

# Pastoral power and Theatricality: Early Modern Governmentality in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*

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*Measure for Measure* is one of the rare Shakespearean comedies that enable us to meditate on and discuss the idea of government in early modern England. From the opening scene, the Jacobean problem play features a conspicuous invocation of the “science” of government between the Duke Vincentio and his elderly courtier, Escalus.<sup>1</sup> The Duke first makes an enthusiastic compliment to his elderly subject for his immaculate understanding of “the nature of our people, / Our city’s institutions, and the terms / For common justice” (1.1.10-12). According to the Duke, Escalus has shown himself “pregnant” in the “art and practice” (1.1.12-13) of government. In a few minutes later, however, he makes a surprising move in delegating his monarchical power to, instead of Escalus, Angelo who is appointed to govern the dukedom during his absence. This distinctive

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<sup>1</sup> All references to *Measure for Measure* are based upon the Oxford edition, edited by N. W. Bawcutt (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991)

exposition, as do many opening scenes in Shakespeare's plays, sets the tone for the play by predicting the issues of science and practice of government as the major theme of *Measure for Measure*.

The word "government" appears only three times throughout the play, while the idea of governing and ruling, as will be explained in the ensuing pages, serves as the predominant motif of actions in this "dark play."<sup>2</sup> With the opening scene in mind, I am going to look into how the play configures or re-configures the idea of government in legal, ethical, and religious contexts. What are represented in the name of law, justice, and truth throughout the play, I would suggest, help us locate early modern governmentality which at once is grafted onto and veers off from the medieval themes of justice and mercy.<sup>3</sup> While drawing upon Debora Kuller Shuger's contribution to our understanding of political theologies in post-Reformation England, I will attempt to trace how Shakespeare's rendition of political delegation and religious confession lends itself to a formative moment of the early modern politico-religious regime. In so doing, this essay aims to explain in what sense Shakespeare's problem play is about the art of government, in both early modern senses of statecraft and governing one's self and thereby show how the art of government becomes the nodal point of early modern subjectivity. The problem comedy is expected to enable us to grasp the early modern idea of government in a somewhat different way from what we see in Shakespeare's tragedies and histories which, more often than not, deal directly with political struggles and monarchical governance.

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<sup>2</sup> All three usages of the word are related to government as a political and legal institution. In addition to the usage of the opening scene, Isabella employs the word in crying out to the disguised Duke about Angelo's tyrannous exercise of power: "oh, how much is the good Duke deceived in Angelo! If ever he return and I can speak to him, I will open my lips in vain or discover his government" (3.1.195-97). The third example is that of Provost who uses the word while explaining how Barnardine's guilt has been confirmed under Angelo's government (4.2.136).

<sup>3</sup> For a more theoretical discussion of early modern governmentality, see Kim.

## DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AND ITS LIABILITIES

The opening scene ends up with a royal delegation of authority, a practice which was indispensable in the development of early modern English nation-state since the installment of the Privy Chamber during Henry VIII. Despite his initial compliment to Escalus on the knowledge of government, the Duke decides oddly to give Angelo the full power either to exercise the law or even modify it:

We have with special soul  
 Elected him [Angelo] our absence to supply,  
 Lent him our terror, dressed him with our love  
 And given his deputation all the organs  
 Of our own power. (1.1.18-22)

Endowing Angelo with absolute power (“In our remove, be thou at full ourself”; 1.1.44), the Duke hopes that Angelo “may in th’ambush of [his] name strike home” (1.3.41). As “a man of stricture and firm abstinence” (1.3.12), Angelo is expected to carry the laws into the “hopeful execution … of [his] commissions” (1.1.60-61). The Duke is seemingly confident that Angelo is the “one that can my part in him advertise” (1.1.42), whose iron fists would root out disorderly behavior with “the needful bits and curbs to headstrong jades” (1.3.20). The Duke suggests to Angelo that a man’s virtues are validated only when used for the public good (1.1.30-32). In this address to mobilize Angelo’s agreement to serve in his absence, the Duke underscores the good subject’s duty to put his virtues to work and thus play the role assigned to him by society or rather by the monarch.<sup>4</sup>

This delegation is, from the beginning, presented both as a political ruse to solve the current problem and as a character test of Angelo (“Hence we

