Pistol's Scars : War and Obedience in *King Henry V*

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In the 1590s the Elizabethan government waged successive wars ; the first war against Spain, and later expeditions into France and Ireland. The consecutive military affairs had several consequences for the country. One of them was the problem of the returning soldiers. The soldiers' condition after service was largely harsh : having lost former jobs, most of them slid into a life of beggary or crime. Although the government repeatedly issued laws for the relief of the discharged soldiers, their situation did not improve. Rather, people saw them as a nuisance to society : the reward for service was contempt and indifference.

The soldiers' difficulties after war indicate a point to which the subjection to the Queen leads. Having served in her army, they were rewarded by a worsened social position. In the late 1590s, the merits of such obedience were called into question. The value of obedience was contested as the discharged soldiers began to voice their discontents. *King Henry V*, first performed in 1599 when these voices reverberated through the society, intervened in the same political field as it gave Henry's soldiers a site of enunciation and grappled with the problem of obedience. The purpose of this paper is to show how the idea of obedience is questioned in *King Henry V* and to consider the way in which the play affects the contemporary English politics.[1] In the first section I will survey the conditions of the returning soldiers and the state policy in Elizabethan England. The inade-

quacy of governmental care and the demonizing process of ex-soldiers will become clear. The anonymous play *A Larum for London*, which records a voice of a lame soldier, will also be introduced. In the second section I will show how the official code of obedience is disrupted in the play by the rebels, Williams, and Pistol. Although Canterbury endorses the authoritative view of obedience as natural, the rebels' act discloses the arbitrary nature of obedience. Moreover, Williams criticizes the difference and inequality legitimated by the idea of obedience. Finally, Pistol as the returning soldier discerns the rewardless quality of his service and compels the state to take responsibility for his post-war condition. In the last part of the paper I will consider the political function of *King Henry V* in the late 1590s.

I

In Elizabethan England a standing army did not exist. The government mainly depended on the militia for warfare. The first problem the conscripts faced upon their return home was unemployment. Although the soldiers tried to get back to their civilian jobs, employers were reluctant to take them back (Cruickshank 26). Consequently, the returned soldiers were forced to beg to support themselves. The royal proclamation announced in 1589 described the situation sympathetically :

> [H]eretofore the masters of such persons as have been pressed for her highness' service have refused, upon the return of the said persons, to receive them into their service, being able to serve ; whereby divers of the said persons have been enforced for lack of relief, being not set awork, to go up and down begging. . . .
>
> (Hughes and Larkin 47-48)

The proclamation ordered that the masters should, under pain of imprisonment, employ the soldiers again, but the order was fruitless. As the number of discharged soldiers increased on account of the successive wars, the number of ex-soldiers becoming vagrants increased, too. For example, in Essex their numbers among vagrants mounted from 9 per cent between 1564 and 1596 to nearly 20 per cent between 1597 and 1644 (Beier 93). The loss of job and income impelled many soldiers to live a life of crime as well as one of vagrancy. Demobilized soldiers returning with arms were widely thought to have introduced a new and unwelcome dimension to violent crime (Cockburn 58). It was difficult and almost impossible for the soldiers to return to their former ways of living.

The government's policy on the problem of the discharged soldiers was not at all successful. Rather, the law exacerbated the situation. The basic method the government took was to have the soldiers repair into the place where they had been born or impressed. And they were admitted to require the benevolence for relief on their way ; in the case of impotent persons, the parish into which they returned had to furnish them with money (Hughes and Larkin 47-48, 96-97). This permission brought about two unexpected results. First, when begging for relief was legalized, all the more increased the number of ex-soldiers who became vagrants. Secondly, other vagrants pretended to be discharged soldiers and asked for money : the priviledge for soldiers was appropriated by those who did not serve. The second effect troubled the government, and actually influenced the official attitude toward the soldiers.

At the beginning of 1590s, the government attempted to distinguish between the real soldier and the false one. The proclamation for placing vagrants under martial law issued in 1591 commands that "such discretion be used betwixt the unlawful vagrant persons" who wander abroad "under pretense of begging as soldiers" and "the soldiers now lawfully dismissed

from their services" who must be supported (Hughes and Larkin 96). The distinction thus asserted, however, was difficult to make as both a soldier who turned into beggar and a vagrant who pretended to be an ex-soldier mingled together in society. The state finally embarked on the ruthless suppression of those vagrant people. The proclamation of 1598 does not insist on the difference, and regards all the vagrants as the mock-soldiers who disturb society :

> [T]he disorder of those vagrant persons is . . . grown to such unruliness and undutifulness, that there hath been of late divers routs and unlawful assemblies of rogues and vagabonds, coloring their wandering by the name of soldiers lately come from the wars. . . .
>
> (Hughes and Larkin 196)

It is possible that some of "those vagrant persons" were the discharged, lawful soldiers. The government, depending on the ambiguity of distinction, tried to neglect the difference. Sympathy the former proclamation had showed for the soldiers was withdrawn, and the returned soldiers were equated with "rogues and vagabonds" who brought evil to society.

