

Disputing Boundaries: Space and Social Boundary in *2 Henry VI*

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Abstract

In Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*, Shakespeare ends Jack Cade's rebellion by having the Kentish esquire, Alexander Iden, kill the hunger-stricken peasant rebel, Cade, in his private urban garden. The enclosed space of Iden's manor garden, his recurrent assertion of his property rights, and both Cade's as well as Iden's identification of Cade as a trespasser on his private property suggest Shakespeare's deliberate exploration of the contested boundaries between the poor peasant/artisanal class and the richer gentry class in the England of his own day. This paper argues that Cade's defeat in the enclosed urban garden discloses the Elizabethans' fear of the threatened violation/erosion of social boundaries. By depicting the rural enclosure rioters as protesting urban workers, by portraying Cade as an egalitarian protestor, and by letting his frantic mobs execute their social betters, Shakespeare extends his dramatic scope not only to a historical retrospective of Jack Cade's rebellion but also to a more sophisticated consideration of the complex web of class antagonisms between the propertyless laborers and the landed gentry of his time.

Keywords

Shakespeare, *2 Henry VI*, class struggle, class antagonism, boundary violation

Although the term “class” was not directly employed by Tudor and Stuart writers to describe social relations in early modern England, people in this period used alternative terms, such as “sorts,” “ranks,” “degrees,” or “categories,” to describe our modern conception of “classes.” In *The Description of England: The Classic Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life* (1577), William Harrison declared that “[w]e in England divide our people commonly into four sorts, as gentlemen, citizens or burgesses, yeomen, and artificers or laborers” (94). Harrison’s conception of social stratification bears witness to the fact that sixteenth- and seventeenth- Englishmen were acutely conscious of their social distinctions as well as boundaries. Tudor social historian Keith Wrightson points out in *English Society, 1580-1680* that in this period, social stratification was displayed everywhere: in the massive and very visible distinctions of wealth and living standards; in the colors and styles of apparel; “in the conventions of comportment which governed face-to-face contacts with superiors and inferiors”; and even in the way in which church seating was arranged (17). Even though Wrightson does not explicitly phrase “social stratification” as “class distinction,” there is nothing other than the concept of class that can better explain the early modern Englishmen’s insistence on social differentiation on the basis of social rank rather than on the basis of income and occupation.

David Scott Kastan in *Shakespeare after Theory* asserts that “classes, in their abstract social sense, can be seen to have existed as long as social organization has permitted an unequal distribution of property, privilege, and power” (150). James Holstun, in *Ehud’s Dagger: Class Struggle in the English Revolution*, argues that for most people throughout history, class is “a relation of exploitation: the ruling class’s systematic extraction of surplus labor from the laboring class, over and above the necessary labor that it performs in order to keep living from day to day. And *class struggle* consists of this very exploitation and resistance to it” (96). To further elucidate his observations on class relations, he writes:

Of course, schemes of estates, hierarchy, and degree do not refer exclusively to the mode of production, but to rich and resonant social differences in a distinctively premodern social totality, in which questions of economy are complexly interwoven with questions of religion, literacy, warfare, family structure, and culture. But these early modern schemes of social structure would collapse and become meaningless if they were not at least *partly* and even, I would argue, *primarily* class relations. (97)

I agree with Kastan that the term “classes” should be considered in the “abstract social sense” in this period, and I strongly agree with Holstun that these modern schemes of social stratification would be meaningless if they are not considered as “class relations.” Therefore, though early modern Englishmen used alternative terms for “classes,” it does not necessarily indicate that there was no class struggle in this period.