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<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the play in terms of role-playing and metadramatic impetus, see Sidney Homan 140-51.

shall see, / If power change purpose, what our seemers be"; 1.3.53-54). What lies in the Duke's endeavors is a dexterous mobilization of political subjection by at once separating and conflating private likings and public duties, as in the case of his speech to Angelo on the necessity of pursuing a virtuous life (1.1.27-43). This transfer of power to Angelo brings into question the issue of Vincentio's own government. This delegation of authority has been considered by many critics to be a deceptive way of thrusting upon Angelo the responsibility for what has occurred during the previous fourteen years and thus distancing the Duke himself from the awkward political situation. As Friar Thomas indicates, the Duke himself has the means to resolve the situation ("It rested in your grace / To unloose this tied-up justice when you pleased"; 1.3.31-32), but, instead, opts to shoulder the responsibility on a subject he knows has a faulty character. Not without hinting at his own share of responsibility in letting the statutes slip, the Duke still wants to avoid blame in the process of their restoration:

I do fear, too dreadful.  
Sith 'twas my fault to give the people scope,  
'Twould be my tyranny to strike and gall them  
For I bid them do. (1.3.34-37).

While seeking a possible exit from the predicaments caused by his own leniency, the Duke seems to make a precipitous getaway from the ducal responsibility with dubious reasons. He insists that he has "a purpose / More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends / Of burning youth" (1.3.4-6). By delegating his power to a hard-nosed deputy, the Duke could certainly minimize his own accountability and thereby come out untainted in the end by declaring himself a problem solver. The Duke's intent to see *incognito* if Angelo "dukes it well in his absence" (3.1.358) surely suggests a kind of Machiavellian tactic, in that he successfully conjures up a

rationale for exercising his art of government through a progressive rehabilitation of Angelo's tyrannical exercise of authority. So it is no wonder to hear Marcia Riefer blasting the Duke: "Far from having Vienna's best interests in mind as he claims ... the Duke is actually setting up Angelo for a fall while protecting himself ... and at the same time betraying the public as well, a public whom he admits he has effectively 'bid' to be promiscuous through his permissiveness" (160-61). Elizabeth Hanson goes further in suggesting that, "figured as a duplicate, the deputy must prove to be duplicitous, a representative who does not figure his own identity" (64-65).

The posture of the Duke as a hermit in withdrawal and contemplation, in this sense, tells no more about his personality than about his notion of government. Throughout the play the Duke seems to embrace the idea of government that associates the knowledge of one's self with the mastery of the realm. The Duke is as much concerned with justifying himself and controlling his image as he is with cleansing the city of sexual license. According to Escalus, the Duke is, or wants to be, "one that above all other strifes contended especially to know himself" (3.1.488-89), as well as "a gentleman of all temperance" (3.1.492). When the old courtier makes this statement to the disguised Duke without knowing the inquirer's true identity ("I pray you, sir, of what disposition was the Duke?"; 3.1.486-87), this episode comes as no surprise, considering the Duke's profound anxiety over the representation of himself in the eyes of the commoners. The Duke's attempt to oversee the workings of his deputy behind the scenes is ironically anchored on the power of early modern monarch that relies on his/her (in-)visibility. As Jonathan Goldberg suggests ("Power-in-absence is the central stance of absolutism necessary to maintain prerogatives and the secrets of state"; 235), the Duke's disguise shows how the royal excess of visibility and thus of invisibility is aligned with the inverted positions of the discoverer and the discovered.

