narratives circulating in performance and provide the audience with a coherent and stable reading of each complex pageant. For the first three stations on the procession route the textual apparatuses are transparently bi-lingual. The English text which accompanies the City’s welcome at Fenchurch is translated directly into Latin with no alterations, as is the pageant uniting the two houses of Lancaster and York, and the “Seat of Worthy Government” pageant. However, halfway through the royal entry the texts diverge significantly. When the English and Latin verses are placed side by side, the paratheatrical texts are no longer bi-lingual versions of the same narrative. Rather, they
express markedly different messages that address two separate interpretive audiences and produce independent models of sovereign authority. Read together, these texts trouble the stability of sovereign identity, the objective which the pageant devisors strove so hard to achieve in production. Since the versions differ on several fundamental points, they were likely written by at least two separate authors, from different educational and, perhaps, class backgrounds. A pageant-by-pageant comparison demonstrates that the two versions of sovereignty locate the source of sovereign authority in different registers. Multiple agendas generate friction between visual, textual, and theatrical meaning, exposing the contested nature of sovereignty in early modern England.

The English and Latin tablets that accompany the pageants along Elizabeth’s procession route provide access to the mechanisms which govern the production of sovereign spectacle. Surprisingly, these paratheatrical texts have been overlooked in favour of studies based on the royal entry as a form of political theatre. Neale, in the introduction to his facsimile edition of the royal entry, states, “In unmistakable language, verbal, pictorial, and symbolical, they proclaimed the new, revolutionary England which the citizens confidently expected her to inaugurate” (13). Much of the scholarship focuses on Tudor propaganda. For example, Grant McCracken analyzes the entry as a “form of state theatre” that rehearses political dialogue in symbolic form (46). The scholarly consensus is that the pageant series is a straightforward royal panegyric produced by a cohesive corporate body. However, as I will argue below, the English and Latin “tables” vex claims of “coherence” and “cohesiveness” put forward by the pageant devisors in sixteenth-century England and by the early modern scholars in the twentieth and twenty-first century.
The tablets blur the division between performance and text because they are at once spoken and read, public and private, dramatic and literary. The English version is more accessible because the narrative is simultaneously spoken and read. However, the tablet draws the (literate) spectator’s attention away from the theatrical performance toward the textualized version. The Latin tablets are not verbalized; therefore, the spectators whose level of literacy enables them to access their meaning experience a higher degree of mediation in performance. The vernacular version is written for a largely civic audience that identifies sovereign authority based on the personal merits and special individuality of the monarch. In these tablets, Elizabeth’s body expresses the essence of legitimate authority and her worth is grounded in the visual manifestation of sovereign spectacle. The promise of a Protestant revival shapes the English “tables” and celebrates Elizabeth’s role in the restoration of Henrician and Edwardian religious policies. The Latin version is directed toward the educated elite. This largely masculine interpretive audience locates the source of sovereign authority in Elizabeth’s genealogy rather than her performativity. Since history is the basis of identity formation in this paradigm, Elizabeth’s alignment with Henry VIII takes on central significance.

Levels of literacy created differing interpretive communities in Elizabeth’s coronation entry. While levels of literacy are difficult to determine for mid sixteenth-century England, Keith Thomas suggests that literacy rates have been significantly underestimated because “there were so many kinds of written words” (99). The diversity of scripts, typefaces, and languages meant that an individual could sometimes read but not write, read type but not script, or be well versed in English but not in Latin. David Cressy calculated that by 1640 only twenty-two percent of men in London were illiterate (Cressy 1980, 51; Thomas 101); F. Du Boulay estimates that by the end of the
fifteenth-century England has a thirty percent literacy rate; Silvia Thrupp estimates that by 1476 there was a forty percent Latin literacy; Jo Ann Hoeppner Moran suggests that most members of the nobility and gentry were literate in the vernacular by the fourteenth century and that by the end of the fifteenth century “literacy had become more common at the middle level of lay society and was not altogether absent even among the very poor” (150). While all estimates are tentative, Michael O’Connell asserts that literacy increased steadily from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth century, and Thomas asserts that by 1600 the gentry and professional classes were completely literate (97; 42).  

Several levels of literacy are operative in Elizabeth’s royal entry. Illiterate spectators had to rely solely on visual representation or, if they were lucky enough to secure a position close enough to the pageants, the orations. Assuming that the paratheatrical texts appeared in basic print, the English tablets were intelligible to merchants, scribes, legal aides, and a large percentage of the middle class. Latinity was the most exclusive level of literacy, available to scholars, lawyers and other professionals, ambassadors, members of Parliament, a large percentage of the gentry, and of course the queen and her retinue. Thomas notes that “Latin was essentially the prerogative of a social elite and a masculine one at that” (101). Education, class, and gender determined literacy, which in turn circumscribed access, and, in the case of the royal entry, aligned subjects with a particular model of sovereign authority. The two interpretive communities demarcated by the English and Latin tablets, therefore, were almost certainly distributed by class, profession, and gender.  

The “Eight Beatitudes” pageant is the first pageant along Elizabeth’s entry which transmits different narratives about sovereignty, social identity, and their interrelationship. The English version, delivered orally and textually, locates the source of Elizabeth’s
authority in her personal merit. The oral explication argues that Elizabeth will be a worthy queen because she was made a Protestant martyr by the Marian regime:

Thou hast been eight times blessed, O Queen of worthy fame
By meekness of thy spirit, when care did thee beset
By mourning in thy grief, by mildness of thy blame
By hunger and by thirst, and justice couldst none get. (*QMP* 84)

The oration itemizes Elizabeth’s sufferings and emphasizes her noble behaviour in the face of persecution. A series of possessive pronouns make specific reference to her hardships: “By mourning in *thy* grief/ by mildness of *thy* blame.” In this version, personal experience is valued, and Elizabeth has proven her worth eightfold. Individuality is privileged as a pathway to heightened spirituality. The queen’s misfortunes are redefined as blessings when her personal merit leads to divine favour. According to the vernacular version, Elizabeth is rewarded for her virtuous behaviour:

*By mercy shown, not felt*, by cleanness of thine heart

By seeking peace always, by persecution wrong,

Therefore trust thou in God, since He hath helped thy smart

That as His promise is, so He will make thee strong. (85, emphasis added)

According to this argument, Elizabeth is deemed worthy to rule England on the basis that she can transform mercy from affect into action. The final two lines of the quatrain suggest the existence of a personal covenant between Elizabeth and God: God promised Elizabeth aid when she suffered as a martyr under the Catholic regime. Her willingness to sacrifice her life for her people and her religion is celebrated as an important source of her sovereign authority, while her personal experiences ensured divine protection for England.
The Latin verses attached to the “Eight Beatitudes” pageant differ considerably. This version disregards the individual merits of Elizabeth in favour of expounding a series of maxims:

*Qui lugent hilares fient, qui mitia gestant*

*Pectora, multa soli iugera culta metent*

*Iustitiam esuriens sitiensue replebitur, ispum*

[Those who weep shall be made happy; those who bear a meek Heart shall alone reap many cultivated acres.]

Who hungers and thirsts for justice shall himself be filled]. (*QMP* 85; trans. Warkentin 128).

Personal experience, so central to the English version, is disguised in the Latin version by *sententiae*. The Latin diction distances Elizabeth from her past suffering: “*Qui lugent hilares [those who weep]***” rather than “thy grief.” While the English version directly apostrophizes the queen (“O worthy queen”), the Latin version addresses the audience collectively in order to promote a much more general message that all suffering will be rewarded in Heaven:

*Fas homini puro corde videre deum*

*Quem alterius miseret dominus miserebitur huius,*

*Pacificus quisquis, filius ille Dei est.*

*Propter iustitiam quisquis patietur habetque*

*Demissam mentem, cælica regna capit.*

*Huic hominum generi terram, mare, sidera vovit*

*Omnipotens, horum quisque beatus erit.*

[And divine law will permit the man pure of heart to see God Himself.]
The Lord will have mercy on him who is merciful to others.

Whosoever makes peace, he is a son of God.

Whoever suffers on account of justice and
Is burdened in spirit shall gain the kingdom of Heaven.

To such men the Almighty promised earth, sea and stars,

And each of these men shall be blessed]. (QMP 85, trans. Warkentin 128)

The reward for suffering is located in the heavenly rather than the earthly realm. While
Elizabeth is promised the reward of ruling England in the English version, the Latin tablet
redistributes reward in aphoristic terms: every man who suffers will be rewarded with in
Heaven when he will “sidera votit Omnipotens [see God Himself]” (QMP 85).

Elizabeth’s special individuality, the authorizing narrative so prevalent in the English
version, has no currency in the Latin model of sovereignty.

When she approached the Little Conduit in Cheap, Elizabeth encountered a
pageant with two mounts, titled Respublica bene instituta and Ruinosa Respublica.

Richard Mulcaster describes the “Decayed Commonweal” as a mount that is “cragged,
barren, and stony” with a “tree all withered and dead” (QMP 87). The sterile mount is
occupied by a man “in homely and rude apparel, crookedly and in mourning manner,
having over his head in a table written in Latin and English, his name, which was Ruinosa
Respublica, A Decayed Commonweal” (87). On the second mount, which Mulcaster
describes as “fair, fresh, green, and beautiful,” a man sits under a tree who is “well
apparelled and appointed, whose name also was written both in English and in Latin,
which was Respublica bene instituta, A Flourishing Commonweal” (87). The English
paratheatrical text identifies the man who occupies the Ruinosa Respublica as a “rueful
wight that sitteth under the barren tree,/ Resembleth to us the form” (88). According to
this tablet, the ruined mount makes visible the suffering of the English people. However, the English oration holds out hope that England could become *Respublica bene instituta*: “But when they be in state triumphant, you may see/ By him in fresh attire that sitteth under the bay” (88). In order to achieve England’s potential, the second stanza entreats Elizabeth directly for help: “we trust wealth thou wilt plant, and barrenness displace” (88). Barrenness, the present state of England, must be replaced with fertility and reproduction. The horticultural metaphor urges Elizabeth to restore England to its former glory and provides her with the key to a flourishing commonwealth:

But for to heal the sore, and cure what is not seen,
Which thing the book of truth doth teach in writing plain:
She doth present to thee the same, O worthy queen,
For that, that words do fly, but writing doth remain. (88)

Truth, on cue, emerges from the cave located in between the two mounts and presents Elizabeth with an English Bible. According to this tablet, the English Bible, a symbol of Protestantism, contains all the knowledge the queen needs to restore England to a “state triumphant.” Responsibility for the nation’s health lies solely in the hands of Elizabeth. Thus, the English Bible is England’s keystone, while Elizabeth is responsible for its implementation and enforcement.

In the Latin text, by contrast, the pageant moves away from the specific representation of England and instead makes the lessons of the pageant more abstract. The ruined commonweal functions as a negative exemplar for citizens and sovereign alike:

*Qui sedet a laeva cultu male tristis inepto*

*Quem duris crescentis cautibus orbis obit*

*Nos monet effigie, qua sit Respublica quando*
Corruit, at contra quando beata viget.

Ille docet iuvenis forma spectandus amictu

Scitus, et æterna laurea fronde virens

[The sad fellow who sits to the left in untended field. Who, encircled by sharp rocks rising high, expires, Warns us by his appearance what the republic may be when it Has been ruined; contrariwise, that lovely youth recognizable by his garment, Teaches [what the republic may be] when it thrives in blessedness, As does the laurel, flourishing with everlasting branch]. (88-89; trans. Warkentin 128)

This version presents the two mounts as abstracted models of utopia and dystopia. These dual images of decay and prosperity exemplify that a commonwealth can only thrive when the entire nation “cultivates” [cultu] the fields. While the English version tells Elizabeth in no uncertain terms that England is in ruin and pleads with her to restore prosperity through religious reform, the Latin version functions as a public service announcement about the importance of collective productivity. The English version places the health of the nation directly on the shoulders of Elizabeth while the Latin version distributes responsibility evenly among all subjects.

The climax of Elizabeth’s royal entry is the delivery of the English Bible into her hands. The pageant-dramatists compose their tableau vivant to emphasize the relationship between Truth and Verbum Dei: Mulcaster states, “directly over her head was set her name and title in Latin and English, Temporis filia, the Daughter of Time … And on her breast was written her proper name, which was Veritas, Truth, who held a book in her hand upon the which was written Verbum veritatis, the Word of Truth” (87-88). Truth has
a dual signification: first, her significance is relational because she is the daughter of Time; second, Truth is the embodiment of the Word of Truth. The oration expands upon the visual narrative the pageant produces: “This old man with the scythe, old Father Time they call,/And her his daughter Truth, which holdeth yonder book/ Whom he out of this rock hath brought forth to us all” (88). The audience is taught how to “read” symbols in order to identify allegorical figures iconographically. According to the oration, Truth is the English Bible and *vice versa*. The legitimizing narrative in this oration argues that Elizabeth is the legitimate queen because she – as the bearer of Truth – restores *Verbum Dei* to the English people.

The Latin version subordinates the importance of the English Bible to a narrative that celebrates the reunion between father and daughter:

*Ille, vides falcem lœva qui sustinet uncam,*

*Tempus is est, cui stat filia vera comes*

*Hanc pater exesa deductam rupe reponit*

*In lucem, quam non viderat ante diu*

[This man thou seest, who holds the scythe in his left hand, Is Time, and with him stands his daughter Truth, Whom he had not seen in a long time; her the father Drew from out the rock and placed again in light]. (*QMP* 88-9; trans. Warkentin 128)

The relationship between Time and Truth reinforces Elizabeth’s pledge to reinstate Henrician reforms and, in the true sense of a mirror, the pageant reverses the roles of emancipator and emancipated: Time draws forth his daughter from darkness just as Elizabeth is to restore her father’s religious policies from Catholic oppression. The
Latin text asserts that genealogy is the fabric of sovereign power, drawing explicit parallels between the father-daughter relationship in performance and the father-daughter relationship in Tudor succession.

The final station of Elizabeth’s royal entry features a set of Latin and English verses placed on panels held above Temple Bar Gate by two ancient giants named Gotmagot and Corineus. These paratheatrical texts offer summaries of the pageants’ themes seemingly to promote a coherent narrative that crystallizes meaning and banishes interpretive ambiguity. The Latin version promotes itself as the final authority: “*Quicquid in immense passim perspexeris urbe/ Quœ cepere omnes unus hic arcus habet* [Whatever thou hast seen elsewhere in this vast city/ This one arch demonstrates what all the rest comprehend]” (*QMP* 94; trans. Warkentin 130). The English version makes the same claims: “What elsewhere thou hast seen in this wide town, again/ This one arch, whatsoever the rest contained, doth say” (*QMP* 94). However, the “official” explanation expounded in the English version differs from the Latin version, exposing the ideologies which underwrite each version of sovereign spectacle, and by extension the identities of the interpretive audiences for whom the authors tailor their narratives.

One disparity between the final English and Latin texts lies in the exordium of each tablet. The English version addresses the citizens of London directly, “Behold here in one view, thou mayest see all that plain” (*QMP* 94), while the Latin version addresses the queen directly: “*Ecce sub aspectu iam contemplaberis uno/ O prince populi sola columna tui* [Behold, in one display thou seest them all/ O princess, thy people’s only pillar]” (*QMP* 94; trans. Warkentin 130). The civic exhortation urges a general audience to exert their gaze, and yet the exact spectacle “they” are meant to behold is unclear: is the tablet urging spectators to view Elizabeth, or urging Elizabeth to gaze upon her
subjects? The answer is perhaps both, and the underlying assumption in this exordium is that truth can be accessed through the act of looking. In the English version, visual representation has the power to render meaning manifest. The Latin version, however, imagines a much more specific audience: the opening statement addresses the queen directly and instructs her to gaze upon the pageants, and perhaps her subjects, to “know” them. Her inspection of the pageantry and the crowd is an act of surveillance: she can “see them all” because she rules them all. The direction of the gaze in each version illustrates the imagined relationship between sovereign and subject. The English version distributes power equally to the citizens and the queen; however, the Latin version invests Elizabeth with the sole power to direct her gaze at her subjects, a gaze that is all-encompassing and all powerful, where “in one display thou seest them all.”

In the final lines, each author concludes his discourse with a clear definition of sovereignty. The tablets reinforce the expectations of the people, outline the goals Elizabeth should strive to achieve, and make clear what tools she requires for successful governance. In the English version, there is a suggestion that an ideal sovereign should sacrifice personal desires for the collective good:

Live long, and as long reign, adorning thy country,

With virtues, and maintain thy people’s hope of thee,

For thus, thus Heaven is won, thus must ye pierce the sky,

This is by virtue wrought, all other must needs die. (QMP 95)

For the civic audience, the end of the royal entry marks the final stage in the metamorphosis from princess to queen. Life and death exist side by side in this farewell quatrain. The first word “live” anticipates the final word “die,” perhaps to celebrate the birth of a new identity, the public queen, with the death of the old one, the private woman.
According to the English oration, Elizabeth’s purpose is to adorn England with virtue to fulfill the hopes of her people. The Latin version establishes a different set of goals for the queen:

\[
\textit{Vive diu, regnaque diu, virtutibus orna}
\]
\[
\textit{Rem patriam, et populi spem tueare tui.}
\]
\[
\textit{Sic o sic petitur cœlum Sic itur in astra}
\]
\[
\textit{Hoc virtutis opus, cætera mortis erunt}
\]

[Live long and reign long, O Queen,
Adorn thy father’s state with virtue.
Hope of thy people, protect their cause.
Thus, O thus, is Heaven attained, thus the stars reached;
This is the work of virtue, all else shall be of death]. (\textit{QMP} 94, trans. Warkentin 130)

Elizabeth’s primary directive in both versions is to seek out virtue, but the focus is relocated from “thy country” in the English text to “\textit{Rem patriam} [thy father’s state]” in the Latin. Worldly and spiritual prosperity, brought into existence by Henrician rule, will be further adorned by his most valuable legacy, Elizabeth herself. While the final lines of the English version induct Elizabeth into a life of service to her nation, the Latin version is more general in its prescriptions for a virtuous life.

The “Deborah with her Three Estates” Pageant, the final dramatic tableau in the entry, generates a great deal of controversy around civic intention and royal reception by engaging in a dialogue with the polemical firestorm raging around Elizabeth’s accession. The pageant-dramatists create a narrative which aligns Elizabeth with Deborah, a biblical figure who liberated the Israelites from the oppression of Jaben of Canaan, just as
Elizabeth delivers the English nation from the yoke of Catholicism. Deborah, drawn from the fourth and fifth chapters of the Book of Judges, appears in the civic entry pageant sitting under her iconic palm tree, wearing an open crown, and arrayed in English parliamentary robes. Instead of focussing on Deborah’s emancipation of the Israelites, the pageant asserts that female governance should be guided by Parliament since the Biblical queen is depicted in council with the Three Estates. Tension exists at the textual level between the English and Latin verses as they produce different evaluations of gender and sovereignty. In the English version, Deborah is a Biblical template for the Tudor queen:

Jaben of Canaan king has long by force of arms
Oppressed the Israelites, which for God’s people went
But God minding at last for to redress their harms,
The worthy Deborah as judge among them sent. (QMP 92)

Drawn from biblical history, Deborah and the Israelites correlate to England under the Marian regime. In this formulation, God has sent Elizabeth to deliver her people from Catholic oppression just as Deborah delivered her people from Jaben. Although the oration advocates on behalf of female governance, the “acceptable” model has specific requirements. Female authority, according to this model, is bestowed divinely rather than lineally or politically:

In war she, through God’s aid, did put her foes to flight,
And with the dint of sword the band of bondage brast.
In peace she, through God’s aid, did always maintain right
And judged Israel till forty years were passed. (QMP 92)
The refrain “through God’s aid” emphasizes that women rule only during special cases that require divine intervention. Elizabeth and Deborah’s success as rulers is determined by “God’s aid” rather than their political acumen. The rhetoric, which appears supportive of female governance, is in fact prescriptive. In the Latin version, Deborah is represented as a mighty warrior who can govern with authority. The Latin model of female leadership is invested with greater power to wield political and military force:

Quando dei populum Canaan, rex pressit Iaben,

Mittitur a magno Debora magno deo:

Quae populum eriperet, sanctum seruaret Iudan,

Milite quœ patrio frangeret hostis opes.

[When Jaben king of Canaan oppressed God’s people

There was sent by great God, great Deborah

To free the people and save holy Judah,

To shatter the enemy’s might with the army of her people]. (QMP 92; trans. Warkentin 129-30)

The biblical story resembles the English version in so far as Jaben oppressed the Israelites and God sent Deborah to free them from their bondage. However, while Deborah was sent by God, she defeated Jaben “Milite quœ patrio [with the army of her people]” unlike the English version which attributes her victory rather vaguely to “God’s aid.” The English version is preoccupied with Deborah’s divine ordination, whereas the Latin version invests her reign with martial authority and even aligns her adjectivally with God: “magno Debora magno deo [great God, great Deborah].” In both versions, female authority is originally bestowed by God, but in the Latin text Deborah’s skills as both a
warrior and magistrate make her leadership a positive model for monarchs of both genders:

*Haec domino mandante deo lectissima fecit*

*Fæmina, et aduersos contudit ense viros*

*Haec quater denos populum correxerat annos*

*Iudicio, bello strenua, pace grauis*

[This most happy woman, the Lord God ordaining,
Contended with the sword against [her] adversaries.
For forty years she reformed the people with justice,
Mighty in war, steadfast in peace]. (*QMP* 92, trans. Warkentin 129-30)

The Latin interpretation of Deborah’s rule does not focus on gender. Instead, the text defines a good leader as one who enacts political reform, upholds justice, and is equally skilled in the art of war and peace. Deborah is not exemplary because of her gender; in this model she is extraordinary for her political acumen and her ability to occupy successfully the martial and diplomatic spheres. An imperative concludes the Latin version: “*Sic, O sic populum belloque et pace guberna,/ Deboras sis Anglis Elizabetha tuis*” [Thus, O thus, Elizabeth, govern the people in war and peace;/ Be a Deborah to thine English [people]] (*QMP* 92). The Latin text counsels the queen to actively perform the qualities demonstrated by the biblical ruler, investing her with the power to enact reform and rule with the sword as circumstances require. The model of queenship represented in the Latin version explicitly affords Elizabeth with political force and autonomy: this is not entirely the case in the English text.

Biblical precedent for queenship appears to be invoked in performance to combat anti-feminist discourse. John Knox, in *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous
Regiment of Women (1558), led the charge against female governance: “By the Holy Ghost is manifestly expressed in these words, I suffer not a woman to usurp authority above man. So both by God’s law and the interpretation of the Holy Ghost, women are utterly forbidden to occupy the place of God in the offices foresaid, which he has assigned to man, whom he hath appointed to be his lieutenant on earth” (qtd. in Levin 1998, 10). The Deborah Pageant is strategically employed by the pageant-dramatists to counter these claims and promote queenship in a political climate rife with anti-feminist discourse:

A worthy precedent, O worthy Queen, thou hast,

A worthy woman judge, a woman sent for stay,

And that the like to us endure always thou mayst

Thy loving subjects will with true hearts and tongues pray. (QMP 92)

The English oration, however, can hardly be categorized as “proto-feminist.” Gender and its relationship to authority are scrutinized in the first two lines of this quatrain. An almost compulsive repetition of “worthy” is paired with various permutations of female identity: political model, monarch, judge, and support for the nation. But the need to draw attention to gender is symptomatic of residual discomfort around notions of queenship.