One of the most conspicuous phenomena of the Tudor and Stuart upperclasses to distinguish classes from their social inferiors was the way they built their homes. Linda Woodbridge observes in *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renaissance Literature* that houses of the Renaissance well-to-do were circumlocutory, with courtyards within courtyards and private spaces deep within the house, as if the owners of these great manors wanted to withdraw and segregate themselves from the outside world where vagrants, criminals and the laboring folks prevailed (169-71). For fear that vagrants might trespass their private gardens, owners of great houses built tall walls to bar outsiders from intruding on their property, while in the meantime enclosing themselves within their own households. This anxiety over boundary violation mingles with fear about the fluidity of social ranks. The violation of manorial space/property interfuses with the potential threat to an established social hierarchy. Such is the case as we consider Jack Cade’s rebellion and his final defeat by the Kentish esquire, Alexander Iden, within the manorial garden in Shakespeare’s *2 Henry VI*. The class struggle between the peasant rebels and their social superiors is manifested via the violation or erosion of the established hierarchal social boundaries that Jack Cade and his fellows intend. Alexander Iden’s final defeat of Jack Cade in the garden not only illustrates the English Renaissance aristocracy’s fear of class violation, but also consolidates this fear via Iden’s defense of his private property and his severe punishment upon a boundary violator. This paper examines the contested social boundaries as well as the complex web of class antagonisms as revealed in Shakespeare’s *2 Henry VI*.¹

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¹ For the discussion of class consciousness and populism in this play, I am greatly indebted to the following three scholars’ works: Thomas Cartelli’s “Jack Cade in the Garden: Class Consciousness and Class Conflict in *2 Henry VI*” 48-67; Geraldo U. de Sousa’s “The Peasants’

We can feel the emergence of a class war from the very beginning of Jack Cade's rebellion scenes. The two rebels who open the scenes point out that Cade's rebellion is a class war between the ruling class and the laboring poor. The first rebel reveals that Jack Cade, a clothier (textile worker) would like "to dress the commonwealth" by turning it and setting "a new nap upon it" (4.2.4-5).² Shakespeare's allusion to his rebel leader's occupation as a clothier fans the fire of class confrontation, since as Richard Wilson argues in "'A Mingled Yarn': Shakespeare and Cloth Workers," the cloth workers, especially the shearmen who participated in the finishing process of the textile industry, were the most radical revolutionists in the urban apprentices' riots and the English Revolution (171-72). Therefore, even before Jack Cade appears on the stage, we understand that his rebellion is an ideological class struggle in which the artisanal laborers intend to claim their rights. The second rebel reinforces this sense of class antagonism by condemning the ruling class for the economic ordeals they currently suffer; he considers Cade's class war necessary, since the aristocrats have impoverished England and made it "threadbare" (4.2.7-8). The first rebel echoes his thought by claiming that their labor is not respected by the ruling classes, and the second rebel appears to be extremely excited as well in imagining the possibility that Cade's rebellion is going to revert the established social hierarchy and allow the laboring poor to rule England (4.2.9-15).

Revolt and the Writing of History in *2 Henry VI* 178-93; and Chris Fitter's "'Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation': Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*" 173-219. Cartelli contends that there was a close correlation between illiteracy and "the lack of authorities" in the laboring class at Shakespeare's time because their inability to write precluded them from expressing their public opinions and made it impossible for them to articulate their economic grievances as their rights were exploited by their literate social superiors and thus intensified their class hatred (180). Deploying a cultural hegemonic reading of Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*, Sousa argues that "Jack Cade identifies writing as the power that authorizes and perpetuates social injustices" (180). The reason why Cade hates the literate so much is because writing confirms traditions as well as privileges which definitely exclude the interests of the illiterate (180). By sketching the Hacket Revolt of July 1591 and its popular reception, Fitter points out Shakespeare's suggestive remodelings of Cade as Hacket and proposes that despite the voluminous criticism claiming Shakespeare's political conservatism, a close examination of the entire Cade sequence will reveal to us that Shakespeare may also be viewed as a "powerful protest playwright" (219). Though also focusing on the discussion of class hatred and antagonism in this play, my article, different from the precedent criticism, places its emphasis upon the competition of spatial and social boundaries and the fluidity as well as interchangeability between space and social class in this play.

² Subsequent quotations from the play are cited from *The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster (2 Henry VI)* in *The Norton Shakespeare*.

