



Holbein, "The Ambassadors" (National Gallery, London).

RENAISSANCE
SELF-FASHIONING

From More to Shakespeare

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With a new Preface

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Introduction

My subject is *self-fashioning* from More to Shakespeare; my starting point is quite simply that in sixteenth-century England there were both selves and a sense that they could be fashioned. Of course, there is some absurdity in so bald a pronouncement of the obvious: after all, there are always selves—a sense of personal order, a characteristic mode of address to the world, a structure of bounded desires—and always some elements of deliberate shaping in the formation and expression of identity. One need only think of Chaucer's extraordinarily subtle and wry manipulations of *persona* to grasp that what I propose to examine does not suddenly spring up from nowhere when 1499 becomes 1500. Moreover, there is considerable empirical evidence that there may well have been less *autonomy* in self-fashioning in the sixteenth century than before, that family, state, and religious institutions impose a more rigid and far-reaching discipline upon their middle-class and aristocratic subjects. Autonomy is an issue but not the sole or even the central issue: the power to impose a shape upon oneself is an aspect of the more general power to control identity—that of others at least as often as one's own.

What is central is the perception—as old in academic writing as Burckhardt and Michelet—that there is in the early modern period a change in the intellectual, social, psychological, and aesthetic structures that govern the generation of identities. This change is difficult to characterize in our usual ways because it is not only complex but resolutely dialectical. If we say that there is a new stress on the executive power of the will, we must say that there is the most sustained and relentless assault upon the will; if we say

that there is a new social mobility, we must say that there is a new assertion of power by both family and state to determine all movement within the society; if we say that there is a heightened awareness of the existence of alternative modes of social, theological, and psychological organization, we must say that there is a new dedication to the imposition of control upon those modes and ultimately to the destruction of alternatives.

Perhaps the simplest observation we can make is that in the sixteenth century there appears to be an increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process. Such self-consciousness had been widespread among the elite in the classical world, but Christianity brought a growing suspicion of man's power to shape identity: "Hands off yourself," Augustine declared. "Try to build up yourself, and you build a ruin."¹ This view was not the only one available in succeeding centuries, but it was influential, and a powerful alternative began to be fully articulated only in the early modern period. When in 1589 Spenser writes that the general intention and meaning that he has "fashioned" in *The Faerie Queene* is "to fashion a gentleman," or when he has his knight Calidore declare that "in each mans self . . . / It is, to fashion his owne lyfes estate," or when he tells his beloved in one of the *Amoretti*, "You frame my thoughts, and fashion me within,"² he is drawing upon the special connotations for his period of the verb *fashion*, a word that does not occur at all in Chaucer's poetry. As a term for the action or process of making, for particular features or appearance, for a distinct style or pattern, the word had been long in use, but it is in the sixteenth century that *fashion* seems to come into wide currency as a way of designating the forming of a self. This forming may be understood quite literally as the imposition upon a person of physical form—"Did not one fashion us in the womb?" Job asks in the King James Bible,³ while, following the frequent injunctions to "fashion" children, midwives in the period attempted to mold the skulls of the newborn into the proper shape.⁴ But, more significantly for our purposes, fashioning may suggest the achievement of a less tangible shape: a distinctive personality, a characteristic address to the world, a consistent mode of perceiving and behaving. As we might expect, the recurrent model for this latter fashioning is Christ. Those whom God in his foreknowledge has called, Tyndale translates the epistle to the Romans, he "fashioned unto the shape of his son" (8:29), and thus the true Christian, Tyndale writes in the *Obedience*, "feeleth . . . him self . . . altered and fashioned like unto Christ." "We are exhorted,"

Archbishop Sandys remarks in a sermon, "to fashion ourselves according to that similitude and likeness which is in him," while in the 1557 Geneva translation of the New Testament we read that Christ "was disfigured to fashion us, he died for our life." If Christ is the ultimate model, he is not even in the New Testament the only one: "In all things," Paul tells the Corinthians, in Tyndale's translation, "I fashioned my self to all men to save at the least way some" (1 Cor. 9:22). This principle of adaptation is obviously not limited to the propagation of the Gospel: in Richard Taverner's *Garden of Wisdom* (1539), for example, we are told that whoever desires to be conversant with public affairs, "must . . . fashion himself to the manners of men,"⁵ and this counsel is tirelessly reiterated.