The state's policy shifted from the selective care of the soldiers to the rough regulation of vagrants which included the veterans. In the process the returned soldiers were transformed from objects of sympathy to a kind of social evil ; the government tried to evade, or mitigate, its responsibility for the relief of soldiers by demonizing them. The despising and irresponsible attitude toward the soldiers prevailed in English society.[2] Edward Hext, a justice of the peace in Somerset, wrote in 1596 that there were none so dangerous as "the wandrying Souldiers and other stout roages of England" and suggested the strict suppression of them (Tawney and Power 345). Hext thus associated the returned soldiers with rogues in a simple-minded

way : in his idea, both were the dregs of society which must be disposed of. In 1598, to take a further example, a crippled soldier Edmond Gouldhurst complained to the Privy Council that the county of Hertford where he had been impressed refused to afford him relief. The official of Hertford asked him to go to Middlesex where he had been born : the official intended to shift the responsibility onto Middlesex. The Privy Council, checking his irresponsible act and ordering the county of Hertford to receive Gouldhurst, also shunned the problem : "we maie no more be troubled with his grievous complaint in this matter" (Dasent 235). Surrounded by the indifference of people, the soldier had nowhere to go.[3]

The condition of soldiers after their service was severe. Demonized and neglected, they received no care but contempt. In the late 1590s such after-effects of obedience were called into question. Having noticed that obedience only led to a poor and despised situation, the soldiers began to doubt the value of obedience. To put it another way, obedience as a given and natural obligation for the subject was contested by the soldiers. Moreover, they questioned the one-sided relationship between the Queen and her subjects ; as they were not given enough reward and regard, they started to ask the Queen to answer for, or take responsibility for, their hard condition. It was at this moment that the absolutist principle of the subjects' "unquestioning obedience" (Anderson 50) collapsed. The returning soldier became a pivotal figure in disjointing the absolutist system of the Elizabethan state.

The doubt about the value of obedience surfaced in several ways : disorder, riots, and re-presentation on the stage. In the beginning of 1590, returning soldiers besieged the court, demanding their pay. On 29 June 1595 a riot broke out in Southwark when a large force of young people, led by a former soldier, assaulted ward officials. Such riots commanded by the ex-soldier happened frequently in the 1590s (Clark 54-55). Most evident

voice of the returned soldier can be heard in an anonymous work *A Larum for London*, which entered in the Stationers' Register in 1599. Although the play is set in Antwerp, the problem it grapples with has much to do with contemporary London. In the play Stump, a lame soldier, expresses his resentment when a burgher asks him to defend Antwerp :

> You haue another groate to giue me then,
> . . . .
> But let a Soldier, that hath spent his bloud,
> Is lame'd, diseas'd, or any way distrest,
> Appeale for succor, then you looke a sconce
> As if you knew him not ; respecting more
> An Ostler, or some drudge that rakes your kennels,
> Than one that fighteth for the common wealth. (599-616)

Stump talks about his post-war condition clearly : in return for his service in war which took one leg away from him, he is greeted with people's callous indifference to his plight. Stump understands the meritless nature of obedience, and voices his demand for reward and social recognition. The burgher's reply, however, repeats and represents the citizens' irresponsible view : "It is thy Countrie that doth binde thee to it, / Not any imposition we exacte" (617-18). The burgher's attitude is a familiar one for Stump. In his words the burgher imitates the irresponsibility of country which should succor veterans, and in this interminable shifting of responsibility the duty to support the discharged soldier is hushed up.

If the atmosphere which surrounds Stump re-presents that of the English society in the late 1590s, Stump's final answer has to be read as the resultant decision of the demonized soldier :

Bindes me my country with no greater bondes,
Than for a groate to fight ? then for a groate,
To be infeebled, or to loose a limme ?
Poore groates-worth of effection ; Well, Ile learne
To pay my debt and to measure my desert
According to the rate. (619-24)

What dissatisfies Stump is that the country's care for him does not balance with his service : the relation between the king and the subject guaranteed by the idea of obedience is one-sided and indeed exploitative. Discontent of Stump leads him to retaliate the country by becoming uncooperative. He chooses negative resistance by being indifferent to the country's project. *King Henry V*, first played between March 1599 and September of that year, takes over Stump's questioning toward obedience and renders it more radical. As we shall see, Pistol tries to challenge the state policy in a positive way.

II

In the second scene of *King Henry V*, when the war against France is near at hand, the official framework of obedience is presented by the Archbishop of Canterbury. His speech is timely, for Henry needs the confirmation of obedience so as to carry out the war successfully :

Therefore doth heaven divide
The state of man in diverse functions,
Setting endeavour in continual motion,
To which is fixed, as an aim or butt,
Obedience. (183-87)

Canterbury stresses that one's social position and job, "functions," are decreed by God : class society is God-given. And obedience means one's duty to stay in his/her given position and work hard for the king. In this "activist ideology" (Sinfield 115), an idle person is to be punished : "The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum, / Delivering o'er to executors pale / The lazy yawning drone" (202-04). Having defined the idea of obedience, Canterbury tries to make it firm by the analogy with the bees' commonwealth : "For so work the honey-bees, / Creatures that by a rule in nature teach / The act of order to a peopled kingdom" (187-89). As the words "a rule in nature" suggest, orderly behaviour, or obedience, is alleged to be a natural propensity of man as well as bees. In construing obedience to be an inherent quality, Canterbury implies it should not be questioned. His duty in this scene is just to assert that both class state and obedience are "natural". It is convincing that Canterbury never appears on the stage after the scene, since there is no need of him once the official view of obedience has been consolidated.