The seemingly dexterous and manipulative deputation, however,

boomerangs to the extent that the Duke turns himself into a subject of his test and contest. His project to reform his wayward subjects, in its course, doubles back on an implicit test of his deputation and government. After all, Angelo turns out to be a symbolic double of Vincentio when he stands in for the absent duke/governor. As Marc Shell points out, "Vincentio, for whom Angelo is the sexual surrogate as well as the deputied political substitute, is, to all intents, the principal caitiff in *Measure for Measure*, the one whose conscious and unconscious intents Angelo acts out" (93). Angelo's government is already a liability of the Duke's administrative decision in choosing him over Escalus ("Old Escalus, / Though first in question, is thy secondary"; 1.1.46-47). Hence in the Duke's confident defense of Angelo against Isabella's passionate accusation, we discover a certain kind of irony: "Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made *an assay of her virtue*, to *practise his judgment* with the disposition of natures. ... I am confessor to Angelo" (3.1.164-9, emphasis added). We cannot but notice an interesting self-referentiality here in Vincentio's defense of Angelo, as much as in Duke-Lodowick's accusation of the dukedom in 5.1.299-323. In his examination of Angelo's "capacity to govern well, to discharge his responsibilities fairly and conscientiously" (Thatcher 34), the Duke makes his own practice of *dissimulation* impressed inevitably upon that of his own deputy. On trial here, therefore, are not only the virtue of the magistrate and his belief in invulnerability to temptation, but the Duke himself and his own government under the guise of delegation.

At first, Angelo lives up to the Duke's anticipation by handing out a rigid punishment of execution to Claudio. Against Isabella's appeal for mercy, Angelo defends himself by arguing that "it is the law, not I, condemn your brother" (2.2.81). Angelo's inflexible notion of government ("the state whereupon I studied"; 2.4.7) leads him to define justice literally: "What's open made to justice, / That justice seizes" (2.1.21-2). When

Angelo's sentence comes into conflict with Isabella's plea for a judicious interpretation of the law, what is challenged is Angelo's perception of his power as a deputy that resides in standing fast as "the voice of the recorded law" (2.4.61). But we know well that the royal deputy is given discretionary power and entitled "to *enforce or qualify the laws* / As to your[his] soul seems good" (1.1.66-67, emphasis added). The Deputy is supposed to uphold the law ("Mortality and mercy in Vienna / Live in thy tongue and heart"; 1.1.45-46), but not without discretionary power for, as the Duke declares, "Your scope is as mine own" (1.1.65). Once again the question may lie in how much discretion a deputy may exercise in standing for the sovereign power.

The subsequent events prove that Angelo is far short of the man whom everybody believes him to be. At first Angelo is said to be a Stoic guru: the Duke considers him as "a man of stricture and firm abstinence" (1.3.12), while the foul-mouthed Lucio calls Angelo "a motion generative that's infallible" (3.1.373). Against Isabella's appeal for mercy to mitigate Claudio's capital punishment, however, Angelo turns himself into the very thing he detests and has just punished in the name of justice. Once he asks Isabella a sexual favor in exchange for her brother's life ("Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite"; 2.4.162), he has to face the dissolution of that personal integrity that has up to now been seen as his strength. His sudden attraction to Isabella gives way to the reckless moment of capitulation: he loses the mastery of himself and defeats himself. Angelo's suppressed desire is at odds with his private principles as well as with his public duty as judge. While going through the conflict between his identity as an ascetic and the newly-found desire for Isabella, his mind oscillates between self-inculcation and self-exculpation. Angelo's dangerous mix-up of private desire and public duty undermines the binary opposition upon which he has built up his own identity. Angelo's confessional soliloquies bring to the surface "the homology of the confessional subject who discloses the 'natural

guiltiness' within his bosom and the hypocrite who conceals 'strong and swelling evil' under 'false seeming'" (Hanson 70).

The early exchanges between Angelo and Isabella, therefore, bring into perspective the issue of the limits and problems in delegating authority. The problem of delegation becomes more apparent in the case of Elbow, "the poor Duke's officer" (2.1.169), who, through his verbal confusion, unwittingly endorses the moral economy of Viennese sexual deviance. Elbow's confusion of "benefactors" with "malefactors" (2.1.49-51), for example, serves to blur the line between authority and deviance, the virtuous and the vicious, and benevolence and malevolence. The Duke's constable, who has been unfairly subjected to this duty for "seven year and a half," only complicates in his report already murky problems (2.1.40ff). In Harry Berger's terms, "the figure of Elbow thus dramatizes the way the Duke's complicity is inscribed in the flawed chain of command and deputation that implicates him in the very disorder from which he tries, by deputation, to distance himself" (357). This whole episode around Elbow thus underscores the current situation of how much the enforcement of law is distorted in Vienna. It is true that Provost and Escalus might be considered as the ideal agents of the law. But Escalus already proves himself ineffective when Angelo frustrates him on the issue of Claudio's sentence, whereas the honest Provost has to tip-toe in the gray area between being loyal and traitorous throughout the Duke's rescue scheme. When the Provost is praised for his "care and secrecy" by the Duke in the final scene, such an acclaim thus warrants Vincentio's apologetic defense of the Provost's violation: "Forgive him[Provost], Angelo, that brought you home / The head of Ragozine for Claudio's; / The offence pardons itself" (5.1.535-37).