In the Deborah pageant, female power is undercut visually because the pageant depicts Deborah conferring with men from each of England’s three estates in order to emphasize that her forty-year reign depended on good counsel from her advisors. The circumscription of female governance aligns itself with contemporary polemicists who defend Elizabeth from the anti-feminist discourse circulating in England and on the Continent. John Aylmer, in Harborowe for faithful and true subjects (1559), wrote a rebuttal to Knox’s scathing account of queenship. Aylmer defends Elizabeth’s right to
rule because “the regiment of England is not a mere monarchie” but rather a combination of “Monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy” (qtd. in Levin, 11). In his pamphlet Aylmer also uses Deborah as a biblical exemplar for female rule:

Deborah judged and that lawfully, which came not to it by inheritance, but by extraordinary calling. Much more may she that to God’s calling hath joined the ordinary of inheritance, her commons’ consent, and confirmation of laws. To Saint Austin and all the rest, which would have women in the subjection of their husbands, is to be answered as before: that their meaning and speaking was, of every private woman in the bonds of marriage: And not of those which God by birth hath called to the governments of realms. (qtd. in Levin, 11)

Aylmer agrees with the patriarchal supremacy of men and the subordination of women in the private sphere but suggests Elizabeth is not subject to the same constraints of gender. While he professes to support Elizabeth’s leadership, this is a conditional acceptance: she must defer to the three estates for counsel and be ruled by the commons and England’s laws. Female authority is conferred not only by divine “calling” but by legitimate lineal succession, the consent of the commons, and legal confirmation. According to Aylmer, Elizabeth must respect judicial power, “For it is not she that ruleth, but the laws” (H3v). Aylmer uses Deborah as an appropriate template for Elizabeth because her sovereign authority depended upon “her commons’ consent, and confirmation of laws.” This model of queenship is contingent rather than absolute. Aylmer’s sexist rhetoric is at times explicit, especially when he argues that although Elizabeth is “weak in nature, feeble in body, [and] soft in courage. If [God] be with her, who can stand against her?” (B2v). However, Aylmer justifies Elizabeth’s accession since he believes that “it is as easy for
him to save … by weak as by strong, by woman as by man” (B2v, B3r). Since Deborah was a woman called upon by God to save the Israelites from the yoke of religious persecution, Aylmer reassures his audience that Elizabeth can provide the same emancipation “even though she were a woman.”

Richard Grafton, one of the original four men commissioned to oversee the pageant series, explains the significance of the Deborah Pageant in his historiographical study of England, *An Abridgement of the Chronicles of England*:43

The fifth [pageant] was a seat royal, wherein was placed Deborah, a queen of the Jews that ruled Israel eleven years, having about her all her counsellors to talk and consult of the state of the realm and benefit of the commonwealth. This was made to encourage the Queen not to fear though she were a woman; for women by the spirit and power of Almighty God have ruled both honourably and politiquely, and that a great time, as did Deborah, which was there set forth in pageant. (QMP Appendix I 166)

Grafton may not have been directly responsible for devising the pageant: he describes Deborah’s reign as consisting of eleven years rather than the forty-year reign asserted by the English oration and the Latin verse. Yet his claim that the story of Deborah was designed to “comfort” Elizabeth is reinforced in Mulcaster’s narrative:

The ground of this last pageant was, that forasmuch as the next pageant before had set before her Grace’s eyes the flourishing and desolate states of a commonweal, she might by this be put in remembrance to consult for the worthy government of her people, considering God oftimes sent women nobly to rule among men, as Deborah which governed Israel in
peace the space of forty years, and that it behoves both men and women, so ruling, to use advice of good counsel. (QMP 92-93)

While the Deborah pageant is ostensibly designed to reassure Elizabeth that she can rule even “though she is a woman,” the rhetoric of reassurance presupposes widespread anxiety around queenship. The necessity of the biblical precedent exposes the underlying tensions generated when the normative precondition for sovereignty, masculinity, is not met.

Tellingly, this is the only pageant for which Mulcaster does not record Elizabeth’s reaction, an omission that is made all the more striking by the excessive praise she heaps upon child orators, civic gifts, and visual splendour throughout the pageant series. Every station along the procession has the same structure: once the meaning of the pageant or oration is conveyed Elizabeth thanks the city, repeats what she believes to be the central message in the performance, and then promises to fulfill the particular request of her subjects. After the opening oration, Elizabeth “thanked most heartily both the city for this gentle receiving at the first [pageant], and also the people for confirming the same” (QMP 77). Once she witnesses the Tudor Tree Pageant, “she thanked the city, praised the fairness of the work, and promised that she would do her whole endeavour for the continual preservation of concord, as the pageant did import” (80). After she understands the meaning of the second pageant, the Seat of Worthy Governance, she “gave the city thanks there, and most graciously promised her good endeavour for the maintenance of the said virtues and suppressions of vices” (83). The Eight Beatitudes Pageant is received with great pleasure: “her Grace heard marvellously graciously” the oration and then “the Queen’s Majesty did most gently thank for their loving wish” (85). Once she learns that she will receive the Bible from Truth in the Respublica Pageant, “she thanked the city for
that gift and said she would oftentimes read over that book” (86). The civic gift of one thousand marks evokes a royal speech in which Elizabeth says, “I thank my lord mayor, his brethren, and you all. And whereas your request is that I should continue your good lady and Queen, be ye ensured that I will be as good to you as ever Queen was to her people” (86-7). After the Respublica pageant Elizabeth gives “great thanks to the city therefore” (88). The final station moves Elizabeth so much that during the final oration she lifts “up her hands and wills the people to say Amen” (93). Even the simple oration delivered outside St. Dunstan’s Orphanage drew a grateful response from the queen, who “received [the oration] graciously both with words and countenance, declaring her gracious mind toward [the orphans’] relief” (93). Yet the Deborah Pageant evokes no royal reaction whatsoever, and Mulcaster merely states, “When the Queen’s Majesty had passed this pageant, she marched toward Temple Bar” (93). The absence of a reaction may reveal Elizabeth’s discomfort with the version of female governance promoted in this final tableau vivant.

Elizabeth may have resented the portrayal of biblical queenship presented by the English text because this model produced authorizing narratives that limited royal power. However, her potential distaste was not enough to dissuade others from incorporating Deborah into the early modern lexicon of queenship; John Aylmer, John Hales, and several other contemporary Protestant polemicists employed Deborah as a useful model of sovereignty for their own political purposes. John Hales, also a Marian exile, returned to England when Elizabeth took the throne and composed an “Oration” to commemorate her coronation in which he states, “It hath pleased His divine providence to constitute your highness to be our Debora” so that “our natural mother England … [be] cleansed, made hole, & then kept in good order” (qtd. in Hoak, 80).44 There is evidence to suggest
Hale and Aylmer employed the story of Deborah after they read Mulcaster’s *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* since Deborah is not employed in discussions of queenship and sovereignty before Elizabeth’s royal entry into London. Alymer and Hale wrote their pamphlets while still in exile on the Continent: according to Dale Hoak, Aylmer wrote his pamphlet in Stroudsburg within weeks of the entry pageants in England and published his treatise in London on April 26 1559 (79). Hoak suggests that Aylmer may have been in correspondence with men who would have recounted the pageantry or even had access to Mulcaster’s *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* very soon after the text finished its first print run (80). The Deborah narrative illustrates how rapidly the proliferation of concepts, symbols, and motifs produced in performance reached both domestic and international audiences. The conflict, contradiction, and ambiguity circulating around sovereignty at the outset of Elizabeth’s reign reveal the impossibility of an “official” royal image or a “collective consciousness.” Instead, we are given divergent models of sovereignty that are much more vexed and less stable than early modern scholars have thus far acknowledged.

The English and Latin paratheatrical texts produce models of sovereignty through very distinct ideological lenses. The English text produces a model of sovereignty whose central authorizing narrative is grounded in individual merit. Personal actions lead to earthly success and heavenly reward, a narrative favoured by civic ideology which privileges the power of individuals to shape their own fortunes. Elizabeth is invested with authority because she has acted nobly in the face of oppression, earning her subjects’ loyalty because she restores the English Bible to England. Elizabeth is also supported by a second legitimizing narrative of divine ordination, and she is portrayed as an instrument of (Protestant) God. She is praised for her religious position and is encouraged in these orations to reinstate Henrician reforms. Civic self-representation asserts that England is in
crisis and despair due to the heavy oppression of Marian rule. Sole responsibility for recovery and future prosperity lies directly on the shoulders of Elizabeth. Hope, however, is promised via Protestant reform and the restoration of the English Bible. The tone of the English version is prescriptive: Elizabeth is informed that her purpose as sovereign is to bestow virtue upon her country, and is counselled that she must sacrifice her desires for the greater good of England. The orations alternately address the queen and the citizens in order to issue instructions which range from a civic plea for Elizabeth to overcome barrenness to a directive that instructs civic spectators to gaze upon sovereign spectacle. One of the driving forces behind the entry pageants and the English paratheatrical texts is to reinstate a shared idiom of sovereignty; the audience is repeatedly taught how to identify allegorical figures in order to stay the crisis of representation precipitated by religious and political upheaval.

The Latin tablets locate the source of Elizabeth’s authority in lineal succession rather than individual merit. Her relationship with Henry VIII and her place within the Tudor dynasty legitimizes her right to the throne and dispels any taint of bastardy. According to the Latin version, the goal of Elizabeth’s reign is to “adorn [her] father’s state” with virtue. England, unlike the civic version, is not in decay. Instead, England should strive towards an ideal commonwealth which, according to the Latin verses, is one of shared responsibility. Collective productivity leads to overall prosperity, so that the responsibility piled upon her by the civic version is distributed equally in the Latin tablets. Elizabeth is addressed directly and is given the power of an all-encompassing gaze in the Latin texts, which fashion her, and by extension her retinue, as the primary audience. The prescriptive tone in the English version and the scrutiny of Elizabeth’s behaviour are transformed in the Latin version into aphorisms. Specific warnings issued by the civic-
based tablets become general maxims in the court-focused narratives. The Latin verse makes a request for Elizabeth to “Be Deborah,” a model of leadership characterized by three directives: reform people with justice, rule with might in war and be steadfast in peace. The only other instruction the Latin text offers Elizabeth is to “protect their cause.” This imperative distances Elizabeth from the people, establishing a distinction between “they” and “we” that also aligns the author of the Latin texts with royal power. Unlike the English tablets, there is very little attempt to decode the allegory or educate its audience in a new idiom. Since meaning is historical and genealogical rather than visual, the accession of Henry VIII’s heir does not provoke the same anxiety around royal representation.

While it is convenient to classify the English version in terms of a civic interpretive audience and the Latin as an aristocratic one, literacy was too fluid to make sweeping statements about access. Due to the collaborative nature of production behind the royal entry, civic interests cannot be reduced to a coherent or unified ideology. Nor can we read the City of London as a homogeneous unit. Instead, the paratheatrical texts reveal that versions of sovereignty are produced by a collection of individuals and factions who struggled amongst themselves, pursued their own interests, and frequently came into conflict over representations of sovereignty, subjecthood, and the state of the nation. The layers of access produced in visual and textual forms reveal that sovereignty meant different things to different interest groups. Therefore, various interpretive audiences are offered versions of sovereignty which appeal to the dominant ideologies produced by their class, profession, and even gender. While these interpretive communities produce variations of sovereign spectacle for their own projects and purposes, these two distinct versions of sovereignty are not in opposition to one another;
rather, some components are isolated for further scrutiny or emphasized. Innovative
generic modulations are employed to mediate new relationships between sovereign and
subject in performance.

Section II: Rhetoric and the Royal Image in The Quenes Maiesties Passage

The City of London celebrated Elizabeth I’s coronation with an elaborate pageant
series that was one part panegyric, one part prescription, and many parts “processual” (in
the sense that the entry designated the course of becoming rather than being a sovereign
queen). Perhaps uncomfortable with the idea of the ephemeral performance fading from
cultural consciousness, the Court of Alderman employed Richard Mulcaster “for making
of the book containing and declaring the histories set forth in and by the City’s pageants
at the time of the Queen’s Highness coming through the City to her Coronation”
(Repertories XIV f.143). Commissioned for posterity, the book was presented to
Elizabeth to commemorate the elaborate display of civic loyalty, a gentle reminder “that
there was no cost spared” on her behalf (QMP 91). The account of the civic pageantry
was also designed for a wider audience. On the day before Elizabeth’s royal entry the
Stationer’s Register expedited a license for Richard Tottel to print a pamphlet version of
Mulcaster’s account of Elizabeth’s royal entry. Civic authorities were invested in making
sure the event was well documented, which meant Mulcaster was probably positioned
within the royal retinue that accompanied the queen on her procession, the optimal
location to record civic and sovereign spectacle. Intersections between pageantry,
performance, and print culture coalesce in The Quenes Majesties Passage, making this
one of the richest early modern texts for reconstructing the cultural mechanisms behind
the production of sovereign spectacle.
In the almost four hundred and fifty years since its first press run, *The Quenes Majesties Passage* has been read, celebrated, forgotten, revived, dismissed, and overlooked. Until very recently, scholars have accepted Mulcaster’s account as an objective record of the royal entry which offers unmediated access to the civic-produced spectacle. Studies of Elizabeth’s royal entry into London do not distinguish between the narratives produced by the pageant-dramatists and those produced by Richard Mulcaster. This oversight conflates authorship, ideological motivations, representative mediums, and aesthetic intentions. Scholars who do study Mulcaster’s *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* argue that the text is an example of the monolithic power of Tudor propaganda. Germaine Warkentin, in her recent edition of *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, says the pamphlet was “of course propaganda, not reportage, and cannot be relied on for factual accuracy” (19). Neale categorizes the pamphlet as the “first … official propaganda during Elizabeth’s reign,” while Bergeron calls *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* “a marvellous piece of propaganda” (14; 18). Claims of propaganda, levelled at the civic-produced entry and Mulcaster’s pamphlet, assume the presence of a corporate body working together to produce “official” discourses. The choice not to differentiate between two very different forms of cultural production (performative and textual, visual and interpretive, ephemeral and literary) reveals an underlying critical assumption that the Elizabethan state existed as a regime with a coherent and unanimous set of interests, values, and policies. According to the scholarship around the civic entry, one corporate body oversaw the secular ritual in order to promote unambiguous narratives about sovereignty and subjection.

However, as I have argued in the previous section, the production and dissemination of sovereign spectacle is produced through collaboration, negotiation, and even conflict. The pageant-dramatists produced two separate versions of sovereign
authority in the paratheatrical texts which accompany the pageants. While Mulcaster reproduced many of the entry’s laudatory narratives, the process of textualizing performance is never transparent. The following study of *The Quenes Majesties Passage* reveals that charges of propaganda are reductive and asserts instead that the rhetoric of royal representation is a dynamic, sometimes conflicted, but always complex negotiation between and among social groups. While the City’s directive was to textualize the pageant’s “histories,” authorial presence always shapes perception and promotes stable meaning. Isolating Richard Mulcaster’s narrative voice enables us to appreciate fully his multiple roles as compiler, historiographer, translator, author, compositor, and participant. From these positions Mulcaster exerts his own interpretation, at times enhancing, dismissing, or revising the narratives put forward by the pageant-dramatists. My focus in this section is three-fold: I will discuss the motives behind the civic commission of a pageant book, the version of sovereignty it promotes, and the dissemination of the book in print in order to argue that these three modalities (form, content, and circulation) produce a new medium for the expression of sovereign spectacle that wields greater power than other available generic models.

The tension between reading and performance, and the meaning this tension produces, is important to our understanding of sovereign authority in sixteenth-century England. *The Quenes Majesties Passage* is a text that compiles, describes, and interprets the components of performance staged for Elizabeth’s royal entry. Richard Mulcaster’s rhetoric creates an illusion of objectivity which upon closer study reveals itself as a medium of convergence and divergence, a site where the narratives produced by performance interact with Mulcaster’s authorial project to produce meaning. The City of London commissioned the *Passage* to record the ephemeral performance, enhance the
prestige of the City, and celebrate civic largess. However, what Mulcaster produced was beyond his charge because he created a text that promoted a version of sovereign authority that, while contiguous with the authorizing narratives circulating in civic pageantry, produced a new performance of royal power. *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* constitutes a new genre that offers a level of proximity hitherto not available to civic readers. Mulcaster locates Elizabeth’s sovereign authority in her special individuality, and in doing so analyzes every gesture, facial expression, and private comment as evidence of her “natural” right to rule.

**Authorship**

Most scholars agree that Richard Mulcaster was the author of *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, largely based on civic documents that record payment to Mulcaster “for making of the book containing and declaring the histories set forth in and by the City’s pageants at the time of the Queen’s Highness coming through the City to her Coronation” (*Repertories* XIV f.143). Although Mulcaster states in his 1581 educational treatise, *Positions*, that this is “my first travell, that ever durst venture upon the print,” he certainly fits the criteria of authorship (Mulcaster 3). Educated at Eton College, Cambridge University, and Oxford University, Mulcaster was an instructor at the Merchant Taylors’ School from 1561 to 1568 and St. Paul’s from 1596 to 1608. He was not, contrary to Anglo’s claim, employed as a “young schoolmaster” when he wrote the pamphlet for Elizabeth’s royal entry, but rather a Member of Parliament as a representative from Carlisle (*Spectacle* 347; Barker *DNB*). Nicholas Udall trained Mulcaster in pageantry and Mulcaster was an avid promoter of theatre throughout his career. Although Mulcaster’s name does not appear on the title page of *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*, there is certainly ample evidence, both concrete and circumstantial,
that makes it likely Mulcaster authored the civic pageant book.\textsuperscript{57} Mulcaster’s fortunes certainly improve after Elizabeth’s civic entry, and according to Richard DeMolen, he enjoyed a long and apparently warm relationship with the queen (216).\textsuperscript{58}

DeMolen suggests that Mulcaster’s primary goal in *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* was to secure civic loyalty: “To begin with, he wanted to confirm Elizabeth’s legitimate descent and to emphasize the continuity of her reign …. Secondly, Mulcaster identified Elizabeth with popular Protestant sentiment in England, following the abortive attempt of Mary I to restore Catholicism. Lastly, he hoped to create an impression of Elizabeth as a good and worthy ruler” (214).\textsuperscript{59} While De Molen is certainly correct that Mulcaster promoted Elizabeth’s Protestantism, he mistakenly attributes the creative production of the pageantry to Mulcaster rather than the four men appointed by the City to oversee the pageants. Scholarship around *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* has consistently overlooked Mulcaster’s rhetorical framework and his strategies for textualizing performance. In this section I argue that Mulcaster did not write a transparent account of the pageantry in Elizabeth’s civic entry. Contrary to civic instructions, *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* does not recount the “histories set forth in and by the City’s pageants,” but instead focuses on the relations forged between sovereign and subject in performance. Mulcaster textualizes Elizabeth’s actions and reactions in order to generate an experience of immediacy that promises readers access to an “authentic” version of sovereignty.

**Genre**

Dramatic speeches, orations, and the paratheatrical texts from the civic entry are recorded in Mulcaster’s pamphlet. This desire to compile a wide range of performance components has similarities to Book II of *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne*. In both texts
the author reproduces the creative work of the pageant devisors and architects with varying degrees of authorial mediation. Both authors are committed to developing a new humanist style in historiography. While the Receyt author used his Prologue to celebrate the providential nature of Henry VII’s accession, Mulcaster fashioned his authorial persona as a historiographer within the classical tradition:

What more famous thing do we read in ancient histories of old time, than that mighty princes have gently received presents offered them by base and low personages. If that be to be wondered at (as it is passingly) let me see any writer that in any one prince’s life is able to recount so many precedents of this virtue, as her Grace showed in the one passage through the city. (*QMP* 97)

Mulcaster places himself among the authors of “ancient histories” in order to compare the virtues of his “prince” with rulers from classical history. According to Mulcaster, Elizabeth’s performance in her civic entry has wider implications for her style of rule because in “one passage through the city” Elizabeth demonstrates more virtue than any other ruler in a lifetime. Mulcaster invokes classical historiography to shape the generic conditions of his text. He employs a rhetoric of transparency and praise in order to market his pamphlet as an “official” version of the royal entry. Unmediated access to the queen’s sovereign spectacle is promised whereby his readers can witness Elizabeth’s “authentic” essence. Mulcaster asserts that his pamphlet is “truly reported” without authorial mediation, framing himself as a historiographer who transcribes and records elements of performance into his “history” (87).

While the Receyt and the Passage are both records of performance that oscillate between authorial composition and intratextual compilation, there are significant
differences between the two texts. Henry VII commissioned a member of his court to record Katherine’s English reception as a monument to his royal power whereas the City commissioned a civic scholar to declare the “histories” of the pageants as a monument to civic largess. The *Receyt* records multiple types of performance, including masques, banquets, and tournaments, and provides access to private spaces and “secret closets” within the court. In contrast, the *Passage* focuses on one cultural performance staged by the City for the queen, and provides access to Elizabeth’s reactions to the pageants and spectators during her procession. Although we can only speculate about access, it is unlikely that *The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne* was used as a template for *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*. However, the desire for generic experimentation to record sovereign spectacle is a Tudor prerogative initiated by Henry VII and capitalized upon in the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. The thriving print culture in mid-sixteenth-century London and the desire to stabilize an Elizabethan idiom of sovereignty provided a context for Richard Mulcaster to produce a text that was polemical and panegyrical, performative and literary.

Louis Montrose analyzes late sixteenth-century pamphlets and Continental pageant books and argues that these texts are part of a distinct genre of the early modern printed book that “does not merely transcribe what was spoken or what was intended to be spoken within the formal presentation; it also embeds the quoted speeches within a narrative that both describes and interprets the dynamics of the actual performance, its circumstances, and its setting” (110). Montrose suggests that when these texts are “considered generically, they have a formed tendency to draw attention away from the manifest encomiastic content of the royal pageantry they describe, foregrounding instead the interplay between intention and contingency in the process of performance and
reception” (110). Although Montrose does not include *The Quenes Majesties Passage* in his discussion, his paradigm informs my discussion since the *Passage* encompasses elements of transcription, description, and interpretation. Mulcaster quotes speeches and transcribes paratheatrical texts, provides subjective accounts of the setting, props, and iconography, then summarizes and comments upon each element from his own perspective. Mulcaster is less concerned with the ideology promoted in the pageants than he is with the interactions between Elizabeth, the pageants, and her civic subjects. *The Quenes Majesties Passage* thus textualizes the three-dimensional space created in performance in order to stage the convergence of sovereign spectacle, civic spectator, and pageantry.

**Circulation**

A mere nine days after Elizabeth processed through the streets of London *The Quenes Majesties passage through the citie of London* was printed *in octavo* on Fleet Street. The City had not fully dismantled the pageants when the pamphlets reached the stands at Tottel’s shop, located only steps away from Temple Bar Gate, the site of the final station in the royal entry. The speed with which the pamphlet was produced indicates the extent of popular demand. According to Neale, the first edition “sold like hot cakes,” forcing Tottel to reset his press hurriedly for a second edition with an even larger press run (21). This second edition, printed only days after the first edition, had an appealing new title, *The Passage of our most drad Soueraigne Lady Quene Elyzabeth through the citie of London*, with only minor textual differences likely produced by a harried compositor. The public appetite for a detailed account of the queen’s royal entry was enormous. Richard Tottel made a considerable profit and the City also benefited because the pageant narratives (and evidence of civic largess) were disseminated to an
audience much larger and more far-reaching than the spectators who lined the London streets on a cold January afternoon in 1559. Richard Mulcaster was also well compensated to the amount of 40 shillings and his commission led to promotions and royal patronage (De Molen 216).

The typographical layout of the pamphlet draws parallels between the text and the “original” performance. D.F. McKenzie suggests that the materiality of texts, including the “composition, formal design, and transmission” is “semiotic” (12); he argues that the “sociology of the text” should be studied for their “social processes of transmission” (13). The typeface, point size, and the arrangement of the words on the page restate the multiple types of literary access produced by the paratheatrical texts in performance. Mulcaster’s narrative is printed in the black letter typeface but the Latin is printed in a larger Roman typeface, as are the names of the allegorical figures that appear in the pageants. The use of typeface not only differentiated between the Latin and English tablets typographically, it also may have signalled different points of access for the Passage readers. Although Thomas asserts that “black letter was the type of the common people” and was a “more basic skill than Roman type literacy,” Zachary Lesser challenges the categorization of black letter texts as representative of “low” culture (99; 101). Instead, Lesser suggests that black letter was used in law books, expensive historiographies, and basic Latin school texts (104). Lesser uses William Lily’s Short Introduction of Grammar as an example of a bilingual text that used roman type for Latin and black letter for the English translation (104). The typographical distinctions between languages in educational textbooks suggests that Mulcaster, who was to become one of the most influential humanist educators in sixteenth-century England, strategically deployed typeface not only to recreate the various interpretive communities established
during performance, but also to shape his pamphlet as an educational manual that “taught” his readers about how to access sovereign spectacle.