In Canterbury's explanation of obedience class society as God-given is introduced at the outset. In this respect his words echo the Book of Homilies of the English Church. The Church Homilies contributed to the Tudor governmental policy by strengthening the idea of obedience. "An Exhortation concernyng Good Ordre and Obedience to Rulers and Magistrates," one of the sermons in *Certain Sermons or Homilies* which was published originally in 1547 and revised in 1563 and 1574, reads as follows :

> Every degree of people, in their vocacion, callying, and office, hath appoynted to them their duetie and ordre. Some are in high degre, some in lowe, some kynges and princes, some inferiors and subjectes . . . riche and poore, and every one have nede of other : so that in all thinges is to be lauded and praysed the goodly ordre of God. . . . (Bond 161)

The overall "ordre" consists of and is dependent on differences. And the differences are legitimate as long as they manifest God's intention. The homily thus approves of the unequal relation, and it enacts the aesthetic containment of inequality by praising the "ordre" of the structure. Canterbury practises the same domestication of difference when he, after enumerating several ranks and functions in the bees' community, emphasizes the harmony Henry's England would finally achieve : "As many several ways meet in one town, /As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea . . ." (1.2.209-10). The idea of the divinely ordered hierarchy is useful for both the Tudor government and Canterbury in maintaining the harmony of the whole as well as the difference it contains.

In his war Henry tries to secure the soldiers' obedience by this double principle of harmony and difference.[4] While encouraging "you noble English" (3.1.17) and "good yeoman" (3.1.25) respectively and making them recognize their own ranks and appertaining roles, he infuses them with a sense of fraternity : "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers" (4.3.60). I agree with Robert Lane in thinking that the fraternal image attempts to inoculate the common soldier against the corrosive effect of class tension (31). The friction which results from the difference, however, never disappears in Henry's army. The point will be discussed later.

The official supposition that obedience is natural is put in doubt as the betrayal of three subjects is disclosed. The Chorus regretfully admits that there exist those who do not follow the alleged propensity of man : "Were all thy [English] children kind and natural !" (2.0.19). The problem Henry faces is how to dispose of the aberration these traitors embody. Henry states that the rebels are motivated by money : "this man / Hath for a few light crowns lightly conspired / And sworn unto the practices of France / To kill us here in Hampton" (2.2.88-91). He believes, or tries to believe that the cause of disobedience is nothing but money : indeed, he mentions

no other reasons at all. This point can be interpreted in two ways. First, by concluding that the rebels are tempted by money, their acts can be regarded as a kind of human degeneration. Henry actually associates them with "[a]nother fall of man" (2.2.141). If the issue is that of morality, the rebels are to blame for it and Henry is not accountable for the situation. Moreover, moralistic solution enables Henry to evade political questions ; the possibility of other motives, such as dissatisfaction with the king, or the doubt about his succession, is effaced. These questions are more intractable and frightening for Henry than the moral one. Henry is insightful in neglecting another reason for betrayal.

Henry's attitude toward the rebels closely resembles that of Elizabeth toward the Irish rebels. In *Declaring Reasons for Sending Army into Ireland*, the proclamation published on 31 March 1599, the word "unnatural" abounds : "unnatural rebellions," "unnatural traitors," "unnatural and barbarous rebels," and so on. The idea that obedience is natural is an essential aspect of Elizabethan official thinking. Besides, the rebellion is considered in terms of "common *humanity*" (emphasis added). As the traitors lack a sense of "common humanity" and disobey her, Elizabeth, though she prefers "clemency," is "forced and so resolved" to suppress them (Hughes and Larkin 200-02). The logic of the argument is completely self-justifying. The shift from mercy to violence is caused by the rebels' fault, so the Queen is not responsible for the execution. Henry depends on the same logic when he tries to make Harfleur surrender (3.3.1-43). We may wonder here whether "clemency" really existed before : it seems to be a fictional construction. Henry's reply to the rebels, "The mercy that was quick in us but late . . . is suppressed and killed" (2.2.79-80), can be read in a similar way. Mercy is just an unsubstantial excuse to mitigate the shock an onlooker feels when power is exercised.

Henry's insistence that the rebels are motivated by money can be

explicated in a different way. It implies a nature of relation between Henry and his subjects. Although Henry refers to "[t]he sweetness of affiance" (2.2.127) he put in Lord Scroop, it is unstable enough to be exchanged for money. By insisting on the financial motivation, Henry ironically affirms this fact. If loyalty depends on money, Henry's belief in the former relationship based on trust is one-sided conviction. Bedford clearly rebukes Henry's fantasy : "'Fore God, his grace is bold to trust these traitors" (2.2.1). The incident indicates that obedience is not natural but rather arbitrary. Even though Henry settles the problem by pointing out the rebels' degeneration from the natural and thus disposing of it as quite an aberrant accident, the arbitrariness still remains as Cambridge leaves the real motive of betrayal pending : "For me, the Gold of France did not seduce, /Although I did admit it as a motive / The sooner to effect what I intended" (2.2.155-57).

If the traitors' conduct discloses the arbitrary quality of obedience, three conscripts, John Bates, Alexander Court, and Michael Williams, question the significance and effects of obedience. These soldiers, representing the returning soldiers prefiguratively, negotiate with the king, asserting their particular stances. The first matter discussed in their dialogue with the disguised king is the cause of war :

King. Methinks I could not die anywhere so contented as in the King's company, his cause being just and his quarrel honourable.
Williams. That's more than we know.
Bates. Ay, or more than we should seek after, for we know enough if we know we are the King's subjects. If his cause be wrong, our obedience to the king wipes the crime of it out of us.