In the failure of Angelo's government, therefore, Shakespeare establishes a close relationship between political government and the government of one's self. Angelo's perfidy obscures the distinction between

“a judge” and “a prisoner,” as is epitomized by Isabella’s invocation of the judge’s affinity with the criminal (2.2.69-70). Even Angelo himself acknowledges in his soliloquy, “Thieves for their robbery have authority / When judges steal themselves” (2.2.179-80). The case of Angelo proves that the corruption of authority is more detrimental to society than Claudio’s violation of the law because it strikes at the very heart of government. Angelo’s violation is at once ethical and politico-juridical, which later retroactively justifies the Duke’s testing of his own deputy.<sup>5</sup> Inasmuch as Angelo demonstrates that the government cannot always be just, since it is too easily exposed to individual whims, *Measure for Measure* presents, as a failed ideal of government, the medieval asceticism of saints that Angelo has allegedly pursued at the beginning of the play.

## ROYAL DISGUISE AND CONFESSION

Drawing upon the convention of the disguised monarch genre, *Measure for Measure* represents the practices of government as involving two complementary techniques of supervision and internalization.<sup>6</sup> Disguising himself in friar’s clothes enables the Duke to restore order in Vienna. He seems to be successful in employing Angelo as his deputy, while keeping his princely dignity and personal probity intact. In his furtive, voyeuristic scheme, the Duke succeeds in putting his subjects under microscopic observation, and thereby identifying and correcting deviant behaviors. Vincentio’s success in disciplining and educating his subjects, if any, is anchored on his (dis-)guise as a meddling friar that allows him “not only to observe but to shape events as well” (Freeburg 7). Leonard Tennenhouse argues that this folkloric convention of royal disguise helps the play

<sup>5</sup> For a critical survey of so-called “test” theory, see David Thatcher.

<sup>6</sup> For the convention of disguised monarch plays, see Ivo Kamps and Stephen Cohen.

“demonstrate the power inherent in the patriarchal principle itself” through its invocation of “a regressive and magical-mythic notion of monarchy” (159). The popular theatrical convention of the disguised monarch provides Shakespeare with an avenue to deal with the problems of “government” from a different perspective. The sanitized position of priest-confessor allows the Duke to author and authorize a series of deceptive plans, while keeping a moral distance from the corruption and degradation in Vienna. While placing himself at a safe distance from the turmoil of Vienna, the Duke attempts to establish his moral superiority and invisible power.

This distance indeed allows a sharp contrast between the world outside and the self within to be established and negotiated, inasmuch as the disguised Duke has not only a chance to hear confession but also to overhear the conversation between the brother and the sister.<sup>7</sup> The Duke-friar hears confessions from Juliet, Claudio, Mariana, mostly about secrets of sexual transactions, which sets in motion a subtle transformation of sexuality into an object of knowledge under Vincentio’s regime. Vincentio pledges to teach Juliet “how you shall arraign your conscience / And try your penitence” (2.3.21-22) and talks her into acknowledging her “most offenceful act” (2.3.26). His making her publicize what is inward to her confessor (however catechistic it may be) is an obverse of the public trials before the crowd, first by Angelo and later by the Duke. In the same vein, Vincentio leads Claudio to arrive at the resolution that he “most willingly humbles himself to the determination of death” (3.1.499-500). The repeated threats of death and reprieve are mobilized for the Duke to build up his superiority at the expense of his subjects’ fear and anxiety.