Mulcaster was responsible for the use of typeface as he indicates typographical shifts in his narrative: “on the forepart of the said pageant was written in fair letters the name of the said pageant in this manner following” (84, emphasis added). Mulcaster’s narrative, which throughout the text appears in black letter, employs a new typeface for the pageant titles. This typeface differs from both the black letter and the Roman typefaces employed for the Latin verses. The letters are evenly spaced and easy to read, perhaps to mimic the appearance of the titles on the actual pageants. The shift from one typeface to another is deliberate and built in to Mulcaster’s narrative design: “[Deborah’s] name and title was in a table fixed over her head in this sort” (91, emphasis added). The civic entry textualized performance with the innovation of paratheatrical texts, allegorical name tags, and pageant titles. However, the textualizing process reached new levels of discursive mediation in *The Quenes Majesties Passage*, blurring the lines between textualized performance and performative textuality. This chiastic relationship creates two separate audiences delineated by access through the act of reading.

Richard Mulcaster occupies the role of historiographer, author, and compositior in the production of *The Quenes Majesties Passage*. He identifies himself as a classical historiographer whose prerogative is to record the life of a “prince.” Mulcaster also aligns himself with the English chronicle tradition as a compiler of pageant ephemera that would otherwise have been lost. As a participant he records the “authentic” utterances of the queen, both in private moments and in her more public speeches. Yet Mulcaster also shapes meaning as an author, translating for his readers the significance of iconography, illuminating the meaning presented in the pageant series, and guiding appropriate
responses to important events. In addition to the act of writing, Mulcaster acts as a compositor because he manipulates his typographical medium in order to enhance the relationship between reading and performance. Attention to the process of textualizing performance brings to the surface the mechanisms behind the social construction of sovereignty. *The Quenes Majesties Passage* contains multiple discourses which are held together by Mulcaster’s authorial narrative. Mulcaster included speeches, paratheatrical texts, architectural descriptions, and iconography in an attempt to naturalize sovereignty and efface the “provisional” quality of producing sovereign spectacle.

**Content**

*The Quenes Maiesties Passage* creates new relations between sovereign and subject since it records the moment when Elizabeth and her people share a reciprocal gaze. The contingences of live performance are muted, and the encounter between monarch and commoner is recast as a moment of intimacy. Aristocratic, clerical, ambassadorial, and heraldic interest groups are ignored in favour of this mutual exchange between Elizabeth and citizen. Since the narrative account doubles as a special gift to the queen and a popular pamphlet, the imagined readership is bifurcated. Print afforded the civic reader repeated and sustained access to sovereign spectacle for the price of an *octavo*. Conversely, Elizabeth was offered a textualized image of herself in performance, an image of coherence which she could access repeatedly and privately whenever she desired to “read” her self through a civic lens, and “read” herself being seen by her loving subjects. Citizens could also derive pleasure from seeing themselves under the gaze of royal favour. *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* marks a particular cultural intersection where a civic reader could inhabit the same interpretive position as the queen through the act of reading. Royal readership and civic readership are combined in this pamphlet,
generating a dynamic whereby sovereign authority and civic identity become mutually constitutive. Reading the Passage forges a new social contract between sovereign and subject because both sets of readers become aware of their reliance on the other for reifying their social identities. Perhaps for the first time in English book history, sovereign spectacle was accessible to an audience outside courtly circles for study, scrutiny, and debate. This text is more than just an official memoriam or histories “set forth in and by the City’s pageants.” Instead, it is a text that stages the moment when sovereign and subject are “bound by promise” to one another (QMP 97).

Mulcaster invests his text with performative presence by “recreating” Elizabeth’s spontaneity in performance. This strategy naturalizes her behaviour and renders it authentic rather than histrionic. His version of sovereign spectacle was persuasive enough to make even the most cynical contemporary scholars become effusive: Anglo asserts, “The queen was a true heir to her father in crowd-pleasing showmanship” (Spectacle 351). De Molen writes, “almost instinctively, she knew when to speak, when to smile, and when to listen attentively” (216); Neale is equally charmed, exclaiming “the instinctive genius of their young heroine, whose spontaneous and unconventional reactions to everything and everyone, converted London on that day into what the author of our pamphlet describes as ‘a stage wherein was showed the wonderful spectacle of a noble-hearted princess toward her most loving people’” (13-14). Spontaneity codes Elizabeth’s interactions as signs of her “authentic” sovereign authority because her responses appear to lack conscious design. This strategy naturalizes Elizabeth’s authority and locates the source of sovereign power in her special individuality. Premeditation would render her actions, gestures, and comments theatrical and therefore insincere.
Accepting this version of sovereign spectacle without qualifying the rhetoric which describes Elizabeth’s behaviour is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, Elizabeth almost certainly manufactured the appearance of spontaneity as a strategy of self-presentation. She was well aware of the performative potential the procession offered to inspire love from her subjects, having accompanied her sister Mary on her coronation entry five years earlier. Her calculated management of her position in relation to each pageant, her insistence on silence to enhance the theatrical experience, and her composed speeches argue for premeditated preparations and dispel the “impromptu” and “instinctive” narratives promoted by scholars like Neale and De Molen. Secondly, no other eye-witness accounts of the civic entry record Elizabeth’s spontaneity. Mulcaster emphasizes her interactions with the pageants and the audience in order to prove Elizabeth’s sovereign authority is expressed in her special individuality.

We do not have access to Elizabeth’s performance in its “original” state. Many performance theorists have argued that once live performance succumbs to mediatization, it loses its value and becomes reproduction without representation. However, Auslander argues against this tendency to subordinate record and privilege performance because the “mediatized, repetitive economy” is itself a performance, one which has immense cultural power to produce and reproduce representation (56). The textualizing process actively shapes the cultural production of Elizabeth’s iconic representation. It is very likely Elizabeth took advantage of the performative space to début her “scripted spontaneity” in order to naturalize her authority and fascinate her subjects. However, one must not privilege the original performance over the textualized performance because ephemerality cannot be reconstructed. Instead, The Quenes Majesties Passage offers readers a rhetorical construction of sovereign spectacle that produces a performance with
its own authorizing narratives. Mulcaster constructs a model of sovereignty that depends
upon reading the queen’s outward signs as manifestations of her inward selfhood.

Spontaneity provides readers with a sense of intimacy with, and access to, the private, and
therefore “authentic,” queen. For Mulcaster, Elizabeth’s spontaneity represents “living
truth.”

Sovereign Specularity

The illusion of sovereign spontaneity requires scenarios of exchange, between the
queen and her subjects and between the queen and the pageant actors, whereby
Elizabeth’s responses, such as her comments, gestures, and behaviour, can be examined
as evidence of Elizabeth’s special individuality. Therefore, Mulcaster textualizes a three-
dimensional space for sovereign spectacle to inhabit. He represents layers of spectatorship,
enabling his readers to “see” Elizabeth within the geometral space of performance in
order to “know” her. Elizabeth’s specularity operates dynamically in relation to her civic
audience:

    And on the other side, her Grace by holding up her hands and merry
countenance to such as stood far off, and most tender and gentle language
to those that stood nigh to her Grace, did declare herself no less thankfully
to receive her people’s good will than they lovingly offered it unto her …

So that on either side there was nothing but gladness, nothing but prayer,
nothing but comfort. (75)

Multi-layered spectatorship provides Mulcaster’s narrative with a sense of the visual field
present in the actual performance. The streets of London are lined with a multitude of
people who have varying levels of proximity to the queen. Those who are too far away to
hear her speak are still acknowledged. While proximity differs, every spectator is offered
a glimpse of the queen that forges a relationship between sovereign and subject, generating “nothing but gladness, nothing but prayer, nothing but comfort” in her audience. Readers occupy a special perspective because they can survey the entire performance space from the privacy of their reading position. Spatial dimensions of performance are textualized in order to emphasize the interaction between sovereign spectacle and civic spectator.

In *The Quenes Majesties Passage*, Elizabeth is invested with narrative agency. She has the power to return the gaze, determine direction, and even disseminate her image. Mulcaster states: “as the Queen’s Majesty did pass by, which on every side cast her countenance and wished well to her most loving people” (85). “Countenance” is a term repeatedly employed in the *Passage* to describe Elizabeth’s specularity. This term is particularly useful to Mulcaster’s project because it suggests agency. When Elizabeth processes through London, she displays her countenance, and in doing so she offers access to her spectacle in a way that bestows royal favour. “Countenance” is both a sign and a gesture, an appearance and an agent. In Mulcaster’s account, sovereign spectacle also provides spectators and readers with incontrovertible evidence of Elizabeth’s worthiness to rule England. Mulcaster asserts, “This her Grace’s loving behaviour, preconceived in the people’s heads upon these considerations, was then thoroughly confirmed, and indeed implanted a wonderful hope in them touching her worthy government in the rest of her reign” (75-6). “Countenance” and “behaviour” are inextricably linked for Mulcaster, who argues that Elizabeth’s special individuality proves she will be a “worthy” leader for “the rest of her reign.” Performance, in this formulation, is where sovereign legitimacy is made material.
Although The Quenes Majesties Passage is preoccupied with Elizabeth’s sovereign spectacle, her clothing and appearance are not mentioned. According to Schivenoglia’s diplomatic dispatch, Elizabeth was spectacularly robed in a “rich royal mantle of gold with a double-raised stiff pile” and carried in an open litter covered in gold brocade (qtd. in Warkentin, 105). However, in Mulcaster’s account Elizabeth’s clothing, jewels, and even her mode of transportation find no representation in his narrative. Instead, the queen’s visibility is coded in a way that guards against objectification. Mulcaster wants his readers to focus on Elizabeth’s behaviour without the distractions of sartorial display.

In contrast to the English chronicles, sovereign specularity is represented as a dynamic rather than a static position in The Quenes Maiesties Passage. When Elizabeth arrives at a pageant she moves within the designated space in order to stage-manage her viewing position: “Which her Grace heard marvellously graciously, and required that the chariot might be remove towards the pageant that she might perceive the child’s words, which were these, the Queen’s Majesty giving most attentive ear and requiring that the people’s noise be stayed” (84). Mulcaster asserts that the queen does not passively consume the pageantry performed for her. Instead, Elizabeth’s desire to see is coded as a desire to comprehend and internalize the civic message, cited as further evidence of her commitment to her subjects. Sovereign spectatorship also engages directly with performance. During the final oration Elizabeth punctuated the speech with her own gestural subtext: “While these words were in saying, and certain wishes therein repeated for maintenance of truth and rooting out of error, she now and then held up her hands to heavenward and willed the people to say Amen” (95). Not content to be a passive spectator, Elizabeth inserts herself into the matrix of cultural performance. She leads her
subjects in a choric performance of acknowledgement and acceptance, creating a performative venue for turning spectators into participants. Her active specularity shapes meaning because she trains her subjects to react appropriately to the ideologies she (via Mulcaster) finds especially valuable.

**Civic Specularity**

Social approbation is an important element of a monarch’s royal entry because it stages the moment when power, in material terms, is given to the monarch by his or her subjects. Mulcaster frames the relationship between sovereign and subject in terms of mutuality: “the Queen’s Majesty passed from the Tower till she came to Fenchurch, the people on each side joyously beholding the view of so gracious a Lady their Queen, and her Grace no less gladly noting and observing the same” (*QMP* 76). Mulcaster creates a visual economy where Elizabeth surveys her subjects who return her gaze. The exchange of gazes places sovereign and subject in a relationship that is mutually constitutive: Elizabeth needs her subjects’ love for her authority, and her subjects need their sovereign’s love for their well being.

Performance has transformative power for the sovereign and her subjects. Mulcaster asserts that the civic audience was deeply affected by sovereign spectacle, stating: “The people again were wonderfully ravished with the loving answers and gestures of their princess” (75). The queen’s spectacle has the power to transform spectators into believers in an almost mystical experience. The encounter for Mulcaster, however, is always mutual:

As at her first entrance she as it were declared herself prepared to pass through a city that most entirely loved her, so she at her last departing, as it were, bound herself by promise to continue [a] good lady and governor
unto that city which by outward declaration did open their love to their
loving and noble prince in such wise, as she herself wondered thereat. (97-
8)
The people are ravished, the queen feels wonder, and the reader of the pamphlet
experiences visual sight lines unavailable during the actual performance.
Mulcaster’s narrative is preoccupied with the interplay between performance and
reception in the royal entry. Since the royal-civic dynamic is of primary importance to
Mulcaster, he places Elizabeth within the three-dimensional space occupied by civic
spectacle:
[T]ill she came against the aldermen in the high end of Cheap … which
began at Fenchurch and stood along the streets one by another, enclosed
with rails hanged with cloths, and themselves well appareled with many
rich furs and their livery hoods upon their shoulders in comely and seemly
manner, having before them sundry persons well appareled in silks and
chains of gold, [such] as wifflers and guarders of the said companies,
beside a number of rich hangings as well of tapestry, arras, cloths of gold,
silver, velvet, damask, satin, and other silks plentifully hung all the way as
the Queen’s highness passed from the Tower through the city. (QMP 86)
In this description, civic specularity is on display for the royal-textual gaze. Mulcaster
provides proximity to Elizabeth so that the readers, who are largely civic, can imagine
themselves in close proximity to the sovereign. Civic spectacle is a source of visual
pleasure for Elizabeth; Mulcaster boasts that “the Queen’s Highness had … seen so
sumptuous, rich, and notable spectacles of the citizens” (93). This description provides
the civic reader with the opportunity to imagine Elizabeth’s admiring royal gaze, an experience that offers possible pleasure via the textual recording.

Mulcaster ventriloquizes the civic audience in order to provide his readers with a contiguous experience of social approbation. He places utterances into the mouths of the audience lining the streets in order to confirm that Elizabeth elicited extraordinary popular support: “And entering the city was of the people received marvellously entirely, as appeared by the assembly, prayers, wishes, welcomings, cries, tender words and all other signs, which argue a wonderful earnest love of the most obedient subjects toward their sovereign” (75). This is a self-perpetuating cycle of legitimacy and loyalty: Elizabeth demonstrates evidence of her worth in performance while her subjects vocalize their loyalty. When the last line of the opening oration is delivered – “God thee preserve we pray, and wish thee ever well” – the crowd is unified in their expression of allegiance: “At which words of the last line the whole people gave a great shout, wishing with one assent as the child had said” (77). Mulcaster assimilates the crowd into one unanimous voice of “assent” in a voiced moment of social approbation that bestows power upon Elizabeth to rule them.

Access

Special “insider” information enhances the value of Mulcaster’s narrative because he promises his readers intimate access to Elizabeth’s private and “authentic” self: “And her Grace likewise of her side in all her Grace’s passage showed herself generally an image of a worthy Lady and Governor. But privately these especial points were noted in her Grace, as signs of a most prince-like courage, whereby her loving subjects may ground a sure hope for the rest of her gracious doings hereafter” (QMP 96, emphasis added). Mulcaster’s reassurance presupposes civic doubt that visual signification is not
compelling evidence for Elizabeth’s worth as a “governor.” Instead, Mulcaster offers concrete proof that her “worthy” appearance corresponds with her private selfhood. Mulcaster asserts that the queen’s private moments reveal an authentic essence that is not histrionic and reassures his readers that although they are correct to treat outward signs with a degree of suspicion, he can confirm that her private behaviour matches her external signification. His focus on the private moments of queenship indicates a shift in the location of sovereign authority from public display, characterized by Henry VIII’s sovereign specularity, to personal and private behaviour.

Mulcaster focuses on moments when the queen operates outside the public gaze in order to expose her “true” thoughts. In an unguarded moment Elizabeth and a member of her retinue share a private exchange that Mulcaster overhears and records: “When the City’s charge without partiality, and only the City was mentioned unto her Grace, she said it should not be forgotten. Which saying might move all natural Englishmen heartily to show due obedience and entireness to their so good a Queen which will in no point forget any parcel of duty lovingly showed unto her” (QMP 97). Not only does he demonstrate his privileged access to Elizabeth’s private conversations, but also Mulcaster confirms that Elizabeth’s gratitude for the civic production is “genuine” because of the private and informal nature of the encounter. Someone “without partiality,” perhaps a noble with no vested interest in civic matters, marvelled that London bore sole responsibility for the production and cost of the royal entry. Elizabeth’s answer is brief, but nevertheless proves her appreciation of civic largess and confirms that the civic entry provided her with pleasure.

The civic entry is framed as an important communicative moment for the civic government to ensure royal support. Mulcaster records Elizabeth’s gratitude toward the
City of London several times in his account because he is committed to forging a close royal-civic relationship. Later in the procession Elizabeth is again reminded of London’s economic investment and her response hints at her future domestic policy:

[O]ne about her Grace noted the City’s charge, that there was no cost spared. Her Grace answered that she did well to consider the same, and that it should be remembered. An honourable answer worthy of a noble prince, which may comfort all her subjects, considering there can be no point of gentleness or obedient love shown toward her Grace, which she doth not most tenderly accept and graciously weigh. (91)

Tellingly, Elizabeth’s noble retinue is only mentioned twice in *The Quenes Majesties Passage*, both times to remind Elizabeth of the City’s expensive display. Two unidentified attendants, perhaps members of her Privy Council, fulfil a singular function in this civic-generated text, which is to elicit Elizabeth’s private comments about civic largess without “bias.” Mulcaster’s “insider” position gains him access to the queen’s presence, his “invisibility” enables him to overhear her private remarks, and his “impartiality” as a historiographer licenses him to record these casual conversations between Elizabeth and her courtiers.

Access to Elizabeth’s “private” moments is accompanied with an intimate narrative focus on Elizabeth’s affective response to the pageantry:

Here was noted in the Queen’s Majesty’s countenance, during the time that the child spoke, besides a perpetual attentiveness in her face, a marvellous change in look, as the child’s words touched either her person or the people’s tongues and hearts. So that she with rejoicing visage did evidently declare that the words took no less place in her mind than they were most
heartily pronounced by the citizens, as from all the hearts of her most hearty citizens. (79)

Mulcaster scrutinizes Elizabeth’s face in order to study her reception of the pageant’s message. In this description Elizabeth is so absorbed in the performance that she is unaware of her position within the visual matrix of performance. This moment of unguarded expressiveness is presented as “proof” of Elizabeth’s commitment to her subjects. While Mulcaster is not quite sure what the catalyst is for the queen’s “marvellous change,” the cause is less important than the outcome, which is Elizabeth’s deep appreciation of her subjects. Her “countenance” is profoundly altered into a “rejoicing visage,” which Mulcaster presents as external evidence of her internal transformation. This intimacy, manufactured by Mulcaster for his readers, invests the extra-diegetic gaze with the possibility for voyeuristic pleasure not available to them in actual performance. Readers can linger over an image of Elizabeth in a private moment of contemplation. Performance shapes social identity, and Mulcaster asserts that Elizabeth is transformed in the processual mode of the civic entry through the love of her subjects. For Mulcaster, social approbation formally authorizes Elizabeth’s sovereign power, and in his text, the act of bestowing authorization in the civic entry is privileged over the coronation ceremony at Westminster.

Special access to sovereign spectacle shapes an unprecedented experience for the readers of The Quenes Maiesties Passage. Mulcaster provides his readers with interpretive extrapolations that underline Elizabeth’s commitment to helping her people. When the queen passes St. Dunstan’s Orphanage, her inner thoughts are ventriloquized:

[T]he children of the Hospital were appointed to stand with their governors, her Grace, perceiving a child offered to make an oration unto her, stayed
her chariot and did cast her eyes upon Heaven, \textit{as who should say} ‘I here see this merciful work toward the poor, whom I must in the midst of my royalty needs remember,’ and so turned her face toward the child. (93, emphasis added)

Mulcaster interprets Elizabeth’s gestures as a sign of the queen’s interiority. His speculative treatment of Elizabeth’s private thoughts is prescriptive rather than descriptive: Elizabeth \textit{should} remember her subjects in the midst of her succession, an account that subtly instructs the queen on the proper response to this spectacle of orphans. Mulcaster imagines and then projects Elizabeth’s inner thoughts in order to enhance his version of sovereignty, one which requires her awareness of the conditions of her people and a commitment to helping those who occupy the margins of society. Royal remembrance, of civic display and civic destitution, reassures the \textit{Passage} readers that Elizabeth will rule with her subjects’ best interests in mind.

The civic entry is a space where the social contract between sovereign and subject is forged. Mulcaster provides his readers with repeated access to the moment of convergence between Elizabeth and her people. When Elizabeth is presented with the City’s traditional gift of gold, Mulcaster records the ritualized transaction in detail:

The Queen’s Majesty with both her hands took the purse, and answered to him, again marvellously pithily, and so pithily that the standers by, as they embraced entirely her gracious answer, so they marvelled at the couching thereof, \textit{which was in words truly reported these}: ‘I thank my lord mayor, his brethren, and you all. And whereas your request is that I should continue your good lady and Queen, be ye ensured that I will be as good unto you as ever Queen was to her people. No will in me can lack, neither
do I trust shall there be lack any power. And persuade yourselves that for
the safety and quietness of you all, I will not spare, if need be, to spend my
blood. God thank you all.’ Which answer of so noble a hearted princess if
it moved a marvellous shout and rejoicing, it is nothing to be marvelled at,
since both the heartiness thereof was so wonderful, and the words so
jointly knit. (86-7, emphasis added)

Elizabeth promises to serve her subjects and put their needs above her own. However,
before readers are allowed to access Elizabeth’s words, Mulcaster mediates the act of
reading Elizabeth’s spoken words. He frames her tone, the content of her words, and the
audience’s reception before he provides the direct quotation in order to guide readers on
the appropriate reception of the queen’s speech. Mulcaster assures his readers that his
transcription is authentic (“truly reported”), so that readers can also experience the
“marvellous” wonder her words produced in the actual performance.

Divine favour, one of the central authorizing narratives around sovereignty in
Tudor England, is a subsidiary source of Elizabeth’s authority in Mulcaster’s account.
The Passage reserves a separate section at the end of the pamphlet under the heading
“Certain notes of the Queen’s Majesty’s great mercy, clemency, and wisdom used in this
passage” (96). Marked off from the main narrative, Mulcaster quotes Elizabeth’s private
prayer as she leaves the Tower to embark on her royal entry. Before readers can access
her words, however, Mulcaster reviews the moments in the procession when Elizabeth
demonstrated piety, especially the moment where she rapturously received the English
Bible, an act that ensures that “God will undoubtedly preserve so worthy a prince” (98).
Mulcaster asserts Elizabeth’s divine right to kingship, stating, “[b]ut because princes be
set in their seat by God’s appointing and therefore they must first and chiefly tender the
Finally, Mulcaster recounts Elizabeth’s utterance before she embarks on her civic entry, a moment which provides readers access to Elizabeth’s most private moment:

[And] in the Tower, where her Grace before she entered her chariot lifted up her eyes to Heaven and said, ‘O Lord, almighty and everlasting God. I give thee most hearty thanks and thou hast been so merciful unto me as to spare me to behold this joyful day … I was overwhelmed, and only by thee delivered. To thee therefore alone be thanks, honour, and praise for ever.

Amen.’ (98)

Mulcaster constructs a portrait of a deeply pious, reflective queen that does not circulate publicly during the actual performance but finds representation in his pamphlet. Her first moments in the procession are recounted in the final lines of *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*. Mulcaster moves away from the chronological focus of historiography in order to end his narrative with an exemplary anecdote of Elizabeth’s religious piety. Mulcaster includes these moments of “unscripted” speech, which he may have recorded, exaggerated, or fabricated, because each instance stands as proof of Elizabeth’s royal authority. *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* offers readers a version of sovereign spectacle that improves on the actual performance because readers are privy to special glimpses and unguarded moments that reveal the private self behind the public queen. Spontaneity authorizes her words as “authentic,” her countenance naturalizes her power, and the eloquence of her speeches confirms Elizabeth as the meritorious, dynastic, and divinely favoured sovereign of England.