Thus separated from the imitation of Christ—a separation that can, as we shall see, give rise to considerable anxiety—self-fashioning acquires a new range of meanings: it describes the practice of parents and teachers; it is linked to manners or demeanor, particularly that of the elite; it may suggest hypocrisy or deception, an adherence to mere outward ceremony; it suggests representation of one's nature or intention in speech or actions. And with representation we return to literature, or rather we may grasp that self-fashioning derives its interest precisely from the fact that it functions without regard for a sharp distinction between literature and social life. It invariably crosses the boundaries between the creation of literary characters, the shaping of one's own identity, the experience of being molded by forces outside one's control, the attempt to fashion other selves. Such boundaries may, to be sure, be strictly observed in criticism, just as we may distinguish between literary and behavioral styles, but in doing so we pay a high price, for we begin to lose a sense of the complex interactions of meaning in a given culture. We wall off literary symbolism from the symbolic structures operative elsewhere, as if art alone were a human creation, as if humans themselves were not, in Clifford Geertz's phrase, cultural artifacts.⁶

"There is no such thing as a human nature independent of culture," Geertz writes, meaning by culture not primarily "complexes of concrete behavior patterns—customs, usages, traditions, habit clusters"—but rather "a set of control mechanisms—plans, recipes, rules, instructions . . .—for the governing of behavior."⁷ Self-fashioning is in effect the Renaissance version of these control mechanisms, the cultural system of meanings that creates specific individuals by governing the passage from abstract potential to

concrete historical embodiment. Literature functions within this system in three interlocking ways: as a manifestation of the concrete behavior of its particular author, as itself the expression of the codes by which behavior is shaped, and as a reflection upon those codes. The interpretive practice that I have attempted to exemplify in the essays that follow must concern itself with all three of these functions. If interpretation limits itself to the behavior of the author, it becomes literary biography (in either a conventionally historical or psychoanalytic mode) and risks losing a sense of the larger networks of meaning in which both the author and his works participate. If, alternatively, literature is viewed exclusively as the expression of social rules and instructions, it risks being absorbed entirely into an ideological superstructure. Marx himself vigorously resisted this functional absorption of art, and subsequent Marxist aesthetics, for all its power and sophistication, has never satisfactorily resolved the theoretical problems raised in the *Grundrisse* and elsewhere.⁸ Finally, if literature is seen only as a detached reflection upon the prevailing behavioral codes, a view from a safe distance, we drastically diminish our grasp of art's concrete functions in relation to individuals and to institutions, both of which shrink into an obligatory "historical background" that adds little to our understanding. We drift back toward a conception of art as addressed to a timeless, cultureless, universal human essence or, alternatively as a self-regarding, autonomous, closed system—in either case, art as opposed to social life. Self-fashioning then becomes a subject only for sociology, literature for literary criticism.

I have attempted instead to practice a more cultural or anthropological criticism—if by "anthropological" here we think of interpretive studies of culture by Geertz, James Boon, Mary Douglas, Jean Duvignaud, Paul Rabinow, Victor Turner, and others.⁹ These figures do not enlist themselves under a single banner, still less do they share a single scientific method, but they have in common the conviction that men are born "unfinished animals," that the facts of life are less artless than they look, that both particular cultures and the observers of these cultures are inevitably drawn to a metaphorical grasp of reality, that anthropological interpretation must address itself less to the mechanics of customs and institutions than to the interpretive constructions the members of a society apply to their experiences. A literary criticism that has affinities to this practice must be conscious of its own status as interpretation and intent upon understanding literature as a part of the system of signs that constitutes a given culture; its proper goal, however difficult to realize, is a