We have to note that Shakespeare deliberately changed the occupations of the rioters, who appear not as rural peasants but as urban artisans (Caldwall 61; Laroque 77; Hattaway 18; Hobday 69; Jones 121). His Jack Cade is a shearman whose father was a bricklayer and whose mother was a peddler's daughter who sold laces (4.2.120; 4.2.35; 4.2.39), and Cade's main lieutenants are mostly "handicraftsmen" in alliance with clothing industries. Cade calls his fellow rioters "clouted shoons" (peasants) only when they desert him (4.3.168); yet, the way he retrieves them conveys an even stronger sense of radicalism since "clouted shoons" were English peasants' hobnailed shoes in early modern England. They were, as the German peasants' leather shoes, the symbol of peasantry and a proverbial phrase for peasant revolts (Hobday 69). In one way, Shakespeare's deliberate exchange of industrial craftsmen for agrarian protestors indicates the dramatist's intention to draw a larger audience in the city of London since his plays were primarily consumed by urban dwellers. This change also authorizes Shakespeare to articulate his contemporary urban workers' political and economic discontents in a time of severe economic distress (Laroque 77). In the play, Cade's first promise to his fellow rioters is to lower prices: "There shall be in England seven half-penny loaves sold for a penny, the three-hoop'd pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to drink small beer" (4.2.58-60). Although this price reform is couched in sarcastic comic terms, the heavy cost of goods was one of the major grievances that the London apprentice rioters wanted to redress.³ This change powerfully binds the communal class hatred of the laboring poor (agrarian peasants and industrial handicraftsmen) for their social superiors to further intensify and complicate the complex webs of class antagonism as peasant rioters turn into frantic city mobs bent on killing all "scholars, lawyers, courtiers and gentlemen" (4.5.35-36).

The resentment that Cade and his fellow rebels have toward lawyers represents the deep-seated class antagonism between the laboring folk and the upper classes. Here we have to delve into the complicated relationships between lordship and tenancy in Renaissance England and the social resources that early modern barristers encompassed to rationalize the origins of the peasants' class hatred. First, early modern tenants didn't own land in their own rights; instead, they leased it from a manorial lord and held their land by the customs of the manors. Only one-fifth of the land in early modern England was possessed by freeholders who "enjoyed a secure title, the rights to sell, lease and bequeath their land, and the protection of the common law" (Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities* 72). These freeholders made only a small payment to acknowledge their obligations to their

³ For food/apprentice riots, see Archer 154-83; Fitter 154-83; Manning 187-219.

feudal overlords. However, most of the tenants were *copyholders* who held their land by “a bewildering profusion of actual terms and conditions, which varied according to the customs of individual manors” (Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities* 72). Though the tenures held by copyholders of inheritance might go with a fixed fine and rent, which might be as secure as a freeholder, the majority were copyholders for life and copyholder at will. These leaseholders paid their rents based upon an assessment of the current value of the land. Therefore, manorial lords were able to “negotiate” annual rents when the tenancy expired. Although the lease-holding tenants did have legal redress against eviction, the King’s Courts could only judge each case of agrarian disputes according to the laws of an individual manor. Since the manorial lords were the lawmakers of their estate-management policies, the tenants usually suffered oppression as well as dispossession (Tawney 281-30).

This is why so many land-dispute lawsuits run through the manorial records in Renaissance England and also the reason why estate lawyers were heavily relied on and extensively employed by landlords to deal with agrarian complaints. Some manorial lords were preoccupied with their summer hunting and mercantile businesses in the city of London and hired lawyers as their steward-of-courts to manage their estates and to represent them in the courts when land disputes occurred. These lawyers of estates were also authorized to negotiate rents and leases, to sue recalcitrant tenants, and to evict illegally detained tenants (Hainsworth 11). Yet, the estate lawyers’ power was not only restricted to their legal domain. Because of their familiarity with the land market, they also acted as real estate brokers in early modern England. Wilfrid R. Prest rightly points out in *The Rise of the Barristers: A Social History of the English Bar 1590-1640* that because of the absence of estate brokers and newspaper advertisements to put potential buyers in touch with vendors, the Renaissance lawyers could take advantage of their familiarity with the land market to enrich themselves via land transactions (168-69). The understanding and exploration of these cultural conventions of Renaissance England help us come to realize why Cade and his fellow rebels resent lawyers so much.