Mulcaster acknowledges the authorizing narratives circulating around sovereign authority in the civic entry, but he recasts genealogy, social approbation, and divine
favour in terms of Elizabeth’s behaviour. In *The Quenes Majesties Passage*, genealogy is celebrated in relation to Elizabeth’s role as a harbinger of unity. According to Mulcaster she is “the only heir of Henry VIII, which came of both the houses as the knitting up of concord, it was devised that like as Elizabeth was the first occasion of concord, so she, another Elizabeth, might maintain the same among her subjects, so that unity was the end” (*QMP* 79). The Tudor dynasty merges royal lineage and individual ability, doubly authorizing Elizabeth as meritorious and dynastic.57 Proof of Elizabeth’s divine authority is grounded in her individual actions, illustrated in his account of Elizabeth’s receipt of the English Bible: “At the receipt whereof, how reverently did she with both her hands take it, kiss it, and lay it upon her breast; to the great comfort of the lookers on. God will undoubtedly preserve so worthy a prince, which at His honour so reverently taketh her beginning” (98). Because Elizabeth rapturously embraces the symbol of English Protestantism, divine favour is assured. Social approbation is recast in Mulcaster’s pamphlet as a relationship cultivated by Elizabeth: “If the baser personages had either offered her Grace any flowers or such like as a signification of their good will, or moved her to any suit, she most gently, to the common rejoicing of all the lookers on, and the private comfort of the party, stayed her chariot and heard their requests” (76). Elizabeth’s accessibility, humility, and kindness would have generated loyalty from her subjects much more effectively than her lineage or her divine authorization. For Mulcaster, dynastic, divine, and English authorizing narratives are only valid if they are placed within the context of the queen’s special individuality.

Performative presence and authenticity are closely connected in *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*. Mulcaster provides his readers with proximity to Elizabeth whereby the closer the reader comes to the experience of performance, the more intimate the level
of access is to sovereign spectacle. The strategies he employs to textualize performance reveal a strong creative force which actively shapes the royal image. The Passage offers readers a lived experience of sovereign spectacle when Mulcaster emphasizes sovereign spontaneity, verbal immediacy, and the dynamic interaction between sovereign and subject. Mulcaster’s authorial gaze follows Elizabeth as she operates within the matrix of performance, textualizing sovereign spectacle in a way that offers readers a “lived” experience of sovereign authority. The relationship established in the text between performance and record is crucial to our understanding of Mulcaster’s project. On one hand, the narrative combats factors which limited access in “live” performance, factors as diverse as viewing positions and literacy levels. In this case, the record of the performance fills in the lacunae of the “live” event in order to provide readers with the “original” version of the performance. On the other hand, the pamphlet creates an entirely new performance of sovereignty inaccessible to spectators on the day of the civic entry. Every one of Elizabeth’s actions, gestures, facial expressions, and comments become evidence of her worth, a revelation that inspires loyalty and love amongst her subjects. His focus on Elizabeth’s special individuality differs from the authorizing narratives produced by the pageant-dramatists, the authors of the paratheatrical texts, and every eye-witness account of the civic entry. A new and entirely distinct performance is produced in the textualizing process. Sovereign-subject reciprocity is the central defining relationship in The Quenes Maiesties Passage. Mulcaster’s version of sovereign spectacle exerts social power and shapes cultural meaning.

Section III: Protestant and Catholic Tensions

While Mulcaster tries to shape his text to celebrate the unanimous social approbation staged at Elizabeth’s civic entry, and invests his text with performative
presence so his readers can access the private moments where Elizabeth expresses her love for her people, the narratives which produce and promote sovereign spectacle in performance are also subject to disruption, appropriation, and degradation. Montrose argues that “the commissioning and shaping, the perception and promotion, of the royal image were components of a dynamic and unstable process. In its motives and in its impact, this process was just as likely to be hortatory or contestatory as it was to be panegyric” (14). Performance produces excess meaning which cannot be fully contained and assimilated into a single narrative. Mulcaster strategically privileged and disregarded elements of performance in order to produce a coherent account of sovereign-subject relations. Many of the conflicts and contradictions present in the ephemeral moment are now lost, yet some tensions are still detectable. Evidence of this residual tension in *The Quenes Majesties Passage* reveals that the very rhetoric of spontaneity which reifies sovereign authority also has the ability to undermine Mulcaster’s authorizing narratives, particularly his portrayal of the unanimous love expressed by Elizabeth’s subjects during her procession. In this section I analyze Mulcaster’s pamphlet alongside other eye-witness accounts, including a civic chronicle, a heraldic account, a diary entry, and a Venetian ambassadorial dispatch, in order to reveal the extent to which sovereign spectacle can be re-mediated to fulfill different ideological projects. In particular, Aloisio Schivenoglia’s diplomatic dispatch offers evidence of dissidence that threatens to destabilize the royal image Mulcaster took such pains to produce. I argue that sovereign spectacle was a discourse shared and contested between the monarch and her subjects. The production and promotion of the royal image, and the conflicts which arose in performative and textual spaces, demonstrate that the formulation of sovereignty, and
the general expectations regarding cultural behaviour, were still in the process of
determination at the time of Elizabeth’s royal entry.

Mulcaster

Despite the best efforts of the pageant-dramatists and Richard Mulcaster,
ambiguity still occupied the thresholds of performance in Elizabeth’s royal entry.
Glimpses of disruption and hints of dissident readings destabilize the picture of
unanimous celebration and unconditional love that the producers of performance tried to
portray. While Mulcaster explains, authorizes, and sanitizes every interaction carefully,
he cannot fully expunge the ambivalent climate of early modern England at the time of
Elizabeth’s accession. His very disavowal of dissonance signals its presence. In his
description of the Tudor Tree Pageant he states, “These verses and other pretty sentences
were drawn in void places of this pageant, all tending to one end, that quietness might be
maintained and all dissension displaced” (QMP 81). Residual discord, produced by the
Marian regime, must be displaced by Elizabeth’s good governance rather than by her
accession alone.

The risk embedded in a model of sovereign authority defined by social
approbation is that the spectacle of allegiance is not unanimous. The most disruptive
moment in The Quenes Maiesties Passage is an encounter Mulcaster records in order to
dispel the possibility of discord among Elizabeth’s subjects. Although he deploys
strategies to contain this moment of disruption, he fails to fully resolve the ambiguity of
the encounter, which deeply troubles Mulcaster’s account of popular support.

About the nether end of Cornhill toward Cheap, one of the knights about
her Grace had espied an ancient citizen, which wept and turned his head
back, and therewith said this gentleman, ‘yonder is an Alderman,’ (for so
he termed him) ‘which weepeth and turneth his face backward. How may it be interpreted that he doth, for sorrow or for gladness?’ The Queen’s Majesty heard him and said, ‘I warrant you it is for gladness.’ A gracious interpretation of a noble courage, which would turn the doubtful to the best. And yet it was well known that her Grace did confirm the same, the party’s cheer was moved for very pure gladness for the sight of her Majesty’s person, at the beholding whereof he took such comfort that with tears he expressed the same. (96)

An old man weeps and turns away from Elizabeth as she processes by, which prompts a member of the queen’s retinue to interrogate the nature of this man’s affective response. The possibility of a dissident reading creates a fissure. Elizabeth “overhears” this question, posed by a member of her retinue, and asserts an interpretation that supports rather than undermines sovereign authority. For Mulcaster, Elizabeth wields the most interpretive power, a fact he confirms when he states that Elizabeth sought out the “true” cause of her subject’s ambiguous feeling. Mulcaster’s version of sovereign spectacle cannot tolerate the possibility of dissension because Elizabeth’s authority is largely defined by the overwhelming love of her subjects. When the old man turns his face to cry, Mulcaster interprets this bodily motion as a gesture of loyalty. The transformative power of discourse absorbs the disjunctions and attempts to erase all dissension, turning “the doubtful to the best.” Mulcaster includes possible sites of tension around sovereign authority only to prove incontrovertibly that Elizabeth’s authority is stable. In The Quenes Maiesties Passage, the weeping alderman becomes a positive sign of her rule, even though the action itself is ambiguous and potentially disruptive. Any gesture of sorrow or resistance is erased, replaced by sanitizing qualifications, explanations, and disavowals.
Yet the very inclusion of the encounter opens up the possibility of “doubtful” citizens outside the text’s assimilating discourse.

**English Accounts**

The majority of eye-witness accounts for Elizabeth’s royal entry into London are civic-oriented. Henry Machyn was a member of the Merchant Taylor guild and kept a personal diary of all the major state occasions in London. In his *Diary*, Machyn provides a brief summary of each pageant:

> [A]nd at Gracechurch Street a goodly pageant of King [Henry] the eighth and Queen Anne his wife and of their lineage, and in Cornhill another goodly pageant of King Henry and King Edward the sixth; and beside Soper Lane in [Cheap] another goodly pageant, [and] the Conduit painted, and at the Little Conduit another goodly pageant of a quick tree and a dead, and the Queen had a book given her there; and there the recorder of London and the chamberlain delivered unto the Queen a purse of gold, full to the value of [blank]; and so to the Fleet Street to the conduit, and there was another goodly pageant of the two churches; and at Temple Bar was two great giants, the one’s name was Gotmagot the Albion and the other Co(rineus) (qtd. in Warkentin, 100).

Although Machyn is accurate in the order and location of the pageants, he misinterprets the second pageant, titled “The Seat of Worthy Governance.” According to Mulcaster, this pageant features “one representing the Queen’s highness sat in this seat crowned with an imperial crown” (*QMP* 82). Elizabeth is seated on the seat of worthy governance surrounded by four virtues who stomped out contrary vices. This pageant, which resembles a morality play, stages the eradication of the vices from Mary’s rule by
Elizabeth’s virtues. Schivenoglia interprets the message behind the pageant in his dispatch, “that hitherto religion has been misunderstood and misdirected, and that now it will proceed on a better footing” (qtd. Warkentin, 103). However, Machyn, perhaps because of his Catholic sympathies, summarizes the pageant as “another goodly pageant of King Henry and King Edward the sixth.” Machyn also fails to identity the “book” Elizabeth received even though the gift of the English Bible was the dramatic climax of the civic entry. Whether this omission is strategic or a veiled Catholic snub at Protestant discourse is difficult to determine. However, what is clear is that citizens who watched the civic entry did not have a comprehensive overview of the civic entry, and would have had to rely on an account like *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* for a detailed description of what they missed in performance.

Heraldic accounts are concerned with the order of processions for great state occasions, such as funerals, coronations, tournaments, and diplomatic meetings. Charles Wriothesley’s position as Windsor herald informs his work *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors*. His enthusiasm for Mary’s funeral and Elizabeth’s coronation contrasts sharply with his lack of interest in civic spheres. He merely states,

Saturday the 14th of January the Queen’s Majesty at 2 of the clock in the afternoon rode from the Tower through the City of London to her palace at Westminster, the Londoners having then made sumptuous provision of pageants and otherwise, as hath been accustomed. Sunday the 15th of January the Queen’s Majesty was with great solemnity crowned in Westminster Abbey. (143)

Wriothesley distances himself from the civic entry and signals to his readers that the relationship between sovereign and subject is of no interest to him. Mulcaster’s account
stands in diametrical opposition to this heraldic account because he does not provide any
details about Elizabeth’s coronation and the courtly celebrations (banquets, the creation of
Knights of the Bath, masques) that fall under royal and heraldic jurisdiction. *The Quenes
Maiesties Passage* is a text produced by a citizen of London for the citizens of London.

Richard Grafton was one of the four overseers for the civic entry and he offers his
readers a retrospective account of the pageant arguments in his *An Abridgement of the
Chronicles of England*, published in 1563. Grafton was involved in the Protestant reform
under Henry VIII and his chronicle is infused with Protestant zeal. He celebrates
Elizabeth as “our redoubted sovereign lady, second daughter to the renowned and most
famous prince King Henry the eighth and sister to the godly King Edward the sixth and
also to the last Queen Mary, to reign over us” (qtd. in Warkentin, 110-1). His remarks
about the intentions behind the production of the civic entry are much more polemical
than Mulcaster’s account. In his description of the fourth pageant, he states,

> The fourth was a mountain with a cabin in the middest, and on the one side
> of this mountain grew all withered, old and decayed trees and fruits, and
> on the other side were all the fresh flowers and beautiful trees and fruits.
> And out of the cabin came an old man whose name was Time, and he
delivered to the Queen a Bible in English, to restore us to God’s verity,
and to put away all dregs of Papistry, that the mountain might become all
fresh. (qtd. in Warkentin, 112).

Grafton does not mention Truth, and places the responsibility of giving the Bible to
Elizabeth solely in the hands of Time. For Grafton, the source of Elizabeth’s sovereign
authority lies in the restoration of Protestantism to England. Therefore, all other
authorizing narratives such as genealogy, social approbation, and divine authority, are
eclipsed in favour of Grafton’s central goal, to “put away all dregs of Papistry.” Grafton plays a significant role in the production of the pageants, however his account of the civic entry is abridged and univocal, in contrast to Mulcaster’s narrative which compiles pageant ephemera to restage the performative nature of the civic entry.

Schivenoglia

Elizabeth’s royal entry into London was recorded in The Quenes Maiesties Passage primarily for an English readership. The nationalistic nature of the text, both its production and reception, naturalizes sovereignty in order to “comfort” the English people that Elizabeth is a worthy queen. However, when this ritual social drama is narrated from the perspective of an outsider, the ideologies of sovereignty and subjecthood are brought into sharp relief and are rendered much more tenuous and contingent. Don Aloisio Schivenoglia wrote a thorough account of the English coronation festivities from the position of spectator. On 23 January 1559, he dispatched his letter detailing the civic and courtly activities to Sabino Calandra, Castellan of Mantua, a mere nine days after Elizabeth’s entry. Schivenoglia, an Italian in the service of Sir Thomas Tresham, provided the Italian city-state with information about the English court during the transition from the reign of Mary to Elizabeth because, at the time of Elizabeth’s coronation, there was no Venetian ambassador in England (Warkentin 103). Schivenoglia provides details about the coronation festivities from an aristocratic-Catholic perspective, one that differed significantly from Mulcaster’s civic-Protestant interpretive lens. The two men have very different agendas: while Mulcaster creates a cultural climate of unanimous jubilation at the accession of a Protestant queen, Schivenoglia distances himself from the “alleged” euphoria and seizes upon moments of contradiction as evidence of dynastic, religious, and even iconographical instability.
The description of the first pageant reveals the extent to which performance is subject to interpretation and also demonstrates how vulnerable authorizing narratives are to disruption. While the pageant-dramatists designed the pageant to draw parallels between Elizabeth Tudor and Elizabeth of York, Mulcaster identifies the pageant as a connection between the queen’s unifying presence through her descent from Henry VIII. However, Schivenoglia proposes a different genealogical link:

The first triumphal arch, which was very lofty, divided into three levels. On the first were King Henry VII, of the House of Lancaster, with a large white rose in front of him, and Queen Elizabeth his wife, of the House of York, with a similar large rose in front of her, but red, [both] in royal robes. On the second level above there were seated King Henry VIII, with a similar rose in front of him, but white and red, [then] a pomegranate in the middle, and Queen Anne Boleyn, mother of this Queen, with a white eagle and a gold crown on its head and gilt sceptre in its right talon, the other resting on a little hill, and surrounded by small branches with little roses in front, the coat of arms and the device of the said Queen. Further up on the third level sat a Queen in majesty to represent the present one, who is descended from the aforesaid. (qtd. in Warkentin, 107)

Schivenoglia spends a disproportionate amount of his narrative on a description of Anne Boleyn’s heraldic device. He also uses ambiguous syntax in order to cast doubt over Elizabeth’s paternal lineage since the “aforesaid” can only definitively be traced back to her mother rather than her father. Here Schivenoglia surreptitiously hints at the queen’s controversial parentage, aligning himself with a Catholic campaign already underway on
the Continent to discredit Elizabeth on grounds of illegitimacy in order to champion their Catholic replacement, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland.  

Schivenoglia’s subversive reading of Elizabeth’s illegitimacy is further strengthened by his observation that a symbol of a pomegranate was positioned between Henry VIII and the “mother of this queen.” Warkentin notes this discrepancy in a footnote and describes the pomegranate as a common emblem of the Resurrection because of its association with the myth of Persephone. She argues that the symbol was used in the pageantry “because its many seeds within a single shell made it a figure of unified authority” (79 n.19). However, Warkentin overlooks the central significance of the pomegranate in English iconography. The pomegranate is Katherine of Aragon’s personal heraldic symbol. It was a ubiquitous symbol of the Anglo-Spanish alliance, making frequent appearances in frontispieces, pageantry, and artwork for over thirty years. The spectators of the royal entry would not fail to identify the pomegranate as a symbol charged with Catholic and Spanish connotations.

Two possible scenarios would explain the presence of such an inflammatory symbol in the midst of the Tudor celebrations. Firstly, Schivenoglia may have fabricated the presence of the pomegranate as a tribute to Katherine and her daughter Mary. In this scenario his inclusion of the pomegranate protests the erasure of Mary from the Tudor genealogical tree. Schivenoglia could very well have invented the pomegranate since Mulcaster makes no reference to it, nor is it recorded in any other account of the royal entry. However, Mulcaster sanitizes components of performance to make his model of sovereign authority appropriately Protestant. Therefore, the second possibility is that the pomegranate was a palimpsest of performance left over from the pageants employed for Mary’s royal entry only five years earlier. We know that the pageants and devices were
reused to save the City of London money and time. The pomegranate may have been a residual symbol that was not fully erased in time for Elizabeth’s coronation. Mary and Philip’s joint entry in 1554 featured a genealogical tree at the Little Conduit in Cheap which traced their common lineage back to Edward III. Workmen responsible for preparing the pageant structures for Elizabeth’s civic entry may have overlooked the symbol, or even kept it in place as a subversive act. There is no way we can know whether the pomegranate was present in the pageant, and while both possibilities are tantalizing, it is less interesting that the meaning generated by the differences between eye-witness accounts. Schivenoglia’s inclusion of the pomegranate and his cryptic comments about Elizabeth’s paternity clearly indicate an agenda that undermines Elizabeth’s dynastic legitimacy.

Traces of Catholicism are identified with satisfaction in Schivenoglia’s dispatch. On the Cross at Cheapside he reports that it was “completely gilt and somewhat renovated, with all the saints in relief, they being neither altered nor diminished” (qtd. in Warkentin, 107). The Catholic symbols have not yet been erased, and Schivenoglia even suggests they may have been purposefully preserved. Mulcaster mentions the renovations but does not specify the type of iconography on the Cross: he merely states, “The cross likewise was also made fair and well trimmed” (QMP 85). The civic records reinforce Schivenoglia’s account of the renovations since two goldsmiths, along with a grocer and a founder, were assigned to ensure the Cross was “very well and seemly trimmed and decked for the honour of the City against the coming of the Queen’s majesty” (qtd. in Warkentin, 118). The Cross was very likely refurbished with a thin layer of gold so that the saints remained intact – for the meantime. Schivenoglia seems to suggest that
Elizabethan England may not perpetuate the iconoclastic zeal characteristic of Henrician and Edwardian policy.

Dissidence becomes explicit in Schivenoglia’s account of the Time and Truth Pageant at the station following the Cross in Cheapside. The conflict between Protestants and Catholics inspired a struggle to monopolize the \textit{Verbum Dei} motif. Mary Tudor took “Veritas Filia Temporis” as her motto at her accession, yet this image is reclaimed as a Protestant symbol in Elizabeth’s coronation entry.\textsuperscript{77} Schivenoglia’s rhetoric shifts from surreptitious dissent to open defiance:

Between the two mounts there was devised a grotto with a little doorway from which, when her Majesty arrived, an old man came forth scythe in hand, representing ‘Time,’ with his daughter Truth at his side, and expressed a wish to mow and reap the grass on the pleasant mount; [this was] an allusion to the motto on the money heretofore coined by Queen Mary, her Majesty of holy memory: \textit{Veritas temporis filia}. The whole implied in their tongue that the withered mount was the past state, and that now the green has appeared, along with the time for gathering the fruits of truth as in the verses in Latin and English on both sides of the arch.

(Warkentin 108)

While the pageant-dramatists use the pageant to paint a picture of England in distress, Schivenoglia suggests that Mary left England as a “pleasant mount” from which Elizabeth can reap benefits. Schivenoglia differentiates between the English oration and Latin verses, suggesting that in “their tongue” citizens express their concerns about England as a “withered” state while the Latin verses are more hopeful of a productive harvest of “truth.” The Italian interprets the \textit{Verbum Dei} motif through a Catholic lens, suggesting
that Truth is an allegorical figure designed as a tribute to Mary. Mary’s personal motto, *Veritas temporis filia*, is recoded as an honour to the “holy memory” of the Catholic queen. Schivenoglia’s account differs from the other extant eye-witness accounts. While he quotes the same verses as Mulcaster, his interpretation of the performance reflects a very different intended audience than the Protestant civic audience Mulcaster imagines for his *Passage*. Reading Schivenoglia’s narrative alongside Mulcaster’s reveals that both authors inserted, effaced, revised, and perhaps even invented details that fit into their agendas governed by class, religion, and politics.

The eye-witness accounts emphasize different aspects of the civic entry from the ideological perspectives of the authors. While Machyn downplays the entry’s Protestant tone, Grafton emphasizes the triumph of Protestant reform and Wriothesley ignores the entry altogether. Mulcaster was certainly aware of the types of documentation around great state occasions but he distances himself from civic historiography and heraldic records to produce a new medium that conveys sovereign spectacle to a diverse audience. However, Mulcaster’s detailed account of civic spectacle is in many ways indebted to the English chronicle tradition. He is interested in the civic role in courtly festivities, paying special attention to the Recorder’s presentation of the traditional 100 marks of gold to the monarch, and the conspicuous display of consumption the commonality display as they line the streets. English historiographers from Edward Hall to Robert Fabyan include similar descriptive passages in their accounts of major court and city pageantry. What is unusual, however, is that Mulcaster displaces aristocratic spectacle altogether in the *Passage*. Elizabeth’s large retinue of lords, ladies, heralds, pages, and countless other noble attendants are not mentioned once in Mulcaster’s account. It was certainly not for lack of opulence because the court produced a spectacle of lavish display, recounted in
Schivenoglia’s letter: “everyone attended the Court in their best dress, and on horseback if they could, that is barons as well as knights, and also the ladies who were all dressed in crimson velvet with various linings, given as livery by the Queen, with such necklaces, gold on their heads, and jewels, that they made the air clear, though it was snowing a little” (qtd. in Warkentin, 104). Even Henry Machyn’s brief diary entry includes a description of the royal retinue: “all the trumpet, and knights, and lords and heralds of arms in their coat armour; and after all they in their scarlet, and all the bishops in scarlet, and the Queen, and all the footmen waiting upon the Queen” (qtd. in Warkentin, 100).

Mulcaster disregards aristocratic spectacle because its inclusion would shift the focus away from the sovereign-civic relationship which preoccupies Mulcaster’s text. Aristocratic spectacle is eclipsed by civic spectacle, an unprecedented shift in English historiography. Mulcaster shapes his text from a civic-centric perspective, subordinating other agents in performance in order to highlight the importance of sovereign-civic relations.

The range of discourses and competing projects challenges perceptions of civic-produced pageantry as “a collective practice” and revises the belief that the procession’s figural narratives were “deeply embedded within English culture” (Breitenberg 2; Smuts 68). Bell asserts that ritual is “not a perfect and holistic order imposed on minds and bodies but a delicate and continual renegotiation of provisional distinctions and integrations” that govern relations between people and produce models of social identity (6). The Quenes Maiesties Passage exposes the provisional categories of sovereign identity developed by the pageant-dramatists, speech writers, translators, and authors; once these ideas circulate they are subject to interpretation and manipulation. When the Passage is interpreted as “propaganda,” the tensions between textuality and performance
are ignored. Such interpretations oversimplify the competing forces at work in the
collection of sovereign spectacle and the effect performance has on social forces that
shape idioms of sovereignty. *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* is a new genre that moves
away from English historiography, heraldic accounts, diplomatic dispatches, and personal
diary accounts. Mulcaster does not focus on the role the nobility played in this civic
drama, a departure from heraldic accounts. His narrative is not strictly chronological, a
shift away from English historiography. Mulcaster distances himself from other available
genres in order to shape a text that emphasizes Elizabeth’s performative presence in a
visual matrix that asserts the queen’s authority through her special individuality. He
signals a shift in representational strategies from the public display of power, favoured by
Henry VIII, to a private expression of authority. For Mulcaster, Elizabeth’s behaviour
represents a “living truth” that can only be fully expressed in his text.