poetics of culture. Such an approach is necessarily a balancing act—correcting each of the functional perspectives I sketched in the preceding paragraph against the others—and necessarily impure: its central concerns prevent it from permanently sealing off one type of discourse from another or decisively separating works of art from the minds and lives of their creators and their audiences. I remain concerned, to be sure, with the implications of artistic representation as a distinct human activity—Shakespeare's depiction in *Othello* of his hero's self-construction and destruction is not simply identical to those patterns of self-fashioning and self-cancellation that I explore in the careers of several of my authors—but the way to explore these implications lies neither in denying any relation between the play and social life nor in affirming that the latter is the "thing itself," free from interpretation. Social actions are themselves always embedded in systems of public signification, always grasped, even by their makers, in acts of interpretation, while the words that constitute the works of literature that we discuss here are by their very nature the manifest assurance of a similar embeddedness. Language, like other sign systems, is a collective construction; our interpretive task must be to grasp more sensitively the consequences of this fact by investigating both the social presence to the world of the literary text and the social presence of the world in the literary text. The literary text remains the central object of my attention in this study of self-fashioning in part because, as I hope these chapters will demonstrate, great art is an extraordinarily sensitive register of the complex struggles and harmonies of culture and in part because, by inclination and training, whatever interpretive powers I possess are released by the resonances of literature. I should add that if cultural poetics is conscious of its status as interpretation, this consciousness must extend to an acceptance of the impossibility of fully reconstructing and reentering the culture of the sixteenth century, of leaving behind one's own situation: it is everywhere evident in this book that the questions I ask of my material and indeed the very nature of this material are shaped by the questions I ask of myself.

I do not shrink from these impurities—they are the price and perhaps among the virtues of this approach—but I have tried to compensate for the indeterminacy and incompleteness they generate by constantly returning to particular lives and particular situations, to the material necessities and social pressures that men and women daily confronted, and to a small number of resonant texts. Each of these texts is viewed as the focal point for converging lines of force in sixteenth-century culture; their

significance for us is not that we may see *through* them to underlying and prior historical principles but rather that we may interpret the interplay of their symbolic structures with those perceivable in the careers of their authors and in the larger social world as constituting a single, complex process of self-fashioning and, through this interpretation, come closer to understanding how literary and social identities were formed in this culture. That is, we are able to achieve a concrete apprehension of the consequences for human expression—for the "I"—of a specific form of power, power at once localized in particular institutions—the court, the church, the colonial administration, the patriarchal family—and diffused in ideological structures of meaning, characteristic modes of expression, recurrent narrative patterns.

Inevitably, the resonance and centrality we find in our small group of texts and their authors is our invention and the similar, cumulative inventions of others. It is we who enlist them in a kind of historical drama, and we need such a drama in part because compulsive readers of literature tend to see the world through literary models and in part because our own lives—quite apart from professional deformation—are saturated with experience artfully shaped. If we constantly use devices of selection and shaping in accounting for our lives, if we insist upon the importance of certain "turning points" and "crises" or, in Freud's famous modern instance, seize upon the plot of a Sophoclean tragedy to characterize our shared "family romance," then it is not surprising that we engage in a similar narrative selection when we reflect upon our shared historical origins. In attempting to glimpse the formation of identity in the English Renaissance, we cannot rest content with statistical tables, nor are we patient enough to tell over a thousand stories, each with its slight variants. The problem is not only lack of patience but a sense of hopelessness: after a thousand, there would be another thousand, then another, and it is not at all clear that we would be closer to the understanding we seek. So from the thousands, we seize upon a handful of arresting figures who seem to contain within themselves much of what we need, who both reward intense, individual attention and promise access to larger cultural patterns.