(4.1.126-33)

One of the points of discussion is the king's accountability : that is, the king's responsibility to explain his policy. In principle, the absolutist monarchs emphasized their exemption from it as one of their privileges (Lane 29). Bates precisely speaks according to the principle : by limiting the scope of knowledge voluntarily, he becomes at this moment a model subject for the absolutist rule. In his tautological recognition of his position as a subject and in his exclusion of other aims of knowledge than obedience, Bates fits in an official framework endorsed by Canterbury.[5]

Williams' answer is more ominous for Henry than Bates'. It means that he does not know the king's cause : he never closes off the possibility of knowing as Bates does. Actually Williams goes further to question the king's responsibility for soldiers' post-war condition ; death and damnation. Having cited the voices of casualties, Williams says : "Now if these men do not die well it will be a black matter for the King, that led them to it, who to disobey were against all proportion of subjection" (4.1.143-46). As the final clause indicates, Williams rules out disobedience : in this respect he thinks within the official framework of obedience. However, he is doubtful about the consequence of observing "proportion," which means order, of subjection, and incites Henry to explain it. It is at this moment in the play that the absolutist privilege, the exemption from accountability, is divested : Henry is forced to account for the matter.[6]

Henry's reply to Williams' question lays bare the real fact of obedience : "the King is not bound to answer the particular endings of his soldiers . . . for they purpose not their death when they purpose their services" (4.1.155-58). Henry thus refuses to take responsibility for soldiers' death. Although the king demands "services" from the subjects, he does not assume any responsibility for the result : in this regard the relation between the king and the subjects is one-sided. Henry is rather indifferent to the post-war condition of each soldier : "Every subject's duty is the King's, but

every subject's soul is his own" (4.1.175-77). The irresponsible and indifferent attitude of Henry is concordant with what the Elizabethan discharged soldier received. Moreover, he even tries to shift the responsibility onto the soldiers. Having enumerated their former crimes, Henry concludes :

> Now if these men have defeated the law and outrun native punishment, though they can outstrip men, they have no wings to fly from God. War is his beadle, war is his vengeance. (4.1.165-69)

His indifference is justified by turning the soldiers into criminals who should be responsible for their death in war : in this process the soldiers degenerate into the evil. Henry in his logic follows the Elizabethan state policy mentioned before.

If we consider Henry's idea from a different viewpoint, it has a close connection with that of the Elizabethan officials : the recruitment of rogues and vagabonds. The levy of these people persisted throughout Elizabeth's reign. Domestic peace was certainly as near Elizabeth's heart as an efficient army, and if she could achieve it at the expense of the troops she was quite prepared to make the sacrifice (Cruickshank 26-28). The government made rogues and vagabonds a scapegoat, and thereby tried to improve the domestic condition ; the internal problem is substitutionally resolved and contained in the war. In this respect it is convincing that in the above passage war embodies "beadle," the parish officer who whipped offenders. In *King Henry V*, Pistol, a rogue as well as a murderer, and Bardolph, a drunken vagabond, are to be involved in the force of scapegoating. The point will be examined later.

Williams and Henry's opinions never coincide. The negotiation between them ends in deadlock : while Williams insists on the king's responsibility,

Henry negates it. The impasse drives both debaters respectively into a difficult situation. The following argument is about whether the king will break his promise not to be ransomed :

> *King.* If I live to see it, I will never trust his word after.
>
> *Williams.* You pay him then ! That's a perilous shot out of an elder-gun that a poor and a private displeasure can do against a monarch. You may as well go about to turn the sun to ice with fanning in his face with a peacock's feather. You'll never trust his word after ! Come, 'tis a foolish saying.
>
> *King.* Your reproof is something too round ; I should be angry with you if the time were convenient.
>
> (4.1.194-202)

Williams recognizes the distance and difference between the king and "a poor and a private" man. Even if the subject protests, the king would not be harmed by that. And Williams admits the impossibility of changing the "proportion of subjection," as he cannot punish the king : in this sense Williams is seriously infused with the official idea of obedience. Williams' words, however, also contain indignation at the limit the idea of obedience sets on the subject's action. Williams is thus faced with a dilemma. Although he has to obey the king, the result of service is not at all satisfying ; as he cannot make an effective challenge or alter the relation, only the double dissatisfaction remains. It is this latent complaint of Williams which makes Henry angry. When Henry meets Williams again in a later scene, he tries to buy off Williams with crowns so as to calm Williams' "displeasure" : he still believes that loyalty depends on money. Williams' blunt refusal of money, "I will none of your money" (4.8.69), tells us that his dissatisfaction is not so tractable as to be exchanged with something.

If Williams is faced with a dilemma because of the impasse in negotiation, Henry shows us an important aspect of his mental condition. In the dialogue his main aim was to negate his responsibility. Indeed, it is his consistent behaviour throughout the play. First, he shifts the responsibility for starting war with France onto Canterbury, who assumes it : "The sin upon my head, dread sovereign" (1.2.97). Secondly, as referred to before, Henry shifts the responsibility for the massacre onto the citizens of Harfleur. Finally, he lays his duty to fight with Williams upon Fluellen. As Alexander Leggatt says, Henry is touchy on the question of responsibility, always trying to shift the burden (133).

It is possible to interpret the problem in terms of "persecution mania." Persecution mania originally derives from a sense of being a persecuted victim (Jung 227). In Henry's case, his father's sin of parricide plays a great role in generating the sense. Henry takes over not only the throne but the guilt of the crime he did not commit ; he is forced to assume the responsibility for the murder of Richard II. Indeed, the words of Cambridge cited before implicitly refer to it. As a son of the criminal Henry also is accused of it, and consequently has acquired the sense of being persecuted, or treated in an unfair way. His continual shifting of responsibility is a defensive behaviour cultivated by this infused idea.