The rebels’ detestation of the lawyers can be further demonstrated by their execution of the innocent Clerk of Chatham. As one of the rebels, Dick the Butcher, suggests that they should “kill all the lawyers” (4.2.68), Jack Cade immediately agrees with this proposal by showing his strong contempt for the lawyers’ power to exploit the tenants by writing legal documents that favor the landowning aristocracy (4.2.69-71). When the frantic rebels present the Clerk to Jack Cade, the first crime

they accuse him is his literacy, which distinguishes him from the laboring-class rebels.

Why do Jack Cade and his fellow rebels detest literacy so much? Why did literacy demonstrate social stratification in Tudor and Stuart England? David Cressy observes in his book *Literacy and the Social Order* that “[t]he hierarchy of social rank in pre-industrial England is precisely and vividly illuminated by the study of literacy” (118). Cressy’s research reveals that literacy leveled people into three major clusters in early modern England. The gentle and clerical élite were distanced from the yeomen and tradesmen, while the latter maintained a solid superiority over mostly illiterate women and the most illiterate laborers (118-9).

As Thomas Cartelli brilliantly argues in “Jack Cade in the Garden: Class Consciousness and Class Conflict in *2 Henry VI*,” David Cressy’s observation that literacy illuminated class distinctions in this period helps us visualize why Cade and his fellow rebels would like to put the Clerk of Chatham’s pen and inkhorn around his neck while hanging him. According to Cartelli, to escape the full severity of the laws, Renaissance criminals would resort to the customary reading of the neck-verse to claim “benefit of clergy” (60). Cartelli also asserts that the rebels’ detestation of literacy reflects their socially inferior status. He contends that Sir Thomas Smith classifies people into four sorts in his *De Republica Anglorum*, and the social group Jack Cade represents assembles what Smith identifies as a “fourth sort of class” that had “no voice nor authoritie in our common wealth” (qtd. in Cartelli 60). Cartelli wants us to note that there is a close correlation between illiteracy and “the lack of authorities” in this respective class because their inability to write did bar them from articulating their opinions and made it impossible for them to redress their economic grievances as their rights were exploited by the literate classes and thus enhanced their discontent as well as class hatred.

In “The Peasants’ Revolt and the Writing of History in *2 Henry VI*,” Geraldo U. de Sousa extends Cartelli’s argument by closely examining the connection between writing, history and power. Deploying a culturally hegemonic reading of Shakespeare’s *2 Henry VI*, Sousa argues that “Jack Cade identifies writing as the power that authorizes and perpetuates social injustices” (180). He thinks that the reason why Cade hates the literate so much is because writing confirms traditions as well as privileges which exclude the interests of the illiterate. Thus, upon taking London, Shakespeare’s Cade immediately orders the destruction of the Savoy Place and the Inns of Court (4.7.1-2): “Away! Burn all the records of the realm. My mouth shall be the Parliament of England” (4.6.11-13). His attempt to abolish literacy is to ensure the leveling of class distinctions: “all things shall be in

common” (4.7.16), because these archival documents constitute a record of customs, traditions, privileges, and laws that perpetuate social injustices (188).

Cade comments that the Clerk of Chatham is “monstrous” when learning from Smith the Weaver that he can read, write, and take accounts (4.2.77). Of course, literacy alone is not a valid reason for hanging a man. It is rather the combination of literary (the symbol and accession to power, prestige and social status) and legal knowledge that may violate the rights of tenants that ignites the wrath of the rebels. So, when Dick the Butcher points out that the Clerk of Chatham is not only literate but also possesses legal knowledge and can write financial bonds and legal documents (4.2.82), his possession of literacy and legal knowledge causes the mobs to act upon their antagonism toward the upper classes. The Clerk’s ability to write his name turns out to be an unforgivable confession that labels him as a class “traitor” (4.2.95).