That they do so is not, I think, entirely our own critical invention: such at least is one of the enabling presumptions of this book. We respond to a quality, even a willed or partially willed quality, in the figures themselves, who are, we assume by analogy to ourselves, engaged in their own acts of selection and shaping and who seem to drive themselves toward the most sensitive regions of their culture, to express and even, by design, to embody

its dominant satisfactions and anxieties. Among artists the will to be the culture's voice—to create the abstract and brief chronicles of the time—is a commonplace, but the same will may extend beyond art. Or rather, for the early sixteenth century, art does not pretend to autonomy; the written word is self-consciously embedded in specific communities, life situations, structures of power. We do not have direct access to these figures or their shared culture, but the operative condition of all human understanding—of the speech of our contemporaries as well as of the writings of the dead—is that we have indirect access or at least that we experience our constructions as the lived equivalent of such access.

We should note in the circumstances of the sixteenth-century figures on whom this study focuses a common factor that may help to explain their sensitivity as writers to the construction of identity: they all embody, in one form or another, a profound mobility. In most of the cases, this mobility is social and economic: More, the son of a reasonably successful London lawyer, becomes a knight, Speaker of the House of Commons, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Steward of Cambridge University, and finally Lord Chancellor of England, the confidant of Henry VIII; Spenser, the son of a modest free journeyman of the Merchant Taylors Company, becomes a substantial colonial landowner described in royal documents as "a gentleman dwelling in the county of Cork";¹⁰ Marlowe, the son of a shoemaker and parish clerk of Saint Mary's, Canterbury, receives degrees from Cambridge University—a more modest ascent, to be sure, but an ascent nevertheless; Shakespeare, the son of a prosperous glover, is able by the close of his career to acquire, on his father's behalf, a coat of arms and to buy the second largest house in Stratford. All of these talented middle-class men moved out of a narrowly circumscribed social sphere and into a realm that brought them in close contact with the powerful and the great. All were in a position as well, we should add, to know with some intimacy those with no power, status, or education at all. With Tyndale, we have to do not with upward mobility, in the conventional sociological sense, but rather with a highly charged geographical and ideological mobility, a passage from Catholic priest to Protestant, from the Gloucestershire of his successful yeoman farmer family to London and then to Continental exile, from obscurity to the dangerous fame of a leading heretic. Finally, with Wyatt, whose family had risen in status and wealth only in the preceding generation, we have the restless mobility—France, Italy, Spain, Flanders—of the diplomat.

The six writers I consider here then are all displaced in

significant ways from a stable, inherited social world, and they all manifest in powerful and influential form aspects of Renaissance self-fashioning. But the aspects are by no means the same. Indeed my organization in this book depends upon the perception of two radical antitheses, each of which gives way to a complex third term in which the opposition is reiterated and transformed: the conflict between More and Tyndale is reconceived in the figure of Wyatt, that between Spenser and Marlowe in the figure of Shakespeare. Wyatt does not raise the opposition of More and Tyndale to a higher level, though his self-fashioning is profoundly affected by the consequences of that opposition; Shakespeare does not resolve the aesthetic and moral conflict inherent in the works of Spenser and Marlowe, though his theater is enigmatically engaged in both positions. Rather Wyatt and Shakespeare express in literary works more powerful than any produced by their contemporaries the historical pressure of an unresolved and continuing conflict. Moreover, the issues raised at the theological level in the works of More and Tyndale are recapitulated at the secular level in the works of Spenser and Marlowe, while Shakespeare explores in *Othello* and elsewhere the male sexual anxieties—the fear of betrayal, the suspension and release of aggression, the intimations of complicity in one's own torment—voiced in Wyatt's lyrics.

We may posit a direction enacted by these figures in relation to power: for the first triad, a shift from the Church to the Book to the absolutist state; for the second triad, a shift from celebration to rebellion to subversive submission. Similarly, we may posit a direction enacted by the works of literature in relation to society: a shift from absorption by community, religious faith, or diplomacy toward the establishment of literary creation as a profession in its own right. But we must recognize that such approximate and schematic chartings are of limited value. The closer we approach the figures and their works, the less they appear as convenient counters in a grand historical scheme. A series of shifting, unstable pressures is met with a wide range of discursive and behavioral responses, inventions, and counterpressures.