Performativity gives way to textuality in both the civic pageantry and the modes
of recording the cultural performance. Mulcaster believes he is qualified to mediate
sovereign spectacle because he shapes himself as a classical historiographer, one who can
best facilitate access to the authentic “essence” of the queen. The City’s commission for a
book to record the pageantry also reveals the increasing power of civic interests in the
operation of the nation. The *Passage* generates an unprecedented readership experience
where sovereign and subject can read themselves through the gaze of the other to find
signification. The *Passage* provides its readers with a level of access to sovereign
spectacle hitherto not available in civic, heraldic, or aristocratic historiographies; but it
also provides Elizabeth with a portrait of her ideal self constructed through the lens of
civic interests. *The Quenes Maiesties Passage* educates the populace on how to read
performance; Mulcaster glosses every allegorical sign and motif circulating in the
pageants. This need for education suggests that the symbols and signs that did not require
discursive mediation before the Reformation are now more ambiguous. Mulcaster
instructs his readers on how to access this system of symbols and beliefs by offering
evidence of Elizabeth’s legitimacy grounded in her special individuality. He attempts to
stabilize meaning in a monological discourse in a culture where female sovereignty is
fraught with contradiction and anxiety. The deployment of hybrid forms to record
performance reveals new relations between sovereign and subject. *The Quenes Maiesties
Passage* privileges the interaction between commoner and sovereign and asserts that
social identity is mutually constitutive.
Conclusion

By examining the performance and textualization of sovereignty in Tudor England, *Mirror of Men* has revealed that sixteenth-century England witnessed both unprecedented generic experimentation around the recording of spectacle and a shift in strategies of sovereign representation and subject formation. I have argued that Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I used performance and its “communicative aspects” to legitimize their authority (Bell 43). Aristocratic and civic identities, in turn, were modelled on aspects of sovereign identity; while courtly audiences celebrated the dynastic lineage and continuity promised by each monarch, civic spectators attempted to fashion their subjecthood upon the individual skills and personal merits of the monarchs. I have sought to demonstrate that performance shaped idioms of sovereignty and subjecthood in the Anglo-Spanish wedding (1501), The Great Tournament at Westminster (1511), and Elizabeth’s coronation entry (1559).

My analysis has also revealed that performance became increasingly textualized in sixteenth-century England as idioms shifted under the pressure of religious changes, foreign alliances, and the introduction of female sovereignty. By Elizabeth’s accession, it was necessary for pageant devisors to employ textual mediation in the performance space in order to ensure comprehensibility and educate the populace on “appropriate” receptions of cultural meaning. The process of textualizing performance allowed for new modes of mediation whereby the reader could become a spectator in a new hybrid genre committed to restaging the lived experience in performance. Sovereign authority was not produced by a single animating agent or institution; rather, the discourses that shaped sovereign authority were determined by royal, courtly, and civic interest groups in performance, reception, and textualization.
As demonstrated in the first chapter, *The Receyt of the Lady Katherine* positioned the reader as a spectator during the Anglo-Spanish marriage of 1501. Katherine of Aragon’s English reception was the most important courtly spectacle in Henry VII’s twenty-four year reign because it functioned also as a symbolic royal entry for Henry VII. The episodic nature of the pageantry wove together seemingly disparate allegorical narratives into a cohesive discourse about sovereign power and English identity. Through the similitude staged between king and God promoted in the civic pageants, Henry VII’s reign established authorization in divine favour. The courtly pageantry focused special attention on Henry VII’s sovereign masculinity, dramatizing his position as symbolic bridegroom and staging the penetration of Katherine by English manhood. Civic and courtly performance, therefore, identified different aspects of sovereignty as the sources of royal power.

The *Receyt* represented Henry VII by means of chiaroscuro specularity. The *Receyt* author also provided his audience with special moments when the reader’s extradiegetic and the king’s diegetic gazes aligned. The representative strategy of the text operates outside the parameters of specularity available in any historical performance; the objective was to facilitate identification with the sovereign while maintaining distance, more effectively dramatizing the transcendent sovereign authority of the king. Proximity to Henry VII’s royal image permitted readers to engage imaginatively in the optics of sovereign specularity. Thus, the *Receyt* author aims to make sovereign authority visible and thereby consolidate the loyalties of his nobility.

Ten years later, as we saw in Chapter Three, *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* served to illustrate Henry VIII’s project of self-fashioning as a chivalric king. During this two-day festival, held to celebrate the birth of his son, Henry participated
under the allegorical name of “Noblesse” in order to graft authorizing narratives of merit and lineage onto the sovereign body. The allegorical challenge, the entry procession into the lists, and the courtly pageants (the *Forest of Saluinge* and the *Archyard of Desire and the Arbour of Delight*) generated an allegorical narrative that idealized the court and promoted the centrality of the king as the animating force of the pageants and, by extension, England.

The *Roll* shaped its own version of performance; the artist omitted most of the pageantry in favour of three “scenes” (an entry procession, a joust, and an exit procession) that privileged Henry VIII’s specularity, and success, within the chivalric milieu. The text also allowed Henry to see himself signify within the optics of the tournament: the *Roll*’s aim was to capture Henry VIII’s dynamic specularity and invest his body with the dual authorizing narratives of merit and lineage. The *Roll* dramatized, in proto-filmic form, the strategies Henry VIII used in performance: the king employed disguise, display, and revelation in order to simultaneously align his sovereign identity with aristocratic masculinity and differentiate himself as the best man, both dynastically and through his individual merit. Thus, the extant eye-witness accounts, read alongside the *Roll*, reveal that masculinity and sovereignty undergo continual change and redefinition in early modern England.

Finally, in Chapter Four, I argued that Elizabeth’s civic entry on the eve of her coronation revealed that, while the queen’s royal image relied on performance for the expression of royal power, there was an increasing need for discursive mediation both in performance and in records of performance. The pageant devisors added paratheatrical texts to each pageant along the procession route, an innovation in the performance culture of sixteenth-century England. The Latin and English tablets were designed to stabilize the
connection between visuality and rhetoric. Rather than providing a bilingual account of the pageant speeches, however, these paratheatrical texts contradict each other in their representations of ideal governance. While the vernacular version celebrated the individual merits of Elizabeth, particularly her Protestant suffering under the Marian regime, the Latin narrative located Elizabeth’s legitimacy in her descent from Henry VIII.

Richard Mulcaster’s printed account of Elizabeth’s civic entry, The Quenes Maiesties Passage, is a unique text because it is directed towards a civic and royal readership. Mulcaster in his representation of the queen instructed his readers on the “correct” way to interpret sovereign spectacle. He positioned his readers as spectators within the optics of sovereign performance to dramatize Elizabeth’s spontaneity, the single most important authorizing narrative in the Passage. Mulcaster was almost certainly a member of the queen’s retinue during her procession and provides intimate details about the queen’s thoughts, prayers, and private remarks. This intimacy enhances the reader’s access and broadens the experience a spectator would have had in the historical performance. Mulcaster’s text signals a shift in representational strategies from the public display of power, favoured by Henry VIII, to a private expression of authority. For Mulcaster, Elizabeth’s behaviour represented a “living truth” that could only be expressed fully in his text. Mulcaster focused his attention on Elizabeth’s “special individuality” within the matrix of performance, calling attention to dynamic exchanges with her subjects that led to mutual transformation: the people are “ravished” by her presence while Elizabeth, after listening to the pageants, experienced a “marvellous change” that was reflected in her “rejoicing visage.” Mulcaster’s text supplies both a performance of sovereign authority and a record of civic performance; in this way, he sought to “comfort” his readers that Elizabeth is the true and “most excellent” sovereign.
The central finding of my dissertation is that new genres were being created during the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I in order to textualize performance. The hybrid texts in this study produce their own performances of sovereign spectacle, collapsing the division between spectator and reader in the textualizing process. The author of the Receyt, the artist of the Roll, and Richard Mulcaster align their texts with a particular cultural performance; however, despite their protestations of “truth” and “transcription,” each creates a new textualized performance of sovereign spectacle.

These hybrid performance texts also register the interplay between gender and sovereignty in Tudor England, categories that were in continual negotiation. Gendered discourses around sovereignty have largely been overlooked in discussions of Tudor kingship. One of the reasons for this critical oversight is Ernst Kantorowicz’s landmark study in which he argues that Tudor England was starting to develop a theory of sovereignty whereby the monarch’s corporeality and the body politic were one corporate unit that was “perfect, ageless, invisible, and ubiquitous” (27). Kantorowicz eclipses gender in his discussion of kingship and corporeality; and, obviously, before Mary I came to the throne, masculinity was the normative precondition of kingship. For Kantorowicz, the connection between masculinity and governance was invisible or at least difficult to separate from narratives of royal power. However, my dissertation has revealed that masculinity played a crucial role in authorizing royal legitimacy for Henry VII and Henry VIII in performance and in performance records. In courtly pageantry and in the Receyt, Henry VII’s virility was dramatized so that he symbolically penetrates Katherine; his masculinity was tied explicitly to his skills in international diplomacy and his designs to ensure the continuity of the Tudor dynasty. In his project of self-fashioning, Henry VIII cultivated a style of sovereignty that found signification in the field of chivalric
masculinity. He located his sovereign authority in his physical body, linking performance and legitimacy, a relationship that was, in turn, represented in the Roll. In the cases of both Henrician kings, masculinity is one of the authorizing discourses manipulated to demonstrate their virility and power; Henry VII and Henry VIII commissioned texts that would record performances of masculine prowess as a lasting monument to their sovereign authority.

Issues raised in *Mirror of Men* open up new avenues for a discussion of gender, genre, and performance in the latter half of the sixteenth century. To date, there is no scholarship that examines the relationship between masculine identity formation and generic innovation during Elizabeth’s reign. With the accession of a female monarch and the concomitant shift in sovereign optics, the hybrid genres within which performance was textualized became sites for expressions of crisis, and experiments in Elizabethan masculinity. It would be fruitful to probe the manner in which Elizabeth and her male courtiers commissioned innovative and hybrid genres, the representational strategies within these genres by means of which gender is contested and re-formed, and the modes of dissemination of these hybrid performance-texts. An examination of textualized performance may illuminate the tensions animating the often fraught relationships among the Queen, her nobility, and the civic populace. There is also important work to be done on the materiality of performance texts. Specifically, how type, speech prefixes, and other textual apparatus are used to generate specular proximity for the audience. While a text like Thomas Churchyard’s *Discourse of the Queenes Majestie’s Entertainment in Suffolk and Norfolk* (1578) should be read in the light of readership communities, early modern print culture, and Tudor historiography, the logic of textual mediation is perhaps most clearly exposed in relation to sexual difference. Investigation into the coordination of
masculinity, performance, and textuality in Elizabethan England has the power to encourage a reevaluation of long-held assumptions about courtly drama, historiography, and genre formation.
Chapter One

2 Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments (1987).
3 Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy (1997).
4 For example, J.R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring’s recent collection of essays, Festivals of the European Renaissance (2002), investigate aristocratic performances (coronations, triumphal entries, funerals, musical festivals) in Italy, Spain, France, and England. Although there are several studies devoted to festivals in the early sixteenth-century in France and Spain, early Tudor performance has been overlooked in favour of festivals in Elizabethan England.
8 Early English Stages, Volume I (1980).
9 Court Revels, 1485-1559 (1994).
11 Jayne Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight’s edited collection, The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I (2007) is a notable exception.
13 Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation (2006).
15 Performance Theory (2002).
17 Performance of Self (2002).
18 Enter the King (1998).
23 Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy (1997).
24 All subsequent references to the Quenes Maiesties Passage (QMP) are from Germaine Warkentin’s edition, The Queen’s Majesty’s Passage (2004).
25 Steve Neale, in “Masculinity as Spectacle,” (1993) complains that “inasmuch as there has been discussion of gender, sexuality, representation, and the cinema over the past decade then, that discussion has tended overwhelmingly to center on the representation of women” (9). He asserts that “it is very rare to find analyses that seek to specify in detail … how masculinity is inscribed and the mechanisms, pressures, and contradictions that inscription may involve” (9). In “The Difficulty of Difference,” D.N. Rodowick argues that Mulvey avoids the logical conclusion of her own theory that would necessitate pairing masochism, the passive submission to the object, with fetishistic scopophilia (77). Rodowick states that due to the “political nature of her argument” Mulvey cannot admit that the masculine look contains passive elements and can signify submission to rather
than possession of the female (78). Anneke Smelik, in “Gay and Lesbian Film Criticism,” (1998) proposes that “like the masquerade, the notion of spectacle has such strong feminine connotations that for a male performer to be put on display or to don a mask threaten his very masculinity” (140). Male spectacle, for Smelik, entails being put in a feminine position. Thomas Waugh, in “The Third Body,” (1999) provides a different interpretation; he positions the gay subject, or what he terms the “third body,” as an indefinite identity. He states: “The ambiguous tensions with spectator voyeurism construct a gay subject that is partly obscured, displaced, or off screen” (147). Gaylyn Studlar, in “Masochism and the Perverse: Pleasures in the Cinema,” (2000) asserts that “the male body cannot be marked explicitly as the erotic object of another male look without repression, sadism, and highly ritualized encoding” (217).

28 The Ethics of Psychoanalysis (1997).
29 The Ethics of Psychoanalysis (1997).
30 Drama and Resistance (1997).
31 Species, Phantasms, and Images (2001).
32 Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages (2002). In her study she outlines the debate staged between Roger Bacon, John Peacham, Augustine and William of Ockham who asserted three theories of vision – extramission, intromission and perspective optics – and argued that they were extremely influential in delineating the paradigms of thinking that constituted late medieval understanding of the connection among the senses, the physical factors of vision and the theological implications of seeing.
33 Collette suggests that although the international scientific world experienced a profound paradigm shift in the early seventeenth-century with Kepler’s theory of the retinal image, it is more difficult to find evidence of how and when these sophisticated theories entered cultural consciousness (165). Representations of medieval extramission theory persist in early modern performance texts and vision retains its figuration as a dynamic extension of the subject into the world and at the same time a penetration and alteration of the viewer’s body by the object. These historical visual economies invite a complex engagement with spectacle and the forms of spectatorship that such spectacle encourages (Collette 167).
34 Male Subjectivity at the Margins (1983).
36 Honoré Bonet, in The Tree of Battles, says “he who performs better is better esteemed” (208). There are a considerable number of treatises on chivalry, written specifically for the instruction of knighthood and for the most part in the vernacular language. Among the most influential works on chivalry and warfare are Ramon Lull’s Orde de Cavayeris (c.1311) translated by William Caxton as The Book of the Orde of Chyvalry; Honoré Bonet’s Arbre de Baitailles (c.1387), translated by Sir Gilbert Hay The Buke of the Law of Armyes (1456); Christine de Pisan’s Les Faits d’Armes (c.1408-9), translated by William Caxton Fayttes of Armes and of Chyvalrye. According to these chivalric experts, this particular model of masculinity requires performance. primarily through tournaments which were often accompanied by disguisings, pageantry, dramatic speeches, and processions.
Romance introduced the female spectator into tournaments, and in doing so encoded the male body as an object of display. According to Juliet Barker, the first evidence of female presence at jousts occurs in twelfth-century romance but there is no mention of women spectators in historical accounts until the thirteenth century (16). Richard Barber argues that the introduction of female spectators coincided with the evolution of personal heraldry, which points to a desire to differentiate between the knights (5). Around this time there was also a shift in popularity from the tourney, which was a mock battle between groups of knights, to individual jousts (Barber 7). The male body moves away from a group identity and becomes increasingly articulated as an individual. The interplay of romance and English tournament culture introduces the female spectator, which in turn “invents” masculine spectacle.

Gender Trouble (1990).

See Anglo, Spectacle (1997), Young, Tournaments (1987), Breitenberg “‘...the hole matter opened’” (1986), for views that represent this approach.

Subject of Elizabeth (2006).

Power/Knowledge (1980).


Masks and Masking (2002).

Plays of Persuasion: Drama and Politics at the Court of Henry VIII (1991),


Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture (1999).

“Mediatize” was first used with these connotations Jean Baudrillard’s “For a critique of the political economy of the sign” (1990). However, the term is used extensively by Auslander in Liveness (1999). His definition of “mediatized” is used, in his own terms, “loosely” (6).


F.S. Fussner, The Historical Revolution in English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640 (1962).


For a more detailed discussion of the difference between Fussner and Woolf’s positions, see Ivo Kamps, “The Writing of History in Shakespeare’s England” (2003): 7-8

He notes that is was only at the end of the sixteenth-century that chroniclers, humanists, and antiquarians were starting to be differentiated from poets, playwrights, religious writers, and polemicists (9).


In the sixteenth-century, records of royal entries were very popular in Europe, and authors often published their accounts within a few days of the cultural performance. In fact, Continental prologues regularly include authorial apologies for the haste in which
their narratives were written due to the overwhelming demand for printed copies. Pierre Mathieu, royal historiographer and deviser of Henri IV’s and Marie de Medici’s entries into Lyon in 1595 and 1600, felt it necessary to account for the quality of his pageant book: “s’il y a une grande distance entre ce qui s’est faict et ce qui se se devoit faire, il faut souvenir qu’il est malaise de faire bien et promptement [if there is a large discrepancy between what was actually done and what might have been done, it must be remembered how difficult it is to perform at speed]” (qtd. in McGowan, 29-30). Authors of Continental festival books fashioned their texts after historiographies rather than reproducing performative presence. For example, Mathieu’s accounts of royal entries had a very clear generic purpose: “C’est une histoire non une receil d’Architecture ou de la Perspective [“It is a history, not a book of Architecture or on Perspective]” (qtd. in McGowan, 31). The genre of festival books so popular in Europe influenced the production of the Receyt, the Roll, and the Passage; however, the English performance texts create their own hermeneutic project and employed textualizing strategies that fulfilled the needs of the particular sovereign within the specific political and social climate of England.

59 The Anthropology of Performance (1986).

Chapter Two

1 Rebellion in Henry’s first decade of rule most often took the form of “Pretenders,” men who tried to pass themselves off as legitimate heirs to the English throne, commonly under the guise of the young murdered princes, Edward V and his younger brother Richard of Shrewsbury. Lambert Simnel, the son of a baker, was the first of many young boys to be cultivated as a claimant to the throne. Perkin Warbeck, the most successful Pretender, purported to be Richard of Shrewsbury, and gained the support of several European monarchs, including the Duchess Margaret, Emperor Maximilian, the King of Denmark, and James IV of Scotland. A claimant to the throne as early as 1490, Warbeck continued to threaten Henry VII’s legitimacy until 1499 with a series of invasions and retreats. Warbeck even attempted to escape the Tower with the genuine claimant, Edward Earl of Warwick in 1499, but both were captured and subsequently executed as traitors. See R.O Bulcholz’s Early Modern England, 1485-1714 (2004), 44-7.

2 On May 6th 1499, the Common Council granted money to prepare “certeyn pageants and other charges agayn the coming of Dame Kateryn, Doughter of the kyng of Spayn” (Chronicles of London 229). The proxy marriage between Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon was held at Bewdley May 19th 1499, with ambassador De Puebla once again appearing on behalf of Katherine. On 23 November 1499, Perkin Warbeck was executed by hanging and on the November 29th the Earl of Warwick was beheaded. The Tudor court’s extensive planning for the wedding did not begin until the spring of 1500 and can be traced through a series of Privy Council orders available from College of Arms, MS 1st M.13, fols 1-11 and printed by P. Yorke, second Earl of Hardwicke, in Miscellaneous State Papers (London 1778), I, 1-20.

3 These three models of chivalric masculinity are foundational to Henry VII’s shaping of Tudor sovereignty. During Henry VII’s reign, the College of Arms capitalized on Henry VII’s Welsh ancestry through his grandfather, Jasper Tudor, in order to assert Henry was the direct descendent of Cadwalader, the last British king from the line of King Arthur.
King Arthur plays a prominent role in 1486 during Henry VII’s royal entry into Worcester, addresses the King in the York civic pageantry, governs Prince Arthur’s civic entry into Coventry in October 1498, and occupies a central symbolic position in the marriage festivities in 1501. The only figure who appears more often than King Arthur in early Tudor performance is St. George, the patron saint of England and the saint for the Order of the Garter. This chivalric knight-cum-Christian saint appeared in the Hereford royal progress in 1486, the water pageantry for the queen’s coronation in 1487, a courtly disguising in 1494, and Prince Arthur’s civic entry into Coventry in 1498. The Feast of St. George became one of England’s most important feast days in Henry VII’s reign, marked by processions, hastiludes, banquets, plays, and disguisings. Henry VII aligned himself with St. George because the folk hero combined chivalric and spiritual discourses into a coherent symbol of masculinity and nationalism. For further information on the Henrician court calendar, see W.R. Streitberger, “Renaissance Revels Documents, 1485-1642” (1978): 11-16; passim, “Court Festivities of Henry VII: 1485-1491, 1502-1505” (1983), 31-4; and passim, Court Revels, 1485-1559 (1994).

4 See Steritberger, “Court Festivities” (1983), 32-6. This discourse of ordination governs Prince Arthur’s civic entry into Coventry in October 1498, which begins with an address from King Arthur. The mythical king promises the young prince that “… no false traitor, no cruel tyrant/ Shall in any way make proffer to your land/ And rebels all false quarrels shall eschew” because Pallas “favours your lineage” (Coventry Leet Book, Vol. 2, 589).

5 The Traduction was a document that provided details of the festivities around Katherine’s entry and reception. The pamphlet was printed at the royal printing house at Westminster, making it very probable that the text was commissioned by the Royal Household. In the Traduction, Queen Elizabeth issues direct commandments, as does the Lord Steward, Master Controller.

6 For more information about the expected reception of Katherine at Southampton, see the Traduction (1500).

7 Henry VII’s use of courtly performances has a clear trajectory and is characterized by three distinct chronological periods. The first series of royal performances, which include the King’s coronation, the King’s royal progress, the Queen’s coronation, and Prince Arthur’s christening, mark the ritualized inauguration of the Tudor family into the English monarchy. The second series in Henry VII’s ideological project dramatizes the consolidation of Tudor entitlement: processions, tournaments, and banquets mark the creation ceremonies for Arthur as the Prince of Wales and Henry as the Duke of York. In the final decade of Henry VII’s reign, the king implemented an international program of Tudor glorification designed to consolidate the Tudor dynasty with proposed marriages between Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon, Margaret Tudor and James IV of Scotland, and Mary Tudor and Charles of Burgundy.


9 For more information about the City’s jurisdiction over civic entries, see Anne Lancashire, London Civic Theatre (2002): pp. 130-40.

10 The Triumph of Honour (1997).

11 Court Revels, 1485-1559 (1994).

12 The Revels Office was officially responsible for the allegorical fountains, hastiludes, and elaborate disguisings in Westminster Hall. The author of the Receyt notes that the
King took a keen interest in every aspect of the marriage festivities. He was responsible for decorating Westminster Hall with huge tapestries (4/130-5) and orchestrated the “goodly disguysyngs” held after the marriage (4/140-4).


J.L. Laynesmith argues that “the potential to provide heirs and the promise of political alliance were two of a queen’s most important attributes” (2004, 30). Lois Huneycutt argues that the intercessory role was emphasized as a queenly ideal by mid to late medieval churchmen, and queens were often compared to Esther, the biblical heroine and template for female governance (1989, 63). Paul Strom asserts that a queen’s role as intercessor had power in the political sphere, and “queenship not only supplements and confirms male power but acts as a powerful reminder of its limits” (1992, 118). For further discussions of medieval queenship, see Nuria Silleras Fernandez (2008); and John C. Parsons (1993).


The Receyt states that the Spanish “Prothonotary of Hispayne…ensured [Henry VII] that they had received bie streite injunction and commaundement of their Soveraigne Lord of their lond that they shold in noo maner of wise permytt ne suffer their ladie and Princesse of Espayne, whom they had to guyde and in gouvernans, to have eny meting, ne use eny maner of communycacion neither company, unt o thincepcion of the very daie of the solempnisacion of the mariage” (1/90-97).