Moreover, Jung points out a doubling of the personality as the symptom of persecution mania ; the subject is split into a plurality of subjects, namely the normal subject and the second subject (ibid.). The symptom can be discerned in Henry in his dialogue with Williams and other soldiers. Throughout the scene he speaks as though he was talking to himself ; "I and my bosom must debate awhile" (4.1.31) ; "For though I speak it to you, I think the King is but a man, as I am" (4.1.101-02) ; and finally, "I myself heard the King say he would not be ransomed" (4.1.189-90). Henry is divided into a speaking subject and a hearing one. The former is the normal

subject, and the latter the second subject who fears the responsibility. As Jung says, in milder cases of persecution mania the two subjects are held together in harmony (ibid.). In the scene we can see the combination of Henry's selves. The normal, speaking subject, which insists that he is not responsible for soldiers' deaths, consoles and contains the second, hearing subject. In this respect, all the words he speaks in the dialogue are a kind of interior monologue.

In serious cases, however, the second subject completely replaces the normal one (ibid.). Having been questioned by Williams severely, Henry's second subject surfaces. Immediately after the three soldiers' exit, Henry says :

Exeunt Soldiers

Upon the King ! 'Let us our lives, our souls,
Our debts, our careful wives,
Our children and our sins lay on the King !'
We must bear all. O hard condition. . . . (4.1.227-30)

Left alone, he cannot help lamenting his "hard condition." He feels the sense of being persecuted again owing to Williams' assertion of his responsibility. The idea drives him into a desperate acceptance of every responsibility, "[w]e must bear all." As the second subject occupies Henry totally, he is compelled to remember the murder of Richard II. He goes back to the point from which his persecution mania originated : "Not today, O Lord, / O not today, think not upon the fault / My father made in compassing the crown" (4.1.289-91). Although Henry made Richard's body interred again and held a mass for Richard, he still has to implore "pardon" (4.1.302) on behalf of his father. His responsibility for his father's crime remains all the same.

As we have seen, both Williams and Henry are fallen into a confusing situation because of the impasse in negotiation. In Henry's case, however, he still tries to resolve the problem of obedience for himself. When Henry is upset by the second subject of him, he refers to "the wretched slave" (4. 1.265). The peasant, in his idea, works hard from morning to night and contributes to the country with "profitable labour" (4.1.274). His way of living is precisely the one which was demanded by Canterbury before. Indeed, in Henry's imagination the peasant is turned into the figure who backs up the official view of obedience :

> such a wretch,
> Winding up days with toil and nights with sleep,
> Had the fore-hand and vantage of a king.
> The slave, a member of the country's peace,
> Enjoys it, but in gross brain little wots
> What watch the King keeps to maintain the peace,
> Whose hours the peasant best advantages. (4.1.275-81)

Although it seems that Henry criticizes the peasant's "gross brain" and want of knowledge, he actually approves of them : it is agreeable for Henry that the peasant never tries to know the king's policy. The peasant thus becomes a model subject who just serves the country and does not question the king as Williams did. The absence of knowledge is admitted as long as it keeps the subject ignorant of the fact of exploitation. Besides, Henry impels the peasant to maintain such condition by concluding that the peasant is superior to and has an advantage over the king. This strategic inversion of hierarchy enables Henry to conceal the actual difference between the king and the subject. Henry, though afflicted by a fit of persecution mania, finds the fictional resolution to the problem of obedi-

ence. By referring to "the wretched slave" abruptly, he legitimates the one-sided and exploitative relation between him and the subject ; or, Henry has to dream of such an obedient figure so as to console himself as well as to justify his logic.[7]

If Williams discerns the difference between the king and the common man, "a poor and a private" people, the Eastcheap characters are actually entrapped into the force of differentiation. The fates of Bardolph, Nym and Pistol indicate the point to which obedience to the king leads. First, Bardolph is hanged for the stealing of a pax. The execution is significant in terms of the state policy, for the plunder in war is generally permitted. One of the conditions for the plunder is that it has to be a service. The proclamation of 1590 emphasized the point : "No soldier English shall be suffered to go forth of his garrisons upon boot-haling or freebooting unless it be for service in convenient numbers . . ." (Hughes and Larkin 67). In this respect, a boy's choice of word is insightful when he refers to the theft of Bardolph and Nym : "Nym and Bardolph are sworn brothers in filching, and in Calais they stole a fire-shovel. I knew by that piece of service the men would carry coals" (3.2.44-46). Although he speaks rather ironically, his use of the words "that piece of service," a military exploit, is appropriate : the theft is legitimated by the name "service." Fluellen unconsciously suggests such ambivalent nature of service in his "wrong" use of the word : "there is very excellent services *committed* at the bridge" (emphasis added ; 3.6.3-4). If the government attempts to justify and monopolize the plunder in the name of a service, the individual action of a soldier has to be restricted. As Bardolph steals a pax alone, he becomes an object of the restriction. Consequently, the execution of Bardolph can be regarded as a warning to the other soldiers. Bardolph is made a scapegoat for the establishment of the discipline, as Fluellen says : "for discipline ought to be used" (3.6.55).