There is no such thing as a single "history of the self" in the sixteenth century, except as the product of our need to reduce the intricacies of complex and creative beings to safe and controllable order. This book will not advance any comprehensive "explanation" of English Renaissance self-fashioning; each of the chapters is intended to stand alone as an exploration whose contours are shaped by our grasp of the specific situation of the author or text. We may, however, conclude by noting a set of governing con-

ditions common to most instances of self-fashioning—whether of the authors themselves or of their characters—examined here:

1. None of the figures inherits a title, an ancient family tradition or hierarchical status that might have rooted personal identity in the identity of a clan or caste. With the partial exception of Wyatt, all of these writers are middle-class.

2. Self-fashioning for such figures involves submission to an absolute power or authority situated at least partially outside the self—God, a sacred book, an institution such as church, court, colonial or military administration. Marlowe is an exception, but his consuming hostility to hierarchical authority has, as we shall see, some of the force of submission.

3. Self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange, or hostile. This threatening Other—heretic, savage, witch, adulteress, traitor, Antichrist—must be discovered or invented in order to be attacked and destroyed.

4. The alien is perceived by the authority either as that which is unformed or chaotic (the absence of order) or that which is false or negative (the demonic parody of order). Since accounts of the former tend inevitably to organize and thematize it, the chaotic constantly slides into the demonic, and consequently the alien is always constructed as a distorted image of the authority.

5. One man's authority is another man's alien.

6. When one authority or alien is destroyed, another takes its place.

7. There is always more than one authority and more than one alien in existence at a given time.

8. If both the authority and the alien are located outside the self, they are at the same time experienced as inward necessities, so that both submission and destruction are always already internalized.

9. Self-fashioning is always, though not exclusively, in language.

10. The power generated to attack the alien in the name of the authority is produced in excess and threatens the authority it sets out to defend. Hence self-fashioning always involves some experience of threat, some effacement or undermining, some loss of self.

To sum up these observations, before we turn to the rich lives and texts that exemplify and complicate them, we may say that self-fashioning occurs at the point of encounter between an authority and an alien, that what is produced in this encounter partakes of both the authority and the alien that is marked for attack, and hence that any achieved identity always contains within itself the signs of its own subversion or loss.

distinctions—it matters a great deal whether Othello or Iago, the Lucayans or the Spaniards prevail—only to suggest the boundaries that define the possibility of any improvisational contact, even contact characterized by hidden malice.

I would not want to argue, in any event, that Shakespeare's relation to his culture is defined by hidden malice. Such a case can no doubt be made for many of the plays—stranger things have been said—but it will sound forced and unconvincing, just as the case for Shakespeare as an unwavering, unquestioning apologist for Tudor ideology sounds forced and unconvincing. The solution here is not, I suggest, that the truth lies somewhere in between. Rather the truth itself is radically unstable and yet constantly stabilized, as unstable as those male authorities that affirm themselves only to be undermined by subversive women and then to be reconstituted in a different guise. If any reductive generalization about Shakespeare's relation to his culture seems dubious, it is because his plays offer no single timeless affirmation or denial of legitimate authority and no central, unwavering authorial presence. Shakespeare's language and themes are caught up, like the medium itself, in unsettling repetitions, committed to the shifting voices and audiences, with their shifting aesthetic assumptions and historical imperatives, that govern a living theater.

Criticism can legitimately show—as I hope my discussion of *Othello* does—that Shakespeare relentlessly explores the relations of power in a given culture. That more than exploration is involved is much harder to demonstrate convincingly. If there are intimations in Shakespeare of a release from the complex narrative orders in which everyone is inscribed, these intimations do not arise from bristling resistance or strident denunciation—the mood of a Jaques or Timon. They arise paradoxically from a peculiarly intense *submission* whose downright violence undermines everything it was meant to shore up, the submission depicted not in Othello or Iago but in Desdemona. As both the play and its culture suggest, the arousal of intense, purposeless pleasure is only superficially a confirmation of existing values, established selves.⁷⁰ In Shakespeare's narrative art, liberation from the massive power structures that determine social and psychic reality is glimpsed in an *excessive* aesthetic delight, an erotic embrace of those very structures—the embrace of a Desdemona whose love is more deeply unsettling than even a Iago's empathy.