Henry VII decided that since Katherine and her retinue “were so far entrid into his empire and realme, the shold seme to be in partie dischadgid annempste their Soveraigne, and of all gouvernay of their said Princes avoided and excluded, and the pleasure and commaundement of her to lie in the power in the grace and disposicion of oure noble Kyng of Englond” (1/108-10).

There is a concerted effort to code Katherine’s body as a virginal spectacle: according to Gibson’s account, her Spanish bonnet was altered to allow her hair to fall loose. Kipling notes that the headpiece was specially adapted to show Katherine’s hair, broadcasting her status as an unmarried woman (Receyt 139).

Thomas More, however, was less enthusiastic about Katherine’s retinue: “Catherine, the illustrious daughter of the King of Spain and bride of our distinguished Prince, lately made her entry into London, amid a tremendous ovation; never, to my knowledge, has there been such a reception anywhere. The magnificent attire of our nobles aroused cries
of admiration. But the Spanish escort – good heavens! – what a sight! If you had seen it, I am afraid you would have burst with laughter; they were so ludicrous. Except for three, or at the most four, of them, they were just too much to look at: hunchbacked, undersized, barefoot Pygmies from Ethiopia. If you had been there, you would have thought they were refugees from hell” (2). The author of the Receyt is more generous in his evaluation of the Spanish ladies, simply stating, “Ther apparel was busteous and marvellous and they were not the fairest women of the company” (2/744-5).


22 The Spanish ambassadors “Publisshid full wise and perfectly before the Kynes Highnes” the “surety” that Katherine was a virgin “so pure and without distress of any malicious person to such corupcion of her disposed or enormly enforsid” (2/880-885).

23 The marriage has an important political and international dimension. A poem read before Arthur and Katherine enter St. Paul’s on the day of their wedding makes the alliance explicit: “Uppon the which Sonday shulde t he goodly wedding/ And everlasting union of Englond and of Ispayne,” and later exclaims, “In Poulis many Simeons thought they hade well taryed/ To see thus Spayne and Englond toguyders to be married” (3/84-5; 90-1).

24 The Last Medieval Queens (2004), 31-3.


26 The parallels drawn between Henry VII and God are also syntactic because the same words to describe God and Henry in the Receyt. For example, the only two usages of “thencension” are attached to God and Henry. The first usage appears in the prologue when the author states, “the will of Almyghtie God, for then<ch>esion that generacions shold multiply” (Prologue 25-6). Then, in Book I, the author says that Henry, dissatisfied with the hasty reception of Katherine at Plymouth, sets off to greet her with “thencension” to abbreviate her “suffered impediment” (1/67-8).

27 Saint Augustine, in Book III of *The City of God*, set out the theoretical framework for the institution of Christian monarchy in his concept of the Two Cities. The theory of the divine right of kings finds scriptural support in Romans 13:1-2, which states: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” See *The City of God against the Pagans* (1998): 130-45.

28 According to both Kipling and Anglo, the Sun entered Sagittarius while Arcturus is entering in conjunction with Hesperus, i.e. Arthur with Katherine (Kipling Receyt, 129; Anglo Spectacle, 72 n.1).

29 This is made very clear throughout the third pageant, but most explicitly when Alfons tells Katherine, “As your self may se here evidentl y,/ Beholdyng Arthure in his hevenly spere,/ Signifiour of your noble spouse so dere” (2/406-8). He links Katherine to Hesperus when he says, “And eke your owne sterre, Hesperus especiall” (2/411).

30 The Receyt of the Lady Katherine (1990). The astrological register is explicitly linked to divine authority because the pageant is introduced by the angel Raphael, who describes
himself as “Goddes messenger” and states that his role is to “declare such heavenly mysteries to man” (2/332-3). Job also asserts that the star alignment was not the only thing that “knet” together Arthur and Katherine, “But also by Goddis providence almighty/ His predestinacion and grace thereto leyed/ To be joined in maryage, with His helpe and ayde” (2/441-5).

31 Arthur is aligned with Christ in a poem read aloud before Katherine and Arthur enter St. Paul’s on the day of their marriage. The poet states, “In Poulis many Simeons thought they hade well taryed/ To see thus Spayne and Engloned toguyders to be married” (3/89-90). Kipling states, “The poem embarks on an extensive parallel between Christ’s presentation in the temple and the marriage of Arthur and Katherine at St. Paul’s. Just as Simeon embraces the Christ child ‘with mooche joy and gladdnes’ (3/71), so the day of the marriage is one ‘of pleasure, joy, and gladnis above many othir’” (3/82).

32 Gordon Kipling points out that the castle was a conventional symbol in civic pageantry (Receyt 122). G.R. Kernodle, in From Art to Theatre, argues that castles were symbols for the nation (78).

33 When she first meets her future father-in-law, Katherine and Henry VII may have communicated in Latin: “through the interpretation of busshoppis the spechis of bothe contrethis be the meane of Laten were understonden” (1/141-3). Likewise, when Katherine enters London, the Duke of Buckingham delivers his welcome speech in Latin: he “declared goodly in Latin a certain proposition of her welcoming into the realme” (1/165-6).

34 For more information about Katherine’s literacy and early education, see Richard Rex, The Tudors (2002), p. 138. Textual aids were often present in sixteenth-century Continental processions to aid the spectators’ interpretive abilities: André Valladier, in Labyrinthe royal de L’Hercule Gaulois triumphant (Avignon 1600), explained that the spectators “lisoient cette Inscription en francois affigee [sic] sur la tapisserie du theatre, our ester leët à loisir, et faciliter à ceux qui n’estoient pas versez au latin l’intelligence des allegories caches sous l’escorce de l’Arc Triomphal” [“read this inscription in French affixed on the stage curtain and which could be perused at leisure, and helped the understanding of those who had no Latin as to the meaning of the allegories hidden beneath the surface of the Triumphal Arch]” (qtd. in McGowan, 33).

35 Early English Stages, 1300 to 1600 (1959).


39 There are four scribal hands in the Receyt MSS. Kipling speculates that the third scribe may be the author because the insertions he makes are revisionist in nature. See Kipling’s introduction to the Receyt for a description of the text’s production (xxxvii-li).

40 Format aligns the Receyt with medieval romances and classical epics. For example, Malory’s Morte d’Arthur is divided into twenty-one books and accompanying chapters, and classical epics, such as Virgil’s Aeneid, are divided into twelve books.

41 In the prologue the author states that it was “the will of Almyghtie God, for then[ch]esion that generacions shold multiply” (Prologue 25-6). Further in that same passage the author states that we “honour and love our maker above all thing” and then moves to earthly rulers who have the “love and unyte of the commons” (Prologue 45; 51). Saint Paul and Saint Peter, Remus and Romulus, Alexander, and Christ are celebrated for
the “great manhode” and pursuit of peace; these figures culminate in the “moost noble and prudent kynges in the world…Kyng Henry the vijt, as the worthy and famous Prince, Fardinand” (Prologue 60-74).


43 Many medieval chronicles began their history with the creation and proceeded chronologically with the anticipation of ending with the final judgement (Woolf 1990, 5).

44 Male Subjectivity at the Margins (1992).

45 The Illusion of Power (1975).


47 The king also enters the tournament grounds without drawing attention because he enters the viewing gallery through the “Chekyr Chambir, without any more shewe or apparens” (Receyt 4/31).

48 The chiaroscuro model of sovereignty is not unique to narratives of sovereignty circulating in Henry VII’s reign. Remarkably, Shakespeare employs a very similar version of sovereign spectacle in 1 Henry IV almost a century later. When Henry IV counsels his son on statecraft, the relationship between power and visibility takes on major political significance. In Henry IV’s formulation, “By being seldom seen, I could not stir/But, like a comet, I was wondered at” (3.2 45-6). Awe surrounding sovereign spectacle is produced through the strategic scarcity of sovereign spectacle, which, according to Henry IV, has a distinct political advantage: Henry states that he “dressed myself in such humility/That I did pluck allegiance from men’s hearts,/Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths” (3.2 50-52). Limited access to sovereign spectacle, according to this paradigm, increases political allegiance and enhances the act of social approbation. The comparisons between Tudor and Shakespearean interpretations of kingly authority are striking: Henry Bolingbroke and Henry Richmond vanquished Richard II and Richard III respectively. Both Henrys committed acts of usurpation that displaced legitimate kings, while both Richards had incontrovertible dynastic claims to the English throne. The hereditary claims of the two Henrys were equally tenuous, and both kings were plagued with civil unrest during their reigns. In Shakespeare’s fictional representation of statecraft and in Henry VII’s carefully stage-managed Tudor performance, sovereign spectacle becomes imbued with secrecy to enhance the moments of revelation that solidify the social contract between King and subject.

49 Henry VII founded the Yeoman of the Guard in 1485. His personal bodyguard consisted of 300 “chosen persones of the hole contreth” who were “strong, valiant, and bold men” (Receyt 1/245-6). Their role was to “evermore stondyng by the weies and passage upon a rowe in both the sides where the Kings Highnes shuld from chamber to chamber or from oon place to another place at his goodly pleasure be removed” (1/246-50). They were dressed in the King’s livery (white and green emblazoned with a red rose) and showcased the King’s magnificence and largess (and perhaps paranoia). The Yeoman of the Guard is the oldest royal bodyguard and standing military corps. See Thomas Preston, The Yeomen of the Guard (1885).

50 I borrow this phrase from Stephen Orgel in The Illusion of Power (1975). While Orgel uses this term to describe the importance of masques in Jacobean court culture, the phrase is useful in a discussion of Tudor courtly performance because it articulates the desire to identify distinct social identities.
A comparison of the tournament account alongside the extant cheques and chronicles reveals that the author of the *Receyt* provides a different order of the knights and their scores are not accurate. See Kipling, *Receyt*, p.133.

The author provides a cursory description of the heralds in Book Two, stating “the kinges of harodes and aroldes of armys in their cote armours of silver and gold of the Kynges armys of Englon…made roome and weye and devyded the common people right orderly” (2/653-6). In this description the heralds’ role is reduced from master of ceremonies to keeping the crowd under control. In Book Four, the author defers his description of the second day’s tournament, referring his reader to heraldic narratives: “[the] goodly feates of arms and therof the whole descripticion appieryth well pleyner and more opyn in the bokys of the haroldes of armys” (4/124-6). See Kipling’s introduction, xlvi-iii, for more information.

When the *Receyt* author tells his audience to read heraldic sources for a more accurate and thorough account of the hastiludes, he makes the authorial assumption that his reader has access to books of heraldry if he or she desire a more complete account of the chivalric performances.


Throughout the sixteenth-century Continental accounts of royal triumphs were written by contemporary historians, designed for a larger audience, and printed in the city who hosted the procession immediately following the event (McGowan 30-1).

If the *Receyt* was indeed designed in part as a royal explication, this practice has Continental correlatives: Henri IV of France required written elucidation of his entry into Moulins in 1595 because without this commentary the king could not understand the complicated imagery which Laval, the pageant poet, had devised to boost the cause of the Bourbon dynasty (McGowan 29).

During the wedding at St. Paul’s, the king was secretly closeted in a private viewing chamber located in the nave, a position which limited his visual field to the nuptial stage erected next to the altar (Kipling *Receyt*, 143).

After 1501, several heraldic records copy sections of the *Receyt*, often including only the very logistical aspects of courtly performance. Sir Christopher Barker, Richmond herald, Norroy Herald, and Garter King of Arms from 1522-1550, compiled a manuscript of coronation ceremonials for Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, and Edward VI based on the *Receyt* (Kipling *Receyt* l-li).

William Caxton established his printing press at Westminster, not London, and supplied Henry VII with several printed English translations of Burgundian-French texts. Henry VII commissioned Caxton to print many books, including Christine de Pisan’s *Feats of Arms, Fifteen Oes, Blanchardine and Eglantine*, and a translation of *Eneydos* (Kipling *Triumph*, 35-6). One of Henry VII’s projects was to establish a Royal Library and he created the Office of the Stationer to the King in December 1485 to ensure access to desirable printed books and illuminated manuscripts (Kipling *Triumph*, 35).
Tournament registration procedures in Tudor England also employed the printing press to distribute important material to a select audience: for example, the articles for the Coronation tournament were published in the City of London (Anglo Spectacle, 17). Once the articles were published, a herald registered each participant: “because that it is needful to have and know the names of them that will be the comers, there shall be a herald waiting ready with a pen, ink, and paper at St. Thomas of Acres in the City of London every work day between this and the said Sunday appointed for the jousts, viz. before noon from ix of the clock until three to write and to register the names of the said comers” (An Ordinance made for the Coronation; qtd. in Anglo Spectacle, 17).

Henry VII published the papal bull allowing Henry VII to marry Elizabeth of York in 1587. Jousts of May and June 1506-7 were also printed at the behest of Henry VII. Henry VII “command[ed]…to pulishe the articles of there armes as well in his noble court as in the cite of London. And thenne his Grace thankefuly granted them and asseigned their articles, and commanded Garter principal kyng of armes to assigne off hys compaignie to proclame the said articles in places convenient for suche actis to be doon; which was fiurst proclaimed in the kyngis great chamber of him maner of Wodestoke, after in the fair of the same towne, and after in London” (LP 388).

In 1500, Pynson did not yet bear the official title of the King’s Printer, but had already been commissioned for several printing jobs. Henry VII created the post of King's Printer in 1504, apparently to coincide with the last parliament of his reign. However, it was not until 1512, when Pynson secured the exclusive right to print all statutes and proclamations, that the king's printer became the true precursor of HMSO (Neville-Sington DNB).

In addition to the three eye-witness accounts of the multi-day festivities, three ancillary texts are linked to the marriage festivities: two allegorical challenges, the Suffolk Challenge and the Buckingham Challenge, and one printed text, The traduction & mariage of the princesse. The Traduction and the two allegorical challenges were published and circulated in anticipation of the marriage in order to provide various audiences with the organizational details of the impending spectacles.

Pierre Mathieu, royal historiographer and deviser of Henri IV’s and Marie de Medici’s entries into Lyon in 1595 and 1600, felt it necessary to account for the quality of his pageant book: “s’il y a une grande distance entre ce qui s’est fait et ce qui se se devoit faire, il faut souvenir qu’il est malaise de faire bien et promptement” [if there is a large discrepancy between what was actually done and what might have been done, it must be remembered how difficult it is to perform at speed]” (qtd. in McGowan, 29-30; Mathieu L’acceuil, 5). For an extensive list of sixteenth-century Continental pageant books, see Margaret M. McGowan “The Renaissance Triumph and its Classical Heritage” (2002).

Continental records of civic entries did not attempt to record performative presence, choosing instead to fashion their texts after historiographies. Mathieu’s accounts of royal entries had a very clear generic purpose: “C’est une histoire non une receuil d’Architecture ou de la Perspective” (“It is a history, not a book of Architecture or on Perspective,” qtd. in McGowan, 31).


Most of the London Chronicles are anonymous, but The Great Chronicle is probably by Robert Fabyan, an Alderman of London, who also wrote The New Chronicles of

71 *Caxton’s Chronicles*, a compilation of many civic chronicles, became the first of the English printed histories. First printed in 1480, four other editions were printed subsequently in the fifteenth century and enjoyed at least seven further editions in the early sixteenth century (Gransden 223).

72 I borrow the phrase “complexly revoiced citations” from Susan Crane’s discussion of performance studies in *The Performance of Self* (3). This phrase is particularly useful to my discussion of sovereign spectacle because it acknowledges the relationship between individual utterance and its reiterative function necessary for the production of social identity.


75 In Book Four, the author identifies the visual pleasure experienced during the procession of knights into the tournament grounds on the first day of the hastiludes: “[the knights were] well horsid, trappid, and hangid with spancles of goold and bellys, that their apparel, avancyng of their horsis, and demeanour of curayge was great pleasure and gladness to the Kynges Grace and to all the beholders of the holl Realme of Englond ther being present” (4/84-8). The king’s visual pleasure at the chivalric spectacle is privileged first. The audience represents England, and visual pleasure is marked in the text as a unifying experience. This is the only place in the narrative that mentions civic visual pleasure.

76 “Ryght comfortable it was to beholde the coragious Doyng of many a good hors bothe of the awayters and also of the said defendours, amount the which that day was gretly commendid & notyd” (*GCL* 314). Successful aristocratic spectacles exhibit masculine prowess on the tournament field: “the said parties tourneyed with swerdes upon horsbak in moost manfull and valiaunt wise; and this daies feate continued from xij of the clok till that dirk nyght” (*CL* 252).

77 Royal magnificence also finds expression in the display of luxury goods in the civic chronicles. While the author of the *Great Chronicle of London* does not record any of the pageant-disguisings, interludes, or speeches delivered at the marriage banquet, he does describe the cupboard boards in the Great Hall, which were filled “with gylt plate as fflagons grete potties standing Cuppis & Bollys, the which sundry aldyrmen of Goldsmyhis at that tyme present valuyed at xij M li” (*GCL* 312). The narrative focuses on the value of the dinnerware rather than the larger figural narratives circulating in courtly performances, exposing the interests of the civic oligarchy. The Alderman was able to provide the chronicler with price estimates for the royal plate because he belonged to the guild responsible for producing the spectacle of largess.

78 Katherine’s journey through the levels of pageantry attracts only cursory attention until she meets with civic dignitaries, at which point she finds narrative representation. This encounter, recorded in both civic chronicles, does not appear in the *Receyt* which overlooks Katherine’s Mayoral welcome entirely, choosing instead to list the names of the lords temporal and spiritual who accompany Katherine on her royal entry (2/14-23). Furthermore, Katherine is not valued for her reproductive or erotic capacity in the chronicles, perhaps because dynastic continuity is an aristocratic preoccupation rather than a foundational characteristic of civic-based value.
Chapter Three

1 Empson and Dudley were responsible for enforcing a taxation policy known as “Morton’s Fork”, characterized by the double dilemma that if subjects liable for taxation lived an extravagant lifestyle, they could afford to pay the fine; if they lived austere, they should have sufficient funds with which to pay (Fox 32).

2 See, for example, Geoffrey Rudolph Elton, England Under the Tudors (1991); Barbara Harris, Edward Stafford, third Duke of Buckingham, 1478-1521 (1986); and S.J. Gunn, Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558 (1995). Helen Miller, in Henry VIII and the English Nobility (1986), suggests that Henry VIII consolidated the loyalty of his nobility via chivalric discourse since he knighted more men in his first five years of power than his father did in his entire reign (39).

3 The Defenders were Thomas Lord Howard (heir apparent to the Earl of Surrey), Sir Edward Howard (Admiral of the English Navy), his brother Lord Richard, Thomas Grey (Marquis of Dorset), Sir Edmund Howard, Sir Thomas Knyvet, and Charles Brandon esquire. The Challengers were Sir John Peachy, Sir Edward Neville, Sir Edward Guildford, Sir John Cary, Sir William Parr, Sir Giles Capell, Sir Griffith Dun, and Sir Rolande (Hall 511).

4 “Then upon the Thursday next following the said Challengers and Defenders made a goodly disport, as first the said Challengers coming out of Westminster Hall caused to be conveyed before them a pageant like a forest pitched full of sundry green boughs within which sat a virgin apparelled after the Spanish guise and assembled of bucks and does about her, and when the said Challengers with their said pageant came before the King standing, a pricket suddenly ran out of the said forest, and after him a brace of greyhounds. The [dogs] coursed the said pricket, and shortly after they slew it, and after that a forester blew a moot for the death thereof and smote off the head quickly and presented it unto the Queen, and that done, the said Challengers passed over to the end of the tilt and then hovid a while” (GCL 341).
In 1452 Henry VI gave his half brother Edmund Tudor the greyhound as a supporter for his coat of arms, and this greyhound was used extensively by Henry VII as heraldic “proof” of his rightful claim to the throne through Henry VI and Lancastrian lineage.

William Caxton, in his edition of the *Ordre of Chyualry* (1484), states “[Tournaments] shold cause gentylmen to resorte to tauncyent customes of chyualry to grete fame and renomee. And also to be alwey redy to serue theyr prynces whan he shalle calle them or haue need” (121).

Ramon Llull’s *Book of the Ordre of Chyualry*, translated and printed by William Caxton in 1484, asserts that “Chivalry hath no regard to the multitude of number but loveth only them that be full of noblesse” (47). Llull further defines noblesse as a combination of “faith, hope, charity, justice, strength, temperance, [and] loyalty” (55).

The debate about the nature of nobility finds its origins in Horace, Cicero, and the Stoics, but the debate was rekindled at various times throughout the Middle Ages, taking a new form in late medieval culture with the publication of *Contraversia de nobilité* (“The Debate About Nobility”) written by the Florentine Buonaccorso da Montemagno in 1428, which was translated into English in 1448 by John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, and probably published by William Caxton as the *Declamation of Noblesse* in 1481. The debate was centered on the question, “is true nobility defined by aristocratic birth or personal merit?” The classical debate asserted that nobility resided in personal virtue rather than social status, yet late medieval English society privileged a dual authorizing narrative. See Jonathan Hughes, “Educating the Aristocracy in Late Medieval England” (1999).


The Victorian of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancastre and Yorke [1548] (1965).


From the time his name appears in the *Revels Account* in 1510 until his death in 1534, Richard Gibson was actively involved in the production of every major tournament and revel at court of which we have record. Gibson’s productions were supervised by Edward Guilford, Master of the Armoury, who was one of Henry’s close friends. Guilford assumed control over the spectacles from Henry Wentworth, who retired in November, 1510. Guilford is credited with devising or supervising most of the major entertainments from 1511-1517, and again in 1522 and 1527 (see Streitberger 1994: 49-50; 67-71).

Henry’s Continental counterparts became avid tourney goers, fashioned partially upon the young English king’s example. Charles V cultivated the strong tradition of Burgundian tournaments begun by the Valois dukes, first appearing in the lists in 1517 to celebrate his arrival in Castile, and in March 1522 a Venetian ambassador reported that the young Roman emperor excelled all others at a tournament in which Charles and his brother Ferdinand tilted together, dressed as Moors. In June of the same year he jousted with, not against, Henry VIII at Greenwich during his visit to England. Francis I was also an able joust who led the Challengers in a tournament held in 1514 to celebrate the marriage of Mary Tudor to Louis XII. At his own accession tournament in 1515, Francis delighted spectators with his performance in the tilityard and received favourable mention
in the letters of English and Venetian ambassadors to their respective courts (Richardson 43).


16 The climate of anxiety was not unfounded because there were several casualties in hastiludes, including the king himself. In 1524, Henry VIII narrowly escaped death when the Duke of Suffolk’s lance struck his helmet. The incident, at Greenwich, is described in Hall’s *Chronicle*: “The Duke [of Suffolk, Charles Brandon] struck the king on the brow right under the defence of the headpiece on the very coyffe scull, or basinet piece… to which never armourer had taken heed, for it is evermore covered with the visor, barbet, and Volant piece” (Hall 674). Nine years later, at the age of forty-four, Henry VIII was unhorsed and lay unconscious for two hours (*Letters and Papers*, X, 200; 427, p. 172). Henry retired from the lists shortly after this accident.

17 Henry VIII always distinguishes himself from all other men he competes against: Hall describes a tournament in 1510 where “At these Jousts the King broke more spears than any other, and therefore had the prize. At the Tourney in likewise the honour was his” (Hall 516). During the Great Tournament at Westminster, success was “valiantly achieved by the King and his aides…[and] his Grace attained the prize” (Hall 518). The civic chronicle corroborates Hall’s account: “[T]he King then came forth again and ran many and sundry courses the which he performed to his great laude and honor, and albeit that the other Challengers did full knightly and well, and in likewise the Defenders as the Lord Marquis Charles Brandon and others, yet the feats of the King so far excelled them, that none had spoken of but him alone” (*GCL* 373).

18 The allegorical challenge makes its first appearance in an English tournament in 1498 to celebrate the proposed union between Princess Mary and Charles of Castile. The challenge assumed primary significance in tournaments at the court of Henry VIII because of the genre’s potential to shape larger figural narratives. The challenge defines in advance the allegorical world that will be created. Often the setting, the costumes, the pageantry, and the ordinances combine into a single dramatic allegory which functions to outline sovereign expectations for participants and spectators alike. The Great Tournament at Westminster challenge survives in two versions: the original manuscript, housed at the College of Arms, bears the signatures of the Challengers and Answerers, while a late sixteenth-century copy of the challenge without the signatures is bound in a heraldry book now in the Bodleian Library. The Oxford MS also includes the jousting cheques for both days of the tournament. College of Arms MS Jousting Cheques 1511; the late sixteenth-century copy is in the Bodleian Library, Asmolean MS. 1116, fols. 109-110b.