The scapegoating of Bardolph can be interpreted in a different way. Bardolph is a vagabond who does not work and drinks all day long in the tavern.[8] In this point the selection of Bardolph is rather significant. As the Elizabethan officials recruited rogues and vagabonds so as to improve the domestic condition, so Bardolph is conscripted as a subject who does not bring profit to the society, contrary to the peasant : he is driven out of the country. A boy actually uses the image of vomiting when he refers to Bardolph and his friends : "their villainy goes against my weak stomach, and therefore I must cast it up" (3.2.52-53). Bardolph is first excluded from the body politic of the state, and then executed in the army for discipline. In this sense he is involved in the double forces of scapegoating. Fluellen's complacent report on his execution discloses the result of scapegoating : "but his nose is executed, and his fire's out" (3.6.104-05). His words imply that Bardolph drinks and consumes no more. In Bardolph's case, then, the official policy succeeds.

There is no information about the death of Nym. We are just told by a boy that he is hanged like Bardolph. It is possible that he is executed on account of the theft, but the obscurity of the execution contrasts with the publicity given to the punishment of Bardolph. The contrast has to do with efficiency of exhibition. It is enough for the government to choose one object, a criminal, for display as long as the result of display meets its expectation ; the exhibition of another execution is surplus to requirement.

As Bardolph and Nym become the object of disposal, so Pistol gets rather severe treatment in spite of his service in war. Indeed, the path he seems to follow parallels that of the Elizabethan returning soldiers. In his description of Pistol, Gower is thrown into confusion :

> Why, 'tis a gull, a fool, a rogue, that now and then goes to the wars to grace himself at his return into London under the form of a soldier. And

> such fellows are perfect in the great commanders' names . . . and what a beard of the General's cut and a horrid suit of the camp will do among foaming bottles and ale-washed wits is wonderful to be thought on. But you must learn to know such slanders of the age, or else you may be marvellously mistook. (3.6.66-80)

As the word "mistook" indicates, Gower regards Pistol as an imposter who deceives people with words and costume. To put it more precisely, he reconstructs Pistol as the mock-soldier (Herman 216). Pistol, though he really serves the king's army, is predetermined as the "unlawful," false soldier for whom the government has no responsibility. In this respect, Gower's attitude toward Pistol closely resembles that of the Elizabethan officials toward ex-soldiers. As the latter regarded the real soldier as the false one by neglecting the difference, so Gower tries to deprive Pistol of his privilege as the lawful soldier beforehand ; Pistol's testimony and memory of war are turned into a delusive lie. Treating Pistol in this way, Gower contributes to the reduction of the state's responsibility. Viewed in this light, Gower's confusion can be interpreted as a political device : it is not Pistol but rather Gower who deceives people. Indeed, Gower's speech sounds like a kind of illustrative guide which teaches one how to deal with the discharged soldier. Although he recommends Fluellen to "know," that is, to distinguish, what he actually suggests is the negation of the lawful and real soldiers.

Pistol's condition after service is thus prefigured. Even though Pistol joins Henry's "band of brothers" during the war, he is demonized into "such slanders of the age" as he returns to England. In this point the alleged harmony and fraternity of the army look rather doubtful. Although Henry tries to conceal the difference by using such rhetoric as Canterbury did before, the force of differentiation never disappears. Indeed, Gower's

treatment of Pistol is consistent in terms of an estimation. While he does not recognize Pistol who does gallant service, "I know him not" (3.6.18), he clearly recalls Pistol as "a bawd, a cutpurse" (3.6.61) : in his memory too, Gower practises discrimination. In Pistol's case especially, the power of differentiation and demonization is prominent. The play in one sense supports it by depicting him in a comical way. Pistol is a typical braggart soldier at whom we should laugh. Lawrence Olivier's 1944 film portrayed Pistol in that way. Besides, a boy associates Pistol with the devil himself : "this roaring devil i'th' old play, that every vice may pare his nails with a wooden dagger . . ." (4.4.70-72). In fact, Pistol, as he is struck with a cudgel by Fluellen in Act 5, Scene 1, becomes a devil who is chastised and driven out of the stage from the viewpoint of dramatic convention. However, it should be noticed that in considering Pistol in this manner we take part in the same stratagem of differentiation and demonization as that done by Gower : one falls into tacit approval of the state policy if he/she just assimilates the comical aspect of Pistol.[9] In this regard, it is interesting that Olivier's *King Henry V*, produced during the World War II, was dedicated to the Commandoes and Airborne Troops of Great Britain (Hodgdon 195).

As we have seen, the service in war brings Pistol only contempt and the demonizing attitude of people : having served the king's army, he gets the worse social recognition. Moreover, Pistol becomes destitute as he cannot gain the ransom from the French prisoner on account of Henry's order to kill all captives. The result of his obedience to the king is thus rather harsh. Actually, what he receives after war are the scars on his head and a groat. When Fluellen gives Pistol a groat after the chastisement, Pistol complains : "Me a groat ?" (5.1.61). We must recall here the words of Stump, "for a groate to fight ?". At this moment Pistol as the returning soldier is fallen into the same situation as that of Stump. As it is so for Stump, the reward

for obedience is unsatisfactory and even derogative one.[10]

If Stump chooses negative resistance with his uncooperative stance, Pistol goes further to challenge the state policy in an unexpected way. In his last speech Pistol says : "And patches will I get unto these cudgelled scars, /And swear I got them in the Gallia wars." (5.1.89-90). From the viewpoint of Pistol's characterization as a braggart soldier, Pistol's words can be interpreted as his determination to boast about the scars. However, they have another important meaning : Pistol talks about his privilege as a hurt soldier. Indeed, a hurt soldier, along with a maimed or diseased soldier, was entitled by the royal proclamation to be provided with relief after the examination of his condition (Hughes and Larkin 105). Pistol's scars are the mark of this privilege. In this respect, things go contrary to the expectation of Gower and Fluellen. Though Fluellen struck Pistol so as to drive out Pistol as a devil, the scars made in this incident are appropriated by Pistol so that they testify to his right. The very act of demonization makes Pistol a lawful soldier for whom the state has to take responsibility.