The disguised confessor forces the sinner to explore him/herself by

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<sup>7</sup> As Karen Newman suggest, “Angelo’s disguise is a disguise of the mind” (21). Brian Gibbons points out that “Shakespeare seems to have been the first Elizabethan dramatists to use the disguise-ruler story as a frame plot” (15). Compare this play with Marston’s *The Malcontent* and Middleton’s *The Phoenix*.

focusing on guilt and weakness whereby the act of confession falls back on the confessed. His guise as a friar places him at the apex of power through the intelligence he gathers about what people think and do, which, in turn, gives him access to individual motives and intentions. With the power derived from the information he withholds, the Duke can control each of his subjects whose knowledge of the situation is always insufficient.<sup>8</sup> As Jeremy Tambling claims, “Those addressed by a confessional discourse are ‘interpellated’ (hailed, singled out by name), and are subjected, i.e. made to define themselves in a discourse given to them, and in which they must name and misname themselves; and secondly, made to think of themselves as autonomous subjects, responsible for their acts” (2). For the Duke-friar’s attempt to reform the inner lives of the sinners through the manipulation of anxiety, Lloyd Davis points out that “by having its revelation withheld and timed, disguise can help translate identity into power. Even indirectly participating or assisting in such unmasking may realize cultural capital” (9). The Duke’s secret knowledge of the others that makes possible his machinations is certainly contrasted with a contradictory picture of the actual legal and political workings of Vienna—some of which are clear violation of his own laws. In this manner, the play envisions an ethical tie binding the governor to the subjects in terms of their lives as well as their behaviors.

## PASTORAL POWER AND CONTENDING THEATER

As shown by his voyeuristic overhearing of the sibling dispute, the Duke is ready to exploit his privileged position. His love of withdrawal is perfectly compatible with his eagerness to spy on the affairs of his subjects.

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<sup>8</sup> For a thorough discussion of techniques of arousing and manipulating anxiety in *Measure for Measure*, see Stephen Greenblatt, 129-42.

This attitude explains his sadistic trifling with Isabella's despair by withholding till the last moment the news that Claudio is alive ("I will keep her ignorant of her good / To make her heavenly comforts of despair / When it is least expected"; 4.3.106-08). The Duke likes to play upon the psyche of the guilty, employing confession as a way of unveiling the depths of the soul and scrutinizing the lives of people in terms of external acts and internal desires. The confessional intervention by the Duke does not intend to "force" what the ruler wants the sinner to do, but rather to make him internalize the moral and ethical codes. The Duke's monitory eyes and ears, in fact, become involved in creating the very distinction between inwardness and outward appearance, and thus the depth and surface of the self through which the discourse of subjectivity operates. What the Duke-friar does is to make his subjects recognize and acknowledge the iniquity of their lives, for the acceptance of one's guiltiness becomes an essential item in the condemnation and the recuperation of the guilty.

The Duke's furtive actions as an eavesdropper and voyeur, as well as his confessional counseling, can be explained by an idea of government based on pastoral power.<sup>9</sup> In his visit as a disguised friar to "the afflicted spirits" (2.3.4), Vincentio literally fuses religion with his political strategies and blends a spiritual vocabulary with worldly attributes. With this fusion, he easily mobilizes his subjects as part of his intrigue (for example, Isabella, Mariana, and Provost). Assuming his role as a shepherd, the Duke lays out a pastoral dream for the wayward members of his flock: "Look, th'unfolding star calls up the shepherd" (4.2.199-200). As the shepherd of men, he will gather together the dispersed sheep and restore order among them. As the spiritual leader, the disguised Duke invokes inwardness for

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<sup>9</sup> The notion of the pastoral power I deploy is inspired by Michel Foucault's late works on governmentality and by what Debora Kuller Shuger means by "political theology" (particularly see chapter 2 of her book).

inquisitional probing and leads them to the discovery of personal virtues. Employing the disguise as a “contrivance to mediate between the character’s secret, subjective worlds and the external domain of publicly administered law” (Maus 178), the Duke can place under his governance the well-being of each and every individual in the realm. It is ironic, then, when Isabella says, “Thoughts are no subjects” (5.1.454-56), while trying to defend Angelo for the sake of Mariana. After all, what the Duke wants in his quest to take care of individual souls is not just the body but also the mind or thoughts. In his pastoral disguise, the Duke seems to dream of (con-)fusing the juridical form of power with the disciplinary one inasmuch as the pastoral care of the Duke on Claudio, Barnadine, and Angelo (what Debora Kuller Shuger describes as “an extraordinary concern for the well-being of private individuals” 101) is at once political and theological.