The rebels’ frantic execution of Lord Saye also reveals the peasant rioters’ resentment toward literacy that is exclusively accessible to their social superiors. Though they fail to provide a justification for executing Lord Saye, the audience may sense that he serves as a scapegoat for Suffolk’s loss of Maine to France (4.7.17-19). When the rebels examine Lord Saye for his alleged “crimes,” Cade attacks him first for his literacy, the symbol of his class status. Lord Saye is accused of promoting literacy and print culture in England (4.7.27-31). For Cade, Lord Saye’s establishment of a grammar school has “most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm”; Saye’s speaking of nouns and verbs—his ability to read and write—is an instrument that the ruling class uses to oppress the lower class (4.7.27-28; 4.7.33-34). He refers to the fact that the Renaissance upper class used their education to abuse the lower class by calling them to come before justices of peace and asking them to answer legal disputes that they are not able to answer (4.7.34-36). In addition, Cade also alludes to the fact that the laboring poor would be sent to the prison much more easily than the ruling class simply because they were uneducated and couldn’t read Latin, so would not be able to plead for the “benefit of clergy” (4.7.36-37). Cade’s accusation of Lord Saye implies the laboring class’s protest against the ruling classes’ monopoly and exploitation of social resources and also conveys their discontent at the injustice of the social disparity.

Though readers might be sympathetic with Lord Saye, his defense reveals the upper class’s blindness to their exploitation of the laboring poor. Obviously, Lord Saye doesn’t consider his social superiority a way to guarantee him education and literacy acquisition; instead, he regards his education as a means to improve his social position: “Because my book preferred me to the King” (4.7.65). Even upon

his execution, he fails to rationalize that his grievous offense to the rebels is “class.” As we review his pitiful last words, we may sympathize with him for his ignorance of the class struggle he falls victim to:

Tell me wherein have I offended most?
 Have I affected wealth or honour? Speak.
 Are my chests filled up with extorted gold?
 Is my apparel sumptuous to behold?
 Whom have I injured, that ye seek my death?
 These hands are free from guiltless bloodshedding,
 This breast from harbouring foul deceitful thoughts.
 O let me live! (4.7.88-95)

His last lines disclose a glaring discrepancy between his own perceptions and those of the rebels. Even at his last moment he still cannot understand the accusations against him; he imagines his wealth, honor, and even sumptuous clothes are held against him, not dreaming instead he stands accused of injustice toward the laboring class and monopoly of social resources.

Cade’s efforts to establish egalitarianism, his brutal execution of lawyers, and his rigid resistance to literacy converge when he is trapped in Alexander Iden’s garden and forced to challenge the established social hierarchy singlehandedly. As I argued earlier in this article, these private manorial gardens of the great lords in Renaissance England guaranteed their owners a space in which to segregate themselves from vagrants, criminals, and the laboring-class. The tall walls enclosing these gardens asserted the property rights of their owners, and their “physical” segregation manifest social hierarchy as well as class superiority. Such is the case of Alexander Iden. As the owner of a private garden, the Kentish esquire is very proud in his estate. Shakespeare is very delicate in depicting Iden’s claim for his private possession and his actual power as the garden’s owner. Iden says:

Lord, who would live turmoiled in the court
 And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?
 This small inheritance my father left me
 Contenteth me, and worth a monarchy.
 I seek not to wax great by others’ waning,
 Or gather wealth I care not with what envy;

Sufficeth that I have maintains my state,
And sends the poor well pleased from my gate. (4.9.14-21)

These lines indicate that though this property is a modest “inheritance” from his father, it is a “state” that he carefully maintains and strives to guard from the poor (4.9.20). As Stephen Greenblatt points out in his essay “Murdering Peasants,” Iden’s claim for his private ownership distinguishes him from the tenants and clearly marks his garden as a piece of “enclosed private property,” rather than “a public or a common domain” (125).