Indeed, how can the official who will examine Pistol know the reason for the scars if he does not have any information from Fluellen ? Pistol's scars would look similar to those of a soldier to whom Henry refers patronizingly in Act 4, Scene 3 :

> Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
> And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
> Old men forget ; yet all shall be forgot
> But he'll remember, with advantages,
> What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
> . . . .
> Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered. (47-55)

In terms of the memory, too, there is a remarkable resemblance between the soldier and Pistol ; they both remember "the great commanders' names." Moreover, the soldier, like Pistol, embellishes his story "with advantages." It is almost impossible to distinguish Pistol's testimony of service from the soldier's one. If, as Jonathan Baldo argues, in the speech Henry attempts to weave together private forms of memory into a unified and centralized national memory, Pistol also can be the spokesman for the national memory, though Gower tries to negate Pistol's memory as a delusive lie (156). The arbitrariness of the state's manipulation of memory and the differentiation it engenders are clear. The differentiation finally fails as Pistol, similar to the soldier acknowledged by Henry, turns into the lawful soldier with his scars and testimony.

Pistol tells us another way of living after war in the same speech : "Well, bawd I'll turn, /And something lean to cutpurse of quick hand. / To England will I steal, and there I'll steal" (5.1.86-88). Pistol, a murderer as well as a rogue before, goes back to a life of crime again as he returns to England. In this regard, Henry's justified scapegoating of criminals in war does not succeed in Pistol's case. Although Pistol was driven out of the country with Bardolph, he returns into the body politic of the state in a circulated way : the expected improvement of domestic condition becomes illusory. Pistol survives the scapegoating, and will continue to trouble the government.[11]

In *King Henry V*, the idea of obedience becomes a contesting field in which the king and the soldiers assert their respective stances. Although the official view of obedience as natural is endorsed by Canterbury, the difference and inequality it legitimates are called into question by Williams in his dialogue with the king. Moreover, Pistol as the returning soldier, though involved in the force of demonization and differentiation, finally compels the state to answer for his post-war condition. *King Henry V*, while presenting the authoritative supposition about obedience, breaks its solidity

by the voices of soldiers. These voices, commingling with and echoing those of Elizabethan veterans, make up the political force which affects the contemporary governmental policy. Actually, in 1601, two years after the first production of the play, the government provided an alternative legislation for a part of the discharged soldiers : the maximum parish rate for the relief of wounded or maimed soldiers was increased, and a county treasurer was appointed to administer the funds, after which pensions were paid to them (Leonard 136). A causal link between the play and the legislation may not be definite, but it is certain that the play takes part in producing the pressure, or a complex amalgam of various voices, which forces the government to change its attitude. *King Henry V*, by giving soldiers a site of enunciation, intervenes in the political field of the late 1590s.

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Notes

[1] Critical studies of *King Henry V* have paid attention to the problem of the returning soldiers. But largely they just point out the existence of the problem in a passing reference and do not elucidate it. An exception is Robert Lane's essay, to which my thesis owes a great deal. Having examined the conditions of the Elizabethan disbanded soldiers deliberately, Lane writes definitely about Pistol as a returning veteran : "More than any other single figure he [Pistol] crystallized the intense concern over the questions of governance so pervasive in the England of the late 1590s" (33). Sharing his view, I try to disclose an alternative aspect of the play by way of the close analysis of the problem of the discharged soldiers.

[2] In 1578, long before the problem of the returning soldiers had reached

threatening dimensions, Barnaby Rich referred to the ungrateful attitude of people toward soldiers :

> In the time of wars, they [the commomn soldiers] spare not in their country's behalf. . . . but the wars being once finished, and that there is no need of them, how be they rewarded, how be they cherished, what account is there made of them, what other thing gain they than slander, misreport, false impositions, hatred and despite !
>
> (qtd. in Cruickshank 39-40)

3 There is no information about how things actually turned out for Gouldhurst after his petition.

4 The Chorus also follows the principle in appealing to the audiences. On the one hand, it asks all the audiences to participate in war in imagination : "Follow, follow ! / Grapple your minds to sternage of this navy . . ." (3.0.17-18). The simulation of war makes the audiences feel they join the army of Henry and are one of the "band of brothers." On the other hand, the Chorus especially incites the one who is competent to serve the army : "For who is he, whose chin is but enriched / With one appearing hair, that will not follow / These culled and choice-drawn cavaliers to France ?" (3.0.22-24). If we take into consideration the fact that all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 were liable for service with the militia in Elizabethan England (Cruickshank 23), the Chorus' words sound like the voice of recruitment of these qualified men. Actually, the Chorus stimulates their sense of pride so that they feel shame for staying at home. As the play was produced during the war against Ireland, the function of the Chorus was practical and patriotic. Such patriotic movement instigated by the Chorus is, as we shall see later, to be disrupted by the voices of soldiers like Williams and Pistol. And it should be noticed that in the Chorus' selective appeal, "grandsires, babies, and old women" (3.0.20) are put into the background ; in case of young women, they are not mentioned at all. The consistent repression of women and femininity in the play is pointed out by some critics, but the problem cannot be discussed here for lack of space. Thus the Chorus, while inciting all the audiences to participate in war in imagination, implicitly

practises the discrimination.