Epilogue

A few years ago, at the start of a plane flight from Baltimore to Boston, I settled down next to a middle-aged man who was staring pensively out of the window. There was no assigned seating, and I had chosen this neighbor as the least likely to disturb me, since I wanted to finish rereading Geertz's *Interpretation of Cultures*, which I was due to teach on my return to Berkeley the following week. But no sooner had I fastened my seat belt and turned my mind to Balinese cock-fighting than the man suddenly began to speak to me. He was traveling to Boston, he said, to visit his grown son who was in the hospital. A disease had, among other consequences, impaired the son's speech, so that he could only mouth words soundlessly; still more seriously, as a result of the illness, he had lost his will to live. The father was going, he told me, to try to restore that will, but he was troubled by the thought that he would be incapable of understanding the son's attempts at speech. He had therefore a favor to ask me: would I mime a few sentences so that he could practice reading my lips? Would I say, soundlessly, "I want to die. I want to die"?

Taken aback, I began to form the words, with the man staring intently at my mouth: "I want to..." But I was incapable of finishing the sentence. "Couldn't I say, 'I want to live'?" Or better still (since the seat belt sign had by this time flashed off), he might go into the bathroom, I suggested lamely, and practice on himself in front of a mirror. "It's not the same," the man replied in a shaky voice, then turned back to the window. "I'm sorry," I said, and we sat in silence for the rest of the flight.

I could not do what the man had asked in part because I was afraid that he was, quite simply, a maniac and that once I had expressed the will to die, he would draw a hidden knife and stab me to death or, alternatively, activate some device secreted on board the plane that would blow us all to pieces (it's not for nothing that I have been living in California for the past ten years).

But if paranoia tinged my whole response, there were reasons for my resistance more complex than the fear of physical attack. I felt superstitiously that if I mimed the man's terrible sentence, it would have the force, as it were, of a legal sentence, that the words would stick like a burr upon me. And beyond superstition, I was aware, in a manner more forceful than anything my academic research had brought home to me, of the extent to which my identity and the words I utter coincide, the extent to which I want to form my own sentences or to choose for myself those moments in which I will recite someone else's. To be asked, even by an isolated, needy individual to perform lines that were not my own, that violated my sense of my own desires, was intolerable.

When I first conceived this book several years ago, I intended to explore the ways in which major English writers of the sixteenth century created their own performances, to analyze the choices they made in representing themselves and in fashioning characters, to understand the role of human autonomy in the construction of identity. It seemed to me the very hallmark of the Renaissance that middle-class and aristocratic males began to feel that they possessed such shaping power over their lives, and I saw this power and the freedom it implied as an important element in my own sense of myself. But as my work progressed, I perceived that fashioning oneself and being fashioned by cultural institutions—family, religion, state—were inseparably intertwined. In all my texts and documents, there were, so far as I could tell, no moments of pure, unfettered subjectivity; indeed, the human subject itself began to seem remarkably unfree, the ideological product of the relations of power in a particular society. Whenever I focused sharply upon a moment of apparently autonomous self-fashioning, I found not an epiphany of identity freely chosen but a cultural artifact. If there remained traces of free choice, the choice was among possibilities whose range was strictly delineated by the social and ideological system in force.

The book I have written reflects these perceptions, but I trust that it also reflects, though in a manner more tentative, more ironic than I had originally intended, my initial impulse. For all of the sixteenth-century Englishmen I have written about here do in

fact cling to the human subject and to self-fashioning, even in suggesting the absorption or corruption or loss of the self. How could they do otherwise? What was—or, for that matter, what is—the alternative? For the Renaissance figures we have considered understand that in our culture to abandon self-fashioning is to abandon the craving for freedom, and to let go of one's stubborn hold upon selfhood, even selfhood conceived as a fiction, is to die. As for myself, I have related this brief story of my encounter with the distraught father on the plane because I want to bear witness at the close to my overwhelming need to sustain the illusion that I am the principal maker of my own identity.