Iden’s assertion of ownership contrasts poignantly with Cade’s aside in the background, “Zounds, here’s the lord of the soil come to seize me for a stray for entering his fee-simple without leave” (4.9.22-23). Although Cade acknowledges Iden’s ownership by calling him “lord of the soil,” we can tell that he is hostile toward the landowning class by the way in which the landowners take trespassers as if they were stray animals, with the legal right to seize them. We can recall Cade’s earlier encounter with Sir Humphrey Strafford as pointing to the origins of his class antagonism.

As a negotiator sent by the King to talk peace with the rebel camp, Sir Humphrey Stratford defies Cade’s claim to royal descent and ridicules him by alluding to the fact that his father was a “plasterer” and Cade himself is a “shearman” (4.2.119-20). In defiance of Sir Humphrey Stratford’s insults of his laboring-class origin, Cade retorts, “[a]nd Adam was a gardener” (4.2.121). Cade’s sense of egalitarianism, as Charles Hobday notes in “Clouted Shoon and Leather Aprons: Shakespeare and the Egalitarian Tradition,” implies that the King and Cade are both descended from Adam, who worked with his hands (67). In this context, the peasant should enjoy the same rights as the monarch since all men are Adam’s descendants.

Here, Shakespeare stages the class struggle as confrontational, as his hunger-stricken Cade confronts Iden and his men in the private urban garden. When Cade is caught by Iden and his men, he has been chased by the King’s army for five days, and he is so hungry that he is forced to trespass into Iden’s private garden to eat the grass (4.9.1-8). The suffering of the poor is so “emblematically” symbolized by the Cade, reduced to eating grass, while Iden and his men stand ready with weapons in their hands.

Though, Cade, representative of the popular voice, is powerless at this point, he understands that his worth as a rebel leader is much more to Iden than as an ordinary trespasser. He says that though Iden will seize him and take his head to the

King for a thousand crowns, he will fight him to the end (4.9.24-27). However, the difference in power is a fact: Cade lies on the ground like a starving animal, whose body can be seized and whose head can be delivered to the manorial lord. Of course, when Iden confronts him, Iden readily parallels this class distinction with Cade's boundary violation. He calls Cade "rude companion," which clearly refers to Cade's lowborn status, and he immediately assures his social hierarchy by identifying himself as "the owner" of the garden (4.9.28-32).

Cade realizes that he is now a prey in the trap; however, he struggles hard to resist Iden's class oppression. Three times in the play, he emphasizes that he is defeated by "famine," rather than by Iden and his five men (4.9.35-38; 4.9.58-60; 4.9.71-72). Even at the moment when he is struck down by Iden and lies dying on the ground, he still shows his uncompromising resistance and hostility.

O, I am slain! Famine and no other hath slain me! Let ten thousand devils come against me, and give me but the ten meals I have lost, and I'd defy them all. Wither, garden, and be henceforth a burying place to all that do dwell in this house, because the unconquered soul of Cade is fled. (4.9.58-62)

The word "famine" carries political significance here since "famine" was consistently the subject matter and major complaint in all peasant revolts and enclosure riots in Elizabethan and early Jacobean England. As Cade lies on the ground awaiting his death, he curses Iden's garden and hopes that it will no longer nurture herbs and instead become a burial ground for Iden and his family. More importantly, however, Cade asserts that though his body is defeated and slain, his soul is never conquered. Even at his death, he is thinking of retrieving the rights that he considers legitimate to claim.

Iden had not realized that the trespasser he has slain is the political insurrectionist Jack Cade, until he hears Cade's dying words. Upon knowing Cade's "economic value" as the rebel leader, Iden repeatedly stabs Cade's bleeding corpse, cuts off his head, and drags his body to the dunghill (4.9.75-81). Although the brutal punishment the Kentish esquire imposes upon a boundary violator may serve as a comic interval to entertain Shakespeare's audience, yet the symbolic cruelty enacted by a property owner in his "state-like" garden helps reaffirm and reconstitute Iden's as well as the English aristocracy's social prestige as well as authority. This spectacle reminds us of Michel Foucault's argument in *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison* in which he argues that the public

execution of criminals served as an occasion to display, acquire, and exercise power within the fluidity of social-political domains. Such punishment served as a ceremonial ritual to reaffirm and reconstitute monarchial power as the monarch exercised his regal power upon the condemned bodies of the criminals as if these bodies were his private property (48-54).