5 It should also be added that Bates performs an evasion of responsibility in his final words. The total engagement in obedience deprives him of individual determination and a sense of responsibility. M. Scott Peck made an interesting statement on this matter :

> Obedience is the number-one military discipline. The dependency of the soldier on his leader is not simply encouraged, it is mandated. By nature of its mission the military designedly and probably realistically fosters the naturally occurring regressive dependency of individual within its groups. (256-57)

Bates' dependency on the king makes him a rather weak debater in the discussion compared to Williams : indeed, he speaks only words of approval once afterwards. Bates remains a tractable opponent for Henry as long as he lacks the private decision which demands his own responsibility.

6 Elizabeth faced same difficulty when people rebuked her for the failure of the Irish expedition. On 28 November 1599, at the conference in the Star Chamber, the Lord Keeper spoke for the queen : "Though princes are not bound to give account of their actions, yet to stop such discourses, I will recount what the Queen has done for Ireland" (Green 347-48). Elizabeth, like Henry, was bound by her subjects to account for her policy.

7 The lifestyle of the peasant deserved praise from the viewpoint of the Elizabethan government, as well. In the 1590s England was beset by the serious dearth. The failure of four successive harvests from 1594 to 1597 caused the most severe inflation of prices in the sixteenth century. And the intensity of the food crisis reached a peak between autumn 1594 and spring 1598 (Power 371, 384). The Elizabethan officials thought that the crisis was brought about by those who did not work. In 1596 Edward Hext, mentioned before, wrote :

> And I maye Iustlye say that the Infynyte numbers of the Idle wandrynge people and robbers of the land are the chefest cause of the dearthe, for thowghe they labor not, and yet they spend dobly as myche as the laborer

> dothe, for they lye Idlely in the ale howses daye and nyght eatinge and drynkynge excessively. (Tawney and Power 341-42)

What irritated Hext is the fact that they consumed too much, though they did not work at all. In this respect, the peasant is the direct opposite of those idle people : for he produces the food by his labour and, as the words "distressful bread" (4.1.267) indicate, consumes it only after the work. The peasant Henry imagines becomes the subject who is approvable for the Elizabethan government which was troubled by the dearth.

8 In this respect, he is precisely one of "the Idle wandrynge people" reprimanded by Hext.

9 Critics should be aware of the fact in interpreting Pistol. For example, Marcia A. McDonald imitates Gower as she names Pistol a duplicitous soldier (137). She unconsciously supports Gower's demonization of Pistol.

10 There are some characters in the play who devote themselves to the king without any distrust. Such devotion, similarly, brings about no beneficial effect upon them. The case of Fluellen is a prominent example. As a Welsh he serves the king his countryman earnestly, but in Act 4, Scene 8 he is beguiled into acting as a substitute for Henry and struck by Williams. Fluellen neither realizes that he is deceived nor says a word of complaint to the king. He is ignorant enough to be exploited fully by the king ; in this respect, it is convincing that the king should keep Fluellen at his side. A comical quality of Fluellen consists in his ignorance and masochistic commitment to the king. It should be noticed, however, that Fluellen's masochistic attitude turns into an aggressive one when he deals with the lower people, Bardolph and Pistol, or the Irishman, Macmorris. It is possible that Fluellen's repressed emotions in his obedience to the king are released in such occasion. The code of obedience makes Fluellen a man of double personality.

11 In the Quarto version of *King Henry V*, the following line is added : "The warres affordeth nought, home will I trug" (Otsuka 48). Pistol is consistent in his pursuit of private interest, whether in England or in France. Actually, his main aim in joining the army was to gain money : "For I shall sutler be / Unto the camp, and profits will accrue" (2.1.111-12). We should refrain from being

too sympathetic to Pistol so as not to overlook his selfish and tricky nature.

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Synopsis

Pistol's Scars : War and Obedience in *King Henry V*

By Miki Nakamura

In the 1590s the Elizabethan government waged successive wars ; the first war against Spain, and later expeditions into France and Ireland. The consecutive military affairs had several consequences for the country. One of them was the problem of the returning soldiers. The soldiers' condition after service was largely harsh : having lost former jobs, most of them slid into a life of beggary or crime. Although the government repeatedly issued laws for the relief of the discharged soldiers, their situation did not improve. Rather, people saw them as a nuisance to society : the reward for service was contempt and indifference.

The soldiers' difficulties after war indicate a point to which the subjection to the Queen leads. Having served in her army, they were rewarded by a worsened social position. In the late 1590s, the merits of such obedience were called into question. The value of obedience was contested as the discharged soldiers began to voice their discontents. *King Henry V*, first performed in 1599 when these voices reverberated through the society, intervened in the same political field as it gave Henry's soldiers a site of enunciation and grappled with the problem of obedience. The purpose of this paper is to show how the idea of obedience is questioned in *King Henry V* and to consider the way in which the play affects the contemporary English politics.

In the first section I survey the conditions of the returning soldiers and the state policy in Elizabethan England. The inadequacy of governmental care and the demonizing process of ex-soldiers become clear. The anonymous play *A Larum for London*, which records a voice of a lame soldier, is also introduced.

In the second section I show how the official code of obedience is disrupted

in the play by the rebels, Williams, and Pistol. Although Canterbury endorses the authoritative view of obedience as natural, the rebels' act discloses the arbitrary nature of obedience. Moreover, Williams criticizes the difference and inequality legitimated by the idea of obedience. Finally, Pistol as the returning soldier discerns the rewardless quality of his service and compels the state to take responsibility for his post-war condition.

In the last part of the paper I consider the political function of *King Henry V* in the late 1590s.