19 Gibson states, “In the 2nd year of our sovereign Lord Harry the 8th his pleasure was to have and hold a joust of honor at his palace of Westminster furnished by his own noble person with three aides in his party” (fol.41). The allegorical challenge also bears Henry VIII’s personal signature.

20 For example, in 1517 he performs as *Loyalty* and *Noblesse* in order to assault a castle filled with women during a pageant-disguising (Hall 537). Henry VIII also appears in the Castle of Loyalty in 1524 during the Christmas season (Hall 548).

Disguise and display is a favourite mode of performance for knights within the romance narratives. In Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*, Gawain, Arthur, and Lancelot enter tournaments as unknown knights. Lancelot conceals his identity in a tournament at Astolat by keeping his visor closed and changing his habitual shield and crest, his insignia. He borrows a shield, fastens a lady’s sleeve to his helm, and relies on his armour as an impenetrable disguise. The romance narrative appears in tales such as Malory's *Tale of Sir Gareth* (c.1460-62) and also *Lybeaus Desconus*, a fourteenth century romance by Thomas Chester. In this story a young knight named Guinglian, the son of Sir Gawain, assumes the name Lybeaus Desconus to hide his illustrious ancestry. See *Lybeaus Desconus* (1969). See also *Le Bel Inconnu* (1992).

Edward III fought in a tournament at Dunstable in 1342 *ad modum simplicis militis* (Vale, *Edward III*, 64-5). Vale suggests the possibility that Edward III competed in the lists bearing the arms of his infant son, Lionel whose betrothal the tournament honoured. In 1334, Edward III fought in the Arthurian incognito of “Sir Lionel” and at other events in the arms of his knights (ibid. 68-9). In 1348, Edward III appeared at the Litchfield jousts in the arms of Sir Thomas de Bradstone and at the Canterbury hastiludes in 1349 he wore Sir Stephen Cosington’s family crest (Vale, *Tournament* 86; Barker 86).

This debate appears in chivalric manuals like Honoré Bonet’s “Laws of Chivalry” from *The Tree of Battles* (1387), Christine de Pizan’s *The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry* (1410), John Gower’s “Complaint against Chivalry” in *Vox clamantis* (1381), John of Salisbury “Chivalric Duties” from *Policratus* (1159), and Ramón Lull’s “The Origins and Purpose of Chivalry,” from *The Book of the Order of Chivalry* (1276). This debate is also highlighted during Katherine of Aragon’s civic entry in 1501 when Noblesse addresses the Princess and tells her that “Vertue appareyneth to every estate./As well to noble as folke of lowe degree./But yet the noble, aftir another rate,/Be applied of their right propertie/To be virtuous and to hav e regalee/…/But without [Virtue] and me [Noblesse], all labour is in vayne” (*Receyt* 2/225-36).

The *bel inconnu* plot has a long history in English tournament culture. Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, organized a series of jousts in 1414 while in Calais during an English campaign, subsequently recorded in a pictorial narrative titled *Pageant of the Birth, Life, and Death of Richard Beauchamp* (24-8). Beauchamp issued challenges under three separate personae, the Green Knight, the Black Knight, and the Attendant Knight. On each day of the joust Beauchamp wore a different coat of arms from one branch of his family lineage. On the final day of jousting his horse’s trappers displayed all three crests from the previous days, quartered with the Beauchamp arms so there was no mistaking Beauchamp’s participation, and victory, in each of the challenges.

It is important to note that the *bel inconnu* plot has a secondary meaning where the knight does not know his parentage and must embark on a quest to discover his identity. An example of this version of the *bel inconnu* plot is *Carduino*, an Italian verse romance generally attributed to Antonio Pucci and dated to the 1370s. See *I cantari di Carduino* (1873: 1-44). This scenario also appears in *Lanzelet*, by Ulrich von Zatzikhoven [c. 1194] (2005), and Chrétien de Troyes' *Le Conte du Graal* [c. 1180-91]. This version of the Fair Unknown dramatizes a very different type of narrative than the one employed by Henry VIII, who, instead of undergoing a process of self discovery and the acquisition of lineage,
uses the romance narrative as an assertion of a stable sovereign identity that is always-already present.

28 Henry VIII was very fond of employing woodwoses in his pageants. On Twelfth Night in 1513 he employs the wild man motif (Hall 535). The wild man makes an important appearance during the Twelfth Night revelry in 1515: the pageant-disguising initially hosted a mock tourney between four knight Challengers and four knight Defenders until “suddenly out of a place like a wood eight wild men, all appareled in green moss made with sleeved silk, with ugly weapons and terrible visages…fought with the knights eight to eight, and after long fighting the armed knights drove the wild men out of their places” (Hall 580). In this pageant, the woodwoses become adversaries that cause the feuding knights to unite under a common cause to champion chivalry over anarchy. See also Gibson PRO E36/217, fols.219-23.

29 The Reveals Account reveals that the woodwoses were adorned with ivy on their “heads and belts and in their staves” (f.51; 128).

30 The woodwose motif was also popular on the Continent. In 1392, King Charles VI of France and five other nobles dressed themselves as woodwoses and chained themselves together for a disguising called the Bal des Ardents. Unfortunately, four of the six members of the masking team burned to death after their costumes, made of pitch and straw, caught fire. Charles IV was saved from the flames because his cousin wrapped him in her robes. This mishap did not quench enthusiasm for this type of costuming and wild men continued to be a popular form of disguise, especially during marriages and Twelfth Night festivities. James IV of Scotland was also fond of the woodwose motif; he hosted a tournament in 1507 called “Tournament of the Wild Knight and the Black Lady” to celebrate the birth of his son and new heir to the Scottish throne. James performed in the lists as a “Wild Knight” accompanied by a host of wild men wearing “hert hornes and gayt skinnis” (qtd. in Fradenberg, 228).


32 While the “Wild Man” motif becomes popular in Henry VIII’s tournaments and pageantry, the figure of the woodwose makes its first appearance in Henrician performance during the Great Tournament at Westminster. According to Streitberger, in Court Revels, 1485-1559, this pageant marks the first time a battle between knights and wild men became a principal focus, and it is the first time an actual martial exhibition was used in a revel (87). Henry VIII’s use of the wild men motif departs from Continental pageantry: while Charles IV of France and James IV of Scotland disguise themselves as wild men, Henry dramatizes his mastery over the woodwoses and invests his style of rule with the ability to tame nature and order chaos.

33 Richard Gibson records in his Reveals Account, “Four visors, the piece 12 d, spent for the four Woodwoses that conducted the forest” (f.51).

34 In 1510 Henry VIII learnt of a tournament held by certain gentlemen at Richmond and decided that he and his friend William Compton would join the hastiludes incognito. According to Hall, they were “unknown to all persons, and unlooked for” (516). The contest featured jousts running en Volant, or without lists, a dangerous venture because of the increased possibility for horse collisions. Both “unknown” knights did very well until Compton received a particularly hard buffet from Sir Edward Knyvet and he was thrown to the ground. Hall writes that “great consternation” ensued because word had gone round that the king was one of the “strange knights” (516). Henry was forced to reveal himself
prematurely to the “great comfort of the people” (516). Instead of erasing the identity of the king, this mode of performance attracts the gaze of his subjects who focus their attention on his body.

The letter of challenge for the Westminster tournament is heavily reliant on John Tiptoft’s “Ordinances, Statutes, and Rules,” which he wrote at the behest of Edward IV in 1466. Tiptoft includes a statute that regulates female spectatorship: “Reserving always to the Queen and to the ladies present, the attribution and gift of the prize, after the manner and form accustomed: to be attributed for their demerits according to the articles ensuing.” (qtd. in Cripps-Da, Appendix II, xxvii-xxix). The statutes are almost identical to the rules outlined in the Great Tournament at Westminster Challenge.


Charles Brandon first jousted publicly in 1501 at the tournament to celebrate Prince Arthur’s marriage to Katherine of Aragon and became a central figure in the tournaments and revels in Henry VIII’s court.


In the first three years of Henry’s reign Brandon shared royal attention with a number of contemporaries, among them Edward Howard, Thomas Knyvet, Henry and Edward Guildford, and Henry Stafford (see DNB). Following Howard and Knyvet’s deaths in the war of 1512-13, Brandon became important in part in the king’s entertainments. In revels he was the only participant dressed identically to Henry VII, and in jousts Brandon had the privilege of being the king’s sole partner in challenging the rest of the court. See Sean Cunningham, “Pole, Edmund de la, eighth earl of Suffolk” (2004).

Henry Guildford, third son of Sir Richard Guildford, opted for a career at royal court. Keith Dockray suggests Guildford may have had little choice since, as a younger son whose father was considerably in debt when he died in 1506, he inherited little land and an annuity of only £10 (DNB). Gaining favour and lucrative positions at court was Guildford’s one recourse for financial and social survival, and his love of jousting and courtly entertainments gained him attention and patronage from the king. During the festivities in January 1510, he and his half brother Sir Edward Guildford were part of the small company headed by the king who burst into Queen Katherine’s chamber dressed as Robin Hood’s men (Hall 513). Guildford became Master of the Revels early in Henry VIII’s reign (Hall 517).

He was the second son of Henry Stafford, second duke of Buckingham and Katherine Woodville, daughter of Richard Woodville, Earl Rivers. The young Stafford’s finances were precarious as the younger son and he sought out a position at the court of Henry VII to improve his economic situation. See Keith Dockray, in “Henry Stafford, earl of Wiltshire (1479-1523),” (2004).

Renaissance Self-Fashioning (1980).


Anglo locates the motivation behind the production of the Roll as a “desire to record ceremonial for practical purposes of precedent” (79). Roy Strong is interested in the Roll
in terms of the history of costume, stating that “this must be the first document in English history to record what people wore for a particular occasion” (1970: 3).

45 Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy (1997).


47 Tudor Political Culture (2002).

48 The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster is 36 membranes and more than 60 feet in length.

49 The Nine Worthies tradition is outlined in William Caxton’s preface to Le Morte Darthur: “For it is notoirly known through the universal world that there been nine worthy and the best men that ever were, that is to wit, three Paynims, three Jews, and three Christian men. As for the Paynims, they were tofore the Incarnation of Christ, which were named, the first Hector of Troy, of whom th’istory is common both in ballad and in prose, the second Alexander the Great, and the third Julius Caesar, Emperor of Rome, of whom th’istories been well known and had. As for the three which were tofore th’Incarnation of our Lord, of whom the first was Duke Joshua which brought the children of Israel into the land of behest, the second David, king of Jerusalem, and the third Judas Maccabeus, of these three the Bible rehearseth all their noble histories and acts. And sith the said Incarnation have been three noble Christian men stalled and admitted though the universal world into the number of nine best and worthy, of whom was first the noble Arthur, whose noble acts I purpose to write in this present book, here following. The second was Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, of whom the’istory is had in many places, both in French and English: and the third and last was Godefroy of Bouillon, of whose acts and life I made a book unto th’excellent prince and king of noble memory, King Edward the Fourth” (2-3).


51 Medieval Tapestries (1967).

52 In 1528 Henry VIII commissioned a series of ten tapestries from Brussels that depict the “Story of Abraham.” Thomas Campbell, in Tapestry in the Renaissance (2002), suggests the Flemish style favoured by Henry VIII was designed to produce a narrative distributed over the entire surface of the tapestry with an emphasis on line and pattern rather than volumetric illusion (73).

53 Emperor Maximilian I revived the Roman iconographic tradition of civic triumphs in order to produce twelve sumptuously illustrated manuscripts comprised of over one thousand woodcuts executed in his service in the first two decades of the sixteenth-century. Albrecht Dürer, Hans Holbein, and Hans Burgkmair were among the large group of graphic artists, wood engravers, historians, painters, and counsellors responsible for producing the Emperor’s body of work. Theuerdank, or “The Knight of Adventurous Thought,” was commissioned in 1512 and printed in 1517: the pictorial narrative, which contains 118 woodcuts with accompanying verses, is an episodic retrospective of the journey Maximilian made in 1477 from Styria in Austria to his beloved bride, Mary of Burgundy in the Netherlands (Benecke 18-22). Freydal is an account of the tournaments and courtly revels Maximilian hosted in Burgundy. Both these pictorial narratives were designed to recount semi-autobiographical adventure stories governed by courtly romance. Stanley Applebaum, in his edition of the Triumph, asserts that text is “one of world’s richest and most unusual monuments of art” (v).
Although *Triumph* was initially conceptualized in 1510, the first printed edition appeared in 1524, seven years after Maximilian’s death (Applebaum vi). If the English king was not aware of Maximilian’s project in 1511, he was almost certainly informed of Maximilian’s iconographic project when he met with the Imperial Emperor at Lille in 1513.


Anthony Wagner, in *A Catalogue of English Mediæval Rolls of Arms*, classifies the 130 extant English rolls of arms in five major categories: occasional rolls, which relate to an event such as a tournament or siege; institutional rolls, associated with religious and chivalric orders and often compiled over many generations; regional rolls, which list the armigers in a particular county; illustrative rolls, which illustrate stories or chronicles; general rolls, which are combinations of several collections and sources (x-xiv). Rolls were usually produced by heralds and pursuivants under the watchful eyes of one of the Kings of Arms, and these texts either remained in the possession of the heralds, either in their personal collections or at the College of Arms, or were given to kings or nobles as gifts. The majority of rolls in the heraldic tradition were vertically organized and consisted of a series of family crests and coats of arms accompanied by brief identifying text.

For example, the *Salisbury Roll* was originally a vellum roll but was cut into book form. The artefact contains a series of fifty-three figures representing successive Earls of Salisbury and their kin. Most of the figures are in pairs of a man and a wife linked by a cord or chain: the men are in armour with their coats of arms emblazoned upon their tabards while the women wear a mantle either of their paternal arms or of their husband’s coat impaling their father’s (Wagner 103).

However, rolls were not always produced under the jurisdiction of the College of Arms. John Rous, chaplain, historian, and antiquary, produced the *Warwick or Rous Roll*. The illustrated chronicle roll, executed between 1477 and 1485, has sixty-six coloured drawings of figures of Kings of Britain and the Earls of Warwick with narrative histories of their lives in Latin below. Because the *Warwick Roll* features two illustrations of Richard III, Tudor-Craig, suggests that the Roll was probably commissioned to celebrate Anne’s coronation in 1483. The roll glorifies the dynastic House of Warwick, commemorates their noble pedigree, and is Yorkist in political flavour (Wagner 116-7).

See Wagner’s foreword to Anglo’s edition of *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster* (1968); and Anglo, *Tournament*, 75-6.

Trinity College MS O.3.59 Catalogue no.1231.

Later copies of this roll are also in the Bodleian Library, Ashmolean MS. 13, and the British Museum Additional MS. 22306.

The *Revels Account* documents the careful and purposeful differentiation in colour, size, and ornamentation between Henry’s pavilion and those of his fellow Challengers. The king’s pavilion is made of blue velvet and cloth of gold while the other three are made of alternating panels of blue and crimson damask. The king’s pavilion is lined with forty-four yards of green sarsenet while the Challengers’ pavilions are unlined (*Revels Account* f.52). The Challengers’ pavilions are decorated with “silk blue and crimson, spent and employed for the fringes of the three pavilions” in contrast to the king’s pavilion which has “a fringe of damask gold weighing by Venice weight 140 ounces, set in the King’s rich pavilion” (*Revels Account* f.54). The king’s pavilion is considerably larger than the
other three pavilions because Gibson employs seventy-two yards of material to construct Henry’s while each of the Challenger’s pavilions use fifty-nine yards.


66 Edward Hall describes the tilt gallery: “A place at the palace was prepared for the King and also the Queen, richly hung the inner part with cloth of gold, and the outer with rich cloth of arras” (517). The tilt gallery for the Great Tournament at Westminster was probably the same gallery used for Henry VIII’s Coronation tournament. Hall describes the viewing stands in 1509: “The new king and queen took their places in the viewing gallery specially made to look like a castle decorated with gilded roses and pomegranates and the initials H and K” (Hall 517).

67 The isolated male head functions much like the Lacanian anamorphosis, which Lacan describes as a “strange, suspended oblique object” that functions as a trap for the gaze (Psychoanalysis 88-9). The disembodied head becomes a “magical floating object,” present in order to capture the attention of the Roll audience and make them aware of their role as voyeurs (Lacan Fundamental Concepts 89). Lacan argues that this moment of awareness disturbs the spectator and produces an emotional response such as shame or fascination. Awareness of the gaze creates a moment of circular recognition that pinpoints the subject as a desiring being.

68 The identities of the Answerers are corroborated by Edward Hall’s description of the men in the lists: “Marquis Dorset and Sir Thomas Boleyn … their horse trappers of black velvet, their tabards, hats and trappers set with scallop shells of fine gold, and strips of black velvet, every strip set with a scallop shell, their servants all in black satin with scallop shells of gold in their breasts” (Hall 518).

69 The Great Chronicle notes that the helm bearer in the tournament’s closing procession is George Neville, Lord of Bergavenny. However, the helm bearer’s legs are encased in armour which suggests that he competed in the lists that day. Anglo proposes that the helmet bearer is in fact Thomas Howard, son of the Earl of Surrey, who was an Answerer in the lists during the second day of the tournament and is recorded in the Great Chronicle as the helmet bearer for the first day of the tournament (Anglo Tournament 104, n.1).

70 This tradition finds its roots in the classical debate about mirrors. In Seneca's speculum principis in De Clementia, the mirror functions, in part, as a device for self-improvement. See Shadi Bartsch, The Mirror of the Self (2006), 45-6. For a discussion of Renaissance theories of mirrors, see Barbara Freedman, Staging the Gaze (1991): 3-5.
71 I borrow these terms from Claire Sponsler, in Drama and Resistance (1997): 108-9. Although Sponsler uses these terms to refer to illuminated books of hours and the cultural capital they bestow upon the mercantile elite, her argument that material culture is crucial to the construction of late medieval subjectivities informs my discussion of The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster.

72 Auslander in fact states that the “live” can only be defined as “that which can be recorded” (27).
73 Efforts are also made to recapture the experience a spectator may have had in the viewing stands at the tournament. Written above the trumpets during the exit procession,
the artist states, “Les son des Trompetters. A l’hostel.” Tournament etiquette required the heralds to cry “A l’hostel” to announce the end of a day in the lists, a convention employed in the Roll to transition from the jousting scene to the exit procession. The verbal utterance is textualized and provides an aural dimension to the pictorial narrative, which creates a performative immediacy for the audience of the Roll. The Great Chronicle confirms this ritual was used in the actual tournament: “The heralds made their monition in crying ‘A loteell, A loteell’ and conveyed the Defenders out at the gate which they first came in at” (370).

76 See Annabel Patterson Reading Holinshed’s Chronicles (1994); D.R. Woolf Reading History in Early Modern England (2000)
77 Hall’s chronicle, ed. H. Ellis (1809); repr. (1965).
78 For more information about Edward Hall, see Peter Herman, “Henrician historiography and the voice of the people” (1997); F. J. Levy, Tudor historical thought (1967); M. McKisack, Medieval history in the Tudor Age (1971); Janette Dillon, Performance and Spectacle in ‘Hall’s Chronicle’ (2002).
79 Henry VIII’s masculine vigour is insatiable according to the Milanese ambassador, who witnessed his jousting performance at Tournai in 1513: he observed that “The King was fresher after this awful exertion than before. I do not know how he can stand it. He is never still or quiet; he is so vivacious and pleasant” (Calendar of State Papers, Milan, i. 669).
82 Hall has access to the king’s private chambers unlike his civic chronicler counterparts. For example, when Henry VIII’s performance in the Archyard of Desire is disrupted, Hall recounts, “So the King with the Queen and the ladies returned to his chamber where they had a great banquet, and all these hurts were turned into laughing and game, and thought that all that was taken away was but for honour and largess; and so this triumph ended with mirth and gladness” (518).
84 The Revels Account reveals that Katherine was active in the production of meaning during the Great Tournament of Westminster. Richard Gibson lists “Three partlets of Cypress bound with frets of damask gold, the piece 6 s 8 d. Item bought a piece of fine Cypress 5 s spent and employed for the apparel or attire of the three maidens after the will and pleasure of the Queen’s ladies that appareled the said three maidens for the forest and the lion and the elephant [sic]” (f.50; 127, emphasis added). Aristocratic female participation reveals the collaborative climate in the production of courtly performance.
85 During the Archyard of Delight pageant, Katherine’s visual pleasure is elicited during the performance: “There was a device or a pageant upon wheels was brought in, out of which the pageant issued out a gentleman richly apparelled that showed how in a garden of pleasure there was an arbour of gold, wherein were lords and ladies, much desirous to show pleasure and pastime to the Queen and ladies if they might be licensed to do so,
who was answered by the Queen how she and all other there were very desirous to see them and their pastime” (Hall 518).

86 There is an extant challenge from jousts held in May 1506 in the form of a letter addressed to the Princess Mary from Lady May. Lady May, with the permission of her mistress Lady Summer, requests that Princess Mary allow her servants to defend her honor. Princess Mary is given a central role in these court spectacles, designed to celebrate her betrothal to Charles. See Streitberger (1994), 44.

87 I borrow this phrase from Peggy Phelan in Preface: Arresting Performances of Racial and Sexual Difference: Toward a theory of Performative Film. She uses the phrase “living truth” to describe the experience theatre provides its audience (6).

88 The city chronicler develops this premise further in his account of the first day’s exit procession: “Lastly next unto the King came Lord Howard bearing a truncheon with the King’s helmet. After whom a certain distance the King then coming took up his horse in so according and lusty a manner that shortly to conduct no man could do better, not sit more close or faster, nor yet keep stirrups more surely” (370).

89 The castle is often used as an allegorical symbol of Castile in order to represent the sophistication and wealth of Spain. Wickham argues that a number of features continually appear in late medieval pageantry which can be understood only in emblematic terms (41). Each motif, according to Wickham, carries a significance which would have been immediately recognizable to the medieval audience. He asserts that a forest represents a “wild and remote country,” while a castle is usually symbolic of a city (42). For a history of the castle and the maid motif, see Glynne Wickham, Early English Stages (1980): 41-5.

90 In 1512, Henry VIII and five other knights stormed a castle garrisoned by six defiant ladies, and in 1517 Henry VIII besieged a castle of maidens under the allegorical moniker “Loyalty” (Hall 523; 537). Henry led both the assaults, and assailed the pageant in 1517 with dates and oranges while the ladies, led by Anne Boleyn as “Perseverance,” resisted their attackers with sweetmeats and rosewater. In both performances, the men were ultimately successful, taking the women prisoner and leading them out of the castle to dance (Hall 537).

91 Kipling, in The Triumph of Honour (1977), discusses Burgundian representations of the popular tableau featuring knights storming the Castle of Ladies. Continental conventions usually entailed men who besieged the castle with swords while the ladies successfully fended off their attackers with roses, signalling the victory of chastity over lust (102-5). The outcome of the war between the sexes differs in England. As I discussed in chapter one, The Castle of Ladies features prominently in the pageantry celebrating Katherine and Arthur’s wedding in 1501. The success of the knights codes marriage as a masculine victory and celebrates Tudor foreign policy. Henry VIII’s reign staged several pageant disguisings using a similar thematic structure: the New Year’s 1512 pageant-disguising at Greenwich also used a castle called Le Fortresse Dangerus, built like a castle with towers and bulwarks. Six ladies were stationed within the castle and it was assaulted by the king, Brandon, Knyvet, Essex, Henry Guildford and two other lords. The ladies eventually yielded the castle to the knights and danced with them, but after, when they re-entered the castle, it “suddenly vanished” out of sight. See Streitberger, Court Revels, 81; Hall 526; Letters and Papers II ii, 1497-9.

92 Richard Gibson’s Revels Account provides the most reliable documentation for the production of sovereign spectacle and allows us to gauge the “accuracy” of the chronicles
against the material conditions of production. The account also offers valuable insights into the predetermined social script that governs the king’s performance.