Hence, Iden's mutilation of Cade's corpse help restore the social hierarchal order that Shakespeare's aristocratic patrons wanted to see. The severing of his head and the flinging of Cade's body onto the dunghill, a departure from historical sources, help reconstitute the social order that Shakespeare's aristocratic audience wanted to restore.⁴ However, the apparent triumph of the aristocracy is still haunted by Cade's "unconquered soul" (4.9.62). Cade's last words mark his stout resistance to the coercive authority that deprives him of the barest subsistence:

Iden, farewell, and be proud of thy victory. Tell Kent from me
 she hath lost her best man, and exhort all the world to be cowards.
 For I, that never feared any, am vanquished by famine, not by valour.
 (4.9.69-72)

Even upon his death, he emphasizes the fact that he never "feared any" and that he is "vanquished by *famine*, not by *valour*" (my emphasis) (4.9.71-72). His persistent resistance tells us that though the authority can exercise power to oppress, coerce, or even suppress popular revolts, yet the laboring class' awareness of class oppression lives on and their desire for equality won't easily die out despite the fact that the dominating class will use any means to oppress them. Though Cade may be defeated by Iden on the stage, his "unconquered soul" will inspire other political revolutionists to come.⁵

⁴ In Hall, Iden takes Cade's dead body to London, rather than flinging it on a dunghill. However, if we know the cultural meaning of what flinging to a dunghill meant in Shakespeare's time, we can readily realize the significance of this bodily disrespect toward Cade's corpse. As Linda Woodbridge points out in *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renaissance Literature*, in the severe winter time in London, "[t]he most desperate poor sometimes slept on dunghills because recently piled dunghill was warm" (187). Iden's disposal of Cade's dead body into a dunghill thus debases the rebel leader, Cade, into an undeserving poor, a trespassing vagrant, who he can ruthlessly exercise his authority and hereby erases the power struggle that Cade and his fellow insurrectionists jeopardize their lives to fight for. See Fitter, "'Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation': Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in 2 *Henry VI*," footnote 85, and Hall 224.

⁵ Here, I would like to alert my readers to the fact that literary critics do have divided opinions about Shakespeare's political radicalism as well as the question of whether he has sympathies with his peasant rebels. Richard Helgerson in *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of*

Indeed, Tudor social historians endorse Cade's sacrifice in their studies of Tudor agrarian rebellions. M. L. Bush in *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* argues that Robert Kett's 1549 Norfolk rebellion was in a sense, *anti-aristocratic* because the rebels possessed "a bristling hostility and a deep suspicion of the aristocratic order for its irresponsible exploitation, or its failure to stop the exploitation of the people by the raising of rents, enclosing and imparking, and the keeping of too many rabbits, doves, sheep, bullocks and deer" (Bush 85-86). Stephen Land's study of the 1549 Norfolk rebellion prisoner's writing reveals that "the rising manifested itself primarily as a war between peasant farmers and small tradesmen on the one hand and landowners, lawyers, and merchants on the other, a war between classes" (49).

Buchanan Sharp's research into Tudor-Stuart agrarian rebellions reveals that England had a long tradition of anti-aristocratic and anti-gentry popular rebellions. These rebellions were the result of social and economic grievances that the laboring poor redressed for long. His research shows that public opinions of the common folks (anonymous libels, seditious utterances reported from the alehouses, and the few surviving examinations of the rioters) disclosed a deep resentment, approaching class hatred, toward people possessing land, power, wealth, and social standing that were denied to them (7; 36; 264). Though there is no direct evidence as to whether Shakespeare wrote Jack Cade's rebellion scenes in direct response to other mid- to late- Tudor agrarian rebellions, such as Robert Kett's Norfolk rebellion of 1549, Hackett's rebellion in 1591, and the Oxfordshire Rising in 1596, yet since these riots aroused national sensation, it was likely Shakespeare knew about them and used his stage as a medium to perform these class wars as well as to articulate his opinions.⁶