Notes

Introduction

1. Augustine, sermon 169, quoted in Peter Brown, *Religion and Society in the Age of Saint Augustine* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 30.
2. *Faerie Queene*, "A Letter of the Authōrs Expounding His Whole Intention in the Course of this Worke"; *Faerie Queene* 6.9.31; Amoretti 8. Citations of Spenser's poetry are to *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, ed. Edwin Greenlaw et al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1932-57).
3. Job 31:15. The OED, from which many of the following examples are drawn, cites the late sixteenth-century translation of La Primaudaye's *French Academy*: "The seede . . . receiveth not fashion presently upon the conception, but remaineth for a time without any figure" (sb 2b). There is an illuminating discussion of self-fashioning by Thomas Greene, "The Flexibility of the Self in Renaissance Literature," in *The Disciplines of Criticism*, ed. Peter Demetz, Thomas Greene, and Lowry Nelson, Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 241-64. Greene's starting point is the assertion in Pico that man may choose to fashion (*effingere*) himself in whatever shape he prefers.
4. See David Hunt, *Parents and Children in History: The Psychology of Family Life in Early Modern France* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), p. 132. The OED cites Richard Mulcaster's *Positions*: "If the infirmity in fashion be casual . . . , exercise . . . will make that straight which was crooked" (sb 2a).
5. Richard Taverner, *Garden of Wisdom* (London: 1539), p. Bviii^v. I owe this reference to Richard Yanowitz, "Tudor Attitudes Toward the Power of Language" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1978).
6. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 51.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 49.

8. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York: Vintage, 1973), pp. 110-11.

9. See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures and Islam Observed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); James Boon, *From Symbolism to Structuralism: Levi-Strauss in a Literary Tradition* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972) and *The Anthropological Romance of Bali 1597-1972: Dynamic Perspectives in Marriage and Caste, Politics and Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966) and *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon, 1970); Jean Duvignaud, *Change at Shebika: Report from a North African Village*, trans. Frances Frenaye (New York: Pantheon, 1970); Paul Rabinow, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974) and *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1969).

10. Quoted in E. de Selincourt's introduction to *Spenser: Poetical Works*, ed. J. C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), p. xxxviii.

Chapter One

1. *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, ed. Louis L. Martz and Frank Manley, *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* 12 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 213. Hereafter cited as *Complete Works*.
2. *The History of King Richard III*, ed. R. S. Sylvester, *Complete Works* 3 (1963), p. 80.
3. *The Prince*, trans. Luigi Ricci, rev. E. R. P. Vincent (New York: Modern Library, 1950), pp. 64-65. Machiavelli's explanation, it should be noted, has its own elusiveness: on the one hand, there is a cold observation of something akin to a law of nature—the fox always eats the hens; on the other hand, there is smoldering outrage at the stupidity, the willfulness, of the victims.
4. In William Roper, *The Life of Sir Thomas More*, ed. Richard S. Sylvester and Davis P. Harding (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 239. I have been deeply influenced throughout by Sylvester's seminal work; see especially, "A Part of His Own: Thomas More's Literary Personality in His Early Works," *Moreana* 15 (1967), pp. 29-42. See also David Bleich's psychoanalytic attempt to correlate More's writing "with particular infantile modalities" ("More's Utopia: Confessional Modes," *American Imago* 28 [1971], pp. 24-52).
5. The classic account of this phenomenon is Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London: E. Arnold, 1924).
6. On the persistence of these hopes, see Frances A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Warburg Institute, 1947), pp. 199-235; Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1977), pp. 176-77.
7. Mary F. S. Hervey, *Holbein's "Ambassadors"* (London: George Bell &