93 The letter “K” is almost certainly designed to represent Katherine in the tournament’s symbolic economy: in *The Great Tournament Roll of Westminster*, the letter “K” is specifically aligned with Katherine because the emblem which precedes the *Roll* tethers the initial K to the pomegranate, Katherine’s personal heraldic emblem.


95* The Mercery of London* (2005). According to Sutton, “acts of Parliament had tried to protect the employment of cloth workers since 1464 by ensuring that enough wool and yarn remained in the country, and by ordering that no cloth or yarn, and later no cloths of a certain price, should be exported unfinished” (336). However, the failure to enforce these statutes led to increasing shortages of fabric in England and raised prices.

96 He also states, “But if I should rehearse the strange and costly devices … I should be long tarrying” (368).

97* Court Revels* (1994).

98 See Meg Twycross and Sarah Carpenter’s *Masks and Masking in Medieval and Early Tudor England* (2002) for a further discussion of dancing as a symbol of social cohesion in courtly performance.

99 Gibson even makes a special note under his heading “expenses of gold in bullion” that states “Item on the cod piece desire” (fol. 67).

100 The Shermans had recently been involved in a court battle against the Mercers and Adventurers over the export of cloth. According to Sutton, there had been a wool shortage since 1480 from a variety of causes, including a case in 1484 where Mercers stalled the export of wool, financially damaging shermans, fullers, tuckers, and cappers (336). The Shermans tried to elicit royal support for their plight in May 1510 but the mercers and Adventurers successfully defended their position and no action was taken. When the civic chronicler identifies the interloper as a “poor Sherman” he registers the tensions between classes and suggests that the Sherman must resort to bribery and looting to turn a profit in an otherwise dismal economic climate.

101 The disorder surrounding souvenir distribution occurred at Henry VII’s court as well: “And ye shall understand that upon every night following these aforesaid jousts it was made at the king’s cost a sumptuous banquet in Whitehall, were also we showed goodly disguisings and other disports. By mean whereof many of the king’s subjects were relieved as well for the stuff by them sold and workmanship of the same, as by plates spangylish roses and other conceits of silver and other gilt which flew from their garments both lords and ladies and gentlemen while they leapt and danced, and were gathered of many poor folks standing near about and pressing in for lucre of the same” (*Great Chronicle* 313).


104 “Ascending the Riche Mount” (1994).

105* Masks and Masking* (2002).

Henry VIII hosted several major tournaments until his retirement from the lists in 1527: in May 1516 he hosted costly hastiludes to celebrate a visit from his sister, Margaret, Queen of Scots. A sumptuous tournament was held to entertain a Flemish embassy in July 1517, and several martial feats were performed for the Treaty of Universal Peace celebrated at Westminster in 1518. The Field of Cloth of Gold, held 11-23 June 1520, was one of the most costly and politically significant hastiludes in Henry VIII’s reign. Tournaments were regularly held in England until Henry retired from the lists in 1527 at the age of forty-four. Hastiludes become much rarer as Henry VIII became increasingly preoccupied with internal affairs and his Reformation.

Spanish Calendar, IV (2), 1061.

Chapter Four

1 See, for example, Imperial Ambassador Van der Delft’s “Account of Edward VI’s Coronation Entry.” Calendar of State Papers, Spanish. ix, 47; the title page of the Great Bible. (1539); Chris Skidmore, Edward VI (2007), pp. 166-8.


3 “Kings, Centers, Charisma” (1983).

4 The Place of the Stage (1988); “… the hole matter opened” (1986).

5 “Thou Idol ceremony” (1989).


7 The Subject of Elizabeth (2006).

8 The Subject of Elizabeth (2006).

9 Frye investigates the gendered exchanges between sovereign and pageant producers, asserting that the civic authorities employ the civic entry as a means to gender the sovereign body and construct Elizabeth as a “compliant, malleable … metaphoric wife” (25).


11 See John N. King’s Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in the Age of Religious Crisis (1989); Margaret Aston’s Lollards and Reformers (1984); Margaret R. Miles’s Image as Insight (1985); J. Philips, The Reformation of Images (1973).

12 Richard McCoy, in “The Wonderful Spectacle,” argues that the Reformation caused serious liturgical problems for coronation ceremonies because monarchs had to negotiate the difficult terrain of a once sacramental ceremony and reconcile it with a newly Protestant discourse. Edward VI chose to secularize the ritual in favour of emphasizing the Protestant view of ceremony and kingship, while Mary attempted to reinstate much of the sacramental elements. Elizabeth I developed the most ambiguous and oblique relationship between ritual and civic pageantry, according to McCoy: he argues that Elizabeth’s behaviour in the civic entry and coronation signals the increasingly secular nature of Tudor power and rites (217-18).

13 The first edition, The Quenes Maiesties passage through the citie of London to westminster the daye before her coronacion (STC 7591), was printed 23 January 1559 by Richard Tottel at Fleet Street in London at the sign of the Hand and Star. The only known copy is at Yale University: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Eliz. 157. The second edition was printed very soon after (within a number of days, although scholars have not been able to pinpoint an exact date), and had a longer title, The Passage of our
most dread souveraigne Lady Quene Elyzabth through the citie of London to Westminster the day before her coronacion (STC 7590) Huntington Library 31398. After Elizabeth’s death, the pamphlet enjoyed a revival in another printing run, with a new title, *The Royall Passage of her Maiesty from the Tower of London to her Pallace of White-hall, with all the Speaches and Deuices, both of the Pageants and otherwise, together with her Maiesties seuerall Answers, and most pleasing Speaches to them all*. London: S. Stafford for John Busby, 1604. (STC 7593). 3rd edition. British Library, C. 33.e.7. (11).


18 Royal entries were an essential component of coronations in England dating back to 1066. Pageantry was employed for Continental coronations since the fourteenth century but not introduced into English pageantry until the introduction of dramatic pageants for the marriage entry of Katherine of Aragon in 1501. From 1501 to 1559, London hosted an incredible seven royal entries, including Henry VIII’s entry (1509), Emperor Charles V and Henry VIII entry into London (1522), Anne Boleyn’s Coronation Entry (1533), and then the rapid succession of monarchs: Edward VI Coronation Entry (1547), Mary (1553), Mary and Philip (1554), and Elizabeth (1559). See Anne Lancashire, *London Civic Drama* (2002): 43-9.

19 For example, the “rich mount” motif was invented by Henry VII to establish a connection between his identity, as the former Earl of Richmond, and England. This symbol was repeatedly employed in courtly performances during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI.

20 The Court of Aldermen allocated responsibilities for individual pageants to guildsmen on 7 December 1558. Nine stations were originally allocated to various guildsmen and each station had between four and eight different tradespeople assigned to “the travails and pains to cause at the City’s cost and charge all the places hereafter mentioned to be very well and seemly trimmed and decked for the honour of the City against the coming of our sovereign lady the Queen’s Majesty that now is to her coronation through the City” (*Repertories* XIV f.97; Warkentin Appendix II 117).

Jonathan Goldberg, in *James I and the Politics of Literature* (1989), suggests Elizabeth acted out her role in the scripted performance with full awareness of her part because she almost certainly approved the script. Goldberg characterizes her role in the royal entry as a “spectacle of state [that] combines deception and display, both the show of participation and genuine participation” (30).

“Whereas you have in your custody and charge certain apparel as officer for our masques and revels, these shall be to will and command you immediately upon the sight hereof that you deliver or cause to be delivered...the said apparel ... for the setting forth of those pageants ...” (3 January 1559 Folger MS L.b.33; qtd. in Bergeron “New Manuscript Evidence,” 22).

The only other evidence we have of this genre is hinted at in the records of Anne Boleyn’s coronation entry in 1533. Dramatist Nicholas Udall and Antiquary John Leland collaborated on Anne’s royal entry and created Latin and English tablets to accompany the dramatic representations.

The pageant’s speeches, orations, and English-Latin tablets circulated widely after the performance because Mulcaster, Schivenoglia, and contemporary chronicles independently record the speeches. Mulcaster had direct access to the scripts produced by the pageant devisors because his friend Richard Tottel, who printed the pamphlet, was Richard Grafton’s son-in-law.

The noise of the crowd is so great that it threatens to eclipse the pageant orations: “as the noise was great by reason of the press of people, so [Elizabeth] could scarce hear the child which did interpret the said pageant” (QMP 79). According to Richard Mulcaster, Elizabeth expressed anxiety around her ability to hear the orations: “[Elizabeth] feared for the people’s noise that she should not hear the child” (81). Elizabeth tries to rectify her hearing impediment: “And ere the Queen’s Majesty came within hearing of this pageant, she sent certain [persons] as also at all the other pageants, to require the people to be silent, for her Majesty was disposed to hear all that should be said unto her” (81).

Historiographers like Holinshed and Stow record some or all of the speeches in their chronicle accounts. See Raphael Holinshed’s *The Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande* (1577); John Stow’s *The Annales, or Generall Chronicle of England...continued unto...1614* by E. Howes; and Charles Wriothesley’s *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, from A.D. 1485 to 1559*.


Even Montrose, whose objective in *The Subject of Elizabeth* is to destabilize claims of an “official” royal image, declares that “the stations of the journey occasioned a coherent program of allegorical pageants that confirmed the royal succession, affirmed principles of good government and reformed religion, and encouraged the young, unmarried woman who was now queen with demonstrations of popular support” (41).


According to Thomas, black letter literacy was the most basic form of literacy, used for everything from proclamations to romances (99). However, Zachary Lesser has troubled the use of black letter typeface to distinguish between “high” and “low” forms of culture, asserting that this is a form of “typographical nostalgia” (100). We have no definitive
evidence about the chirographic nature of the paratheatrical texts, but Mulcaster describes
the tablets in diverse ways, stating that they were “written,” “drawn,” “painted,” and
“written in fair letters.” It is likely that the English “tables” were hand lettered to ensure
the greatest accessibility because if the words were in script, it would further limit the
number of people who could access meaning. Thomas states that “it was perfectly
possible in the Tudor and early Stuart period for someone to be able to read print fluently,
but to be quite incapable of deciphering a written document” (100).

34 Age of Ambition (1970).
35 The Merchant Class of Medieval London (1948).
36 The Growth of English Schooling (1985)
37 The Idolatrous Eye (2000).

Father Time’s identity is accessible to the spectator because he carries a scythe, while
Truth’s identifying apparatus is the English Bible she holds. There are differences in
ontological signification between the two allegorical figures: while the scythe is a fluid
symbol that interchangeably represents Time, Death, or the agricultural harvest, the
English Bible becomes inextricably bound to Truth. Since the oration does not specify
whom Time leads out of the grotto, syntactic ambiguity combines the identity of Truth
and the Bible, rhetorically intertwining the quality of righteousness with the material
object of the Protestant movement.

39 This allusion is not lost on the queen, who makes reference to this relationship in a
witty remark when she beholds the pageant: “And it was told her Grace, that there was
placed Time. ‘Time,’ quoth she, ‘and Time hath brought me hither’” (85). Elizabeth
playfully suggests that Time cannot inhabit the pageant as a static figure because time
only exists in movement as the vehicle of change. On another level, however, Time is an
allegorical representation of Henry VIII, the man who not only was the first one to
emancipate Verbum Dei on Grafton’s frontispiece, but also brought forth Elizabeth into
the world. Hence Elizabeth’s double pun: time has changed her position from princess to
queen which subsequently brought her to the present pageant, and Henry VIII, the
original emancipator of Truth, brought her forth into the world to fulfill her present role
as Protestant queen. Elizabeth cultivates a close alignment with her father because it
provides her with a narrative of lineal succession and combats charges of illegitimacy.

40 These figures are present in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s History of the Kings of Britain.
For a discussion on the role of these giants in London civic pageantry, see Lawrence
Manley, “Civic Drama” (2002); passim, Literature and Culture (1995): 251; and William
41 David Bergeron, in “Elizabeth’s Coronation Entry (1559): New Manuscript Evidence,”
argues that Deborah’s costume was borrowed from the Royal Wardrobe in order to draw
visual parallels between the Biblical Queen and Elizabeth (24).

42 In contrast to Elizabeth, Deborah is not an imperial monarch and therefore cannot wear
an imperial crown, a distinction made clear iconographically in the visual tableau.
43 Richard Grafton, An Abridgement of the Chronicles of England, gathered by Richard
165v-167v. Excerpts are reproduced in Warkentin Appendix I 101.
44 BL Harleian MS 419, fols. 143-8.
I borrow the term “processual” from anthropological discourse which uses the term to refer to the cultural-historical process of social identity through the formulation of general rules for cultural behavior. For further definition, see R.K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (1957): 316.

Royal receipt is documented in the Court of Aldermen records: “Item, it was ordered and agreed by the court here this day that the Chamberlain shall give unto Richard Mulcaster for his reward for making of the book containing and declaring the histories set forth in and by the City’s pageants at the time of the Queen’s highness coming through the City to her Coronation forty shillings, which book was given unto the Queen’s grace” (Repertories XIV f.143). This record does not clarify how the book was presented, but it may well have been formally delivered by Richard Mulcaster.

The Quenes Majesties Passage is extant as a unique copy of the first known edition of the royal entry pamphlet (London: Richard Tottel, 1559) at the Yale Elizabethan Club, Yale University: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Eliz. 157.


For example, Grant McCracken, in “The Pre-Coronation Passage of Elizabeth I,” states, “It was a rehearsal of rules, sentiments, promises, and good intentions… It was in short not an enactment of what the state was, but what the state, according to Elizabethan concept, aspired to be” (58). See also See also Richard C. McCoy, “‘The Wonderful Spectacle’” (1990) 217-27; Helen Hackett, Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen (1996), 42-3.

“Editorial Introduction,” The Quenes Majesties Passage (1960); English Civic Pageantry (1971).

In fact, many scholars make this assumption a foundational component of their argument. For example, Mark Breitenberg, in “‘… the hole matter opened’: Iconic Representation and Interpretation in The Quenes Majesties Passage” (1986), argues that the production and dissemination of “state pageantry” is a collective practice governed by a flexible, yet specific, set of rules (2). This assumption informs Germaine Warkentin’s analysis: “[T]he ‘voice’ (in the literary sense) of the entry pageant is in a marked sense that of Reformation England: urgent, almost pedagogic, and deeply committed to the creation of a new monarchical imagery” (72). R. Malcolm Smuts, in “Public Ceremony and Royal Charisma,” says that “social and religious conventions deeply embedded within English culture … orchestrated the majestic ceremonies enveloping the monarch” (68).

Conflicting versions of sovereign authority are staged between English and Latin paratheatrical texts. However, inter-guild tensions were also present, recorded in the City of Aldermen records when the Painters refused to paint and trim the Great Conduit in Cheap for the civic entry (December 21, 1558 Court of Aldermen Repertories, XIV, 1558-1561, fol.103v; Warkentin Appendix II 120). Warkentin states “It is not clear why the Painters refused to assist; the money offered may have been too little, or the conduit may have been too recently refurbished, or inter-Company tensions could have played a role” (120 n.15).


Nicholas Udall was very experienced in the art of pageantry because he was responsible for organizing the coronation procession and pageantry for Anne Boleyn’s royal entry: see John N. King, “The Royal Image” (1995): 54-103. Mulcaster participated in the entertainments at Kenilworth in 1575 when Leicester hosted Queen Elizabeth during her royal progress. He wrote Latin verses that were displayed over the door of the castle which welcomed the Queen, explaining to her the identities of the fictional characters who gave her presents of fruit, armour, grains, and wines. He may have even delivered the poem to Elizabeth because darkness had descended, making it difficult to make out the words. A figure “clad as a poet” carefully explained the verses to Elizabeth. These verses were later published by George Gascoigne in The Princely Pleasures at the Courtte at Kenelwoorth (1823): 485-573.

When scholars do acknowledge Mulcaster as the author of The Quenes Majesties Passage, they often mistakenly presume he also produced the pageantry. There is no evidence linking Mulcaster to the pageantry, and in fact there is a great deal of evidence to indicate the contrary, yet scholars like J.E. Neale, Sandra Logan, and David Bergeron continue to speculate. In English Civic Pageantry, Bergeron begins his study of Elizabeth’s royal entry with a brief textual note: “Whether he actually devised some of the entertainment or not, Richard Mulcaster seems clearly to have been largely responsible for the preparation of the text” (18). Bergeron proceeds with his discussion of the pageantry with no further reference to Mulcaster.

The Receyt of the Ladie Kateryne may have been originally designed for wider dissemination but we have no record that it made it to print. The manuscript is held at the College of Arms, which suggests it was acquired at some point by the College as a record for ceremonial order. Since it is likely that the Receyt was produced by a member of the court for an elite audience, it is unlikely that Richard Mulcaster, a commoner, would have access to this document.

The Subject of Elizabeth (2006).

Sandra Logan suggests that the pamphlet’s audience was not as “diverse” as the audience of the performance because it was limited by literacy (251). However, literacy was a determining factor for access in performance as well. In many ways the pamphlet promotes rather than limits access because it was circulated at court and the city. In was also available to an international audience within weeks of the royal entry (see my discussion of the Deborah pageant).

For example, Mulcaster translates the significance of the white rose: “Queen Elizabeth, being heir to the house of York, enclosed with a white rose” (78). He also acts as an
interpreter: “The matter of this pageant dependeth of them that went before. For as the first declared her Grace to come out of the house of unity, the second showed that she is placed in the seat of government stayed with virtues to the suppression of vice, and therefore in the third the eight blessings of Almighty God might well be applied unto her. So this fourth now is to put her Grace in remembrance of the state of the commonweal which Time with Truth his daughter doth reveal, which Truth also her Grace hath received, and therefore cannot but be merciful and careful for the good government thereof” (89).


66 This exclusion is particularly striking because fifteen and sixteenth-century historiography always provides an account of the sovereign’s visual appearance. Il Schivenoglia’s description is similar to the type of description usually found in English chronicles: “And last of all came her Majesty in an open litter, trimmed down to the ground with gold brocade with a raised pile, and carried by two very handsome mules covered with the same fabric, and surrounded by a multitude of footmen in crimson velvet jerkins, all studded with massive gilt silver, with the arms of a white and red rose on their breasts and backs, and with two letters on either side, E.R., which signified Elizabeth Regina wrought in relief, the usual livery of the crown, which makes the most superb show...Her Majesty was dressed in a very rich royal mantle of gold with a double-raised stiff pile. And on her head over a coif of cloth of gold, beneath which was her hair, she wore the plain gold crown of a princess, without lace but covered with jewels, and with nothing in her hands but gloves” (qtd. in Warkentin, Appendix I, 105-6).

67 Every time Henry VIII’s name is invoked, behaviour rather than lineage alone provides Elizabeth with authority. When Elizabeth passes by St. Dunstan’s Orphanage, Mulcaster states, “the everlasting spectacle of mercy unto the poor members of Almighty God, furthered by that famous and most noble prince King Henry the Eighth, her Grace’s father, erected by the City of London, and advanced by the most godly, virtuous and gracious prince King Edward VI, her Grace’s dear and loving brother, doubting nothing of the mercy of the Queen’s most gracious clemency by the which they may not only he relieved and helped, but also stayed and defended, and therefore incessantly they would pray and cry unto Almighty God for the long life and reign of her highness with the most prosperous victory against her enemies” (93). Royal patronage and “remembrance” of the City’s poor are qualities Elizabeth shares with her father and brother.

68 *Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* (2006).

69 Mulcaster’s account differs from the narratives constructed by the pageant dramatists. For example, very little attention is devoted to the Eight Beatitudes Pageant in the pamphlet and he chooses to skip over the medieval trope of the virtues stomping upon vices. Certain components of the entry are excluded altogether: the Latin verses delivered at Ludgate, the performance by the City Waits, and Elizabeth’s pardon for the poor find no representation in *The Quenes Maiesties Passage*. We know that this juncture was an important part of the entry through Schivenoglia’s account: “Her Majesty then turned ... then the gate of Ludgate, where the prisoners of the Mayor of London are held. There were certain verses in Latin in praise of her Majesty above a little table, hanging at the
front of the said gate, which was entirely painted with the arms of the City. I hear that she pardoned all those prisoners who were merely debtors” (qtd. in Warkentin, Appendix I, 109). The civic records from the Court of Aldermen also record the four men who were assigned to this station (Repertories XIV ff. 97-98; Warkentin Appendix 1, 17-9). Sandra Logan, in “Making History,” argues that Mulcaster rearranges the order in performance to privileges religion over economics: “At issue in the relationship between Mulcaster’s text and the events it inscribed is the tension between religious and economic concerns. Since he chose to reverse the order of the presentation of two material gifts to the Queen – the gift of gold and the gift of the Bible – it appears he found the order of presentation and precedence inappropriate in its emphasis of the economic” (257).

According to Meraud Grant Ferguson’s entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Grafton was Edward’s royal printer but he lost his position under the Marian regime because of his Protestant sympathies. Although he had fallen from favour at court under Mary’s rule, he was still influential in the city which is probably why he was commissioned in 1554 to arrange the pageants for Philip and Mary’s triumphal entry into London.


Catholic polemicist Nicholas Sander states, “the incestuous marriage with Anne Boleyn. I say incestuous of Henry, for if Anne was not his own child, she was the child of his mistress; the incest also of Anne Boleyn with her own brother; the ecclesiastical supremacy of the king, which Henry was the first to assume, as the foundations on which that religion is built and stands, which England held and professed under Henry, Edward, and Elizabeth” (Sander De origine ac progressu schismatic anglicani; trans. Lewis, 100).

The genealogical tree is described in detail: “under the root whereof was an old man lying on his left side, with a long white beard and closed crown on his head and a sceptre in his right hand and a ball imperial in his left; which old man signified King Edward the third, of whom their majesties are lineally descended... where also in the top of the said tree was a queen of the right hand, and a king of the left, which presented their majesties... under one crown imperial” (Chronicle of Queen Jane and Mary 149). The verse argues Mary and Philip “which both descended of one ancient line/ It hath pleased God by marriage to combine” (Chronicle of Queen Jane and Mary, 80, 149-50). This parallels Katherine’s Receyt in 1501 who was shown to have descended from John of Gaunt. For more discussion see Anglo Spectacle, 335-6.

This is certainly a possibility because resistance to Marian rule was registered during her marriage entry into London when a painter depicted Henry VIII holding an English Bible. See footnote 17 in this chapter.

Repertories XIV ff.98.

Richard Grafton’s first edition of the English Bible, printed in 1539, featured a frontispiece that depicted Henry VIII holding an English Bible titled Verbum Dei. The constituent features combined a personified representation of Truth with a book (designed to represent the Bible) inscribed with the title Verbum Dei. This image codes the English Bible as the “true” word of God and Henry as the champion of “pure religion.” Designed
to justify Henry VIII’s religious reforms, *Verbum Dei* became a powerful Protestant motif that was frequently used in iconic, textual and performative mediums. During Edward VI’s coronation entry in 1547 this motif appears twice (see *Literary Remains*, I, cclxxviii-ccciii). The *Verbum Dei* motif appears twice in Mary and Philip’s royal entry, but with different intentions. Pairing the Latin Bible with *Veritas* was a strong message to her people that she intended to reinstate pre-Reformation doctrines and “restore” the Bible to its Latin form. For a history of this motif in England and on the Continent from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, see Marina Warner, *Monuments & Maidens* (2001): 317-319.

Il Schivenoglia is largely preoccupied with aristocratic display, specifically the order of the procession, and the rank of the nobles in the royal retinue: “Behind the [Queen’s] litter came Lord Robert Dudley, Master of the Horse, mounted on a very fine charger and leading by the hand a white hackney covered with cloth of gold. Then came the great Lord Chamberlain and other lords of her Majesty’s Privy Chamber, who were followed by nine pages dressed in crimson satin on very handsome chargers richly caparisoned, with their Governor and Lieutenant” (qtd. in Warkentin Appendix I, 106).

Conclusion

1 Susan Frye (*Elizabeth I*, 1992) and Louis Montrose (*The Subject of Elizabeth*, 2006) are interested in the gendered discourses that circulate around Elizabeth I’s royal image; Louise Fradenburg analyzes masculinity and sovereignty in the Scottish court during the reigns of James IV and James V (*City, Marriage, Tournament*, 1991).

2 *The King’s Two Bodies* (1957).
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