England argues that Shakespeare chose to erase, alienate, or even demonize popular ideology and popular voices in his history plays (214). James Holstun in "Damned Commotion: Riot and Rebellion in Shakespeare's Histories" contends that "Shakespeare never portrays plebeian revolt without considerable sympathies, though his sympathies tend to be oblique, interspersed with antipathies, fragmented, laying arthwart the main plot lines" (199). Chris Fitter in "'Your captain is brave and vows reformation': Jack Cade, the Hacket Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*" holds the opinion that Shakespeare intends to create a "surprisingly substantial sympathy for underclass sufferings and popular rebellion" (175). I tend to agree with Fitter and his more radical reading of Shakespeare's political stance on the agrarian class struggle in this play.

⁶ Literary critics, such as Annabel Patterson and Chris Fitter, did try to locate evidence between Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI* and these mid- and late- Tudor riots. I find their articles very useful to my understanding of the play, but am not totally convinced that Shakespeare intended to use his play to refer to any specific agrarian rebellions.

What I find fascinating in Jack Cade's class war in the garden is the fluidity as well as interchangeability between space and class. In *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, anthropologist Mary Douglas contends that the anxiety over border and class violation should be associated with the different images of the body parts as well as Renaissance pollution theories. The fear that vagrants may transport contagious germs and diseases to the healthy, and the deliberate segregation of them illustrate the English Renaissance aristocracy's fear of the threatened erosion of social boundaries. The fear of upward mobility from the lower class and the fear of national invasion by foreigners (the Spanish Armada, foreign artisans in London) are two sides of one coin. Jack Cade's transgression into Iden's urban garden instantiates the kind of fear because Cade not only trespasses the border, the physical boundary of the garden, but also threatens the class and social boundary as symbolized by Iden's garden state. The anxiety over border and class violation propels Iden to impose the most severe punishment upon Cade's body. The disposal of his corpse on the dunghill demonstrates Iden's determination to eradicate all possible sources of contamination, as represented by his debasing Cade as a pollutant-and-germ-transporting vagrant.

In *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, Michel Foucault argues that starting from the late sixteenth century, England built houses of correction to accommodate the unemployed, the poor, the insane, prisoners, and even vagabonds. These houses of confinement were not medical establishments to provide necessary medical attention to the insane; rather, they served as a semi-judicial and administrative structure to help exercise the sovereign's absolute power over the inhabitants. In comparison with medieval Englishmen's attitude of demonstrating Christian neighborliness to the poor, these institutions represented the Renaissance Englishmen's new attitude to poverty and their reactions to the economic crisis in their period. The realignment of the unemployed, the insane, and the vagrant within the confined social space represented the sovereign's desire to control as well as categorize people for the purpose of extracting their labor to increase economic productivity of the nation state (42-46). Iden's confinement within his enclosed urban garden exhibits another side of this social segregation. The fear that vagrants might destabilize the social order caused the upper classes to erect barriers against them. It is this same fear that propels Iden to confine himself within his garden. His garden becomes an emblematic place where notions of class and space merge and collide. Indeed, they are impossible to separate, just as the complex web of class antagonisms in this play cannot be disentangled.

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Spaces of Identity is a stimulating account of the complex and contradictory nature of contemporary cultural identities, and important reading for all concerned with the threads from which the pattern of our contemporary identities are being woven. David Morley is Reader in Communication Studies at Goldsmiths's College, London. Kevin Robins is Reader in Cultural Geography and a Researcher at the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies, University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Spaces of identity. Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries. David Morley and Kevin Robins. Lond Boundary 2, often stylized boundary 2, is a quarterly peer-reviewed academic journal of postmodern theory, literature, and culture. Established in 1972 by William V. Spanos and Robert Kroetsch (Binghamton University), under the title boundary 2, a journal of postmodern literature, the journal moved to Duke University Press in the late 1980s and is now edited by Paul A. Bovens (University of Pittsburgh).