What turns out most subversive to the Duke’s pastoral power, however, is neither Angelo nor the criminals such as Pompey or Barnardine, but rather Lucio who loves to mimic the royal monopoly on language and theatricality. Lucio is all too ready to invert official discourse and challenge the royal theater. There is no doubt that Lucio is theatrically successful in producing very climactic and hilarious effects in theatrical performance. Lucio’s distorted statements are subversive of the sovereign power, even though they might be quite acute and accurate. Vincentio finds himself at a loss with Lucio’s pungent statement: “It was a mad fantastical trick of him [Duke] to steal from the state and usurp the beggary he was never born to” (3.1.355-56). There is so much in common between Lucio, “a fantastic,” and “the old fantastical Duke of dark corners” (4.3.154-55), when Lucio duplicates, with his rhetorical skill, the art that the Duke himself practices. Like a small crack in a dike, the scandal-monger sets off a flood of discord, which directly affects the Duke’s anxiety over the representation of himself to the eyes of the commoners. In Lucio, Vincentio sees one of his own kind—someone who loves to appropriate the power of theatricality

and the theatricality of power—as is implicit in the scene where the Duke himself makes a similar accusation of himself as an unjust ruler (5.1.296-99). Keen on his rhetorical and theatrical talent, he mocks the Duke, exchanges sour repartee with the two gentlemen, teases the arrested Pompey with his witticisms, and generates trenchant badinage about Mistress Overdone. Lucio's theatrical versatility shines, for example, when he goads Isabella to appeal for her brother to Angelo.

With his calumnious remarks about Vincentio (“A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow”; 3.1.400), Lucio invokes a perverse image of the Duke's dark private life. The Duke, in Lucio's presentation of him, becomes a womanizer, an intriguer, and a prodigal: “he would mouth with a beggar though she smelt brown bread and garlic” (3.1.440-41). While this accusation may refer to the leniency the Duke has shown toward sexual behaviors during the past years, those triads can ironically be compared to the Duke's self-representation of himself as “a scholar, a statesman, and a soldier.” Lucio's defamatory statements, however vehemently Vincentio contests them, point implicitly to the Duke's problems as the governor of Vienna. Lucio's remark that the Duke “yet would have dark deeds darkly answered, he would never bring them to light” (3.1.434-35) uncannily strikes at the heart of Vincentio's activities. Despite self-justifying and self-exculpatory gestures, the truth is that the Duke himself is a rumor-mill and a dark manipulator (1.3.15; 4.2.193ff). While talking to Friar Thomas just after handing over his power to Angelo, the Duke falsely maintains that it is his “nature never in the fight / To do in slander” (1.3.43-44).<sup>10</sup> But the Duke feels no compunction in spreading false stories about his whereabouts at the beginning or make slandering remarks about the dukedom in the final scene. In the final scene, the disguised Duke himself makes bitter comments on his government, presenting himself as “a

<sup>10</sup> Brian Gibbons glosses this phrase as “while I myself am not directly the instrument of disgrace” (95).

looker-on" in Vienna "where [he has] seen corruption boil and bubble / Till it o'errun the stew" (5.1.318-21). Though it appears that the Duke's primary intention might be to test the loyalty of his subjects, we cannot be blind to its obvious irony in this self-critical moment. Such actions surely call into question his punishment of Lucio for "slandering a prince" (5.1.527).

The Duke's reaction to Lucio's slanders on his personality is more than a trivial concern of whether "a fellow of much license" (3.1.461) tells the truth or not. The Duke is deeply concerned with the fact that even the most powerful are subject to public mockery, which is an inherent danger of depending on the power of theatricality. Like the Duke, Lucio himself is a theatrical director on his own: for example, when he tries to coach Isabella how to persuade Angelo in Act 2 Scene 2. Lucio's rhetorical and theatrical buzzing clearly frustrates the Duke's attempt to control his subjects. Simon Shepherd points out that the early modern English establishment took "murmurings" as "a practical political threat" and thus "the ideological devaluing of such 'murmurings' is clearly part of the state's efforts to maintain its secrecy" (31). As a purveyor of public murmurings, Lucio loves to intertwine truth and deception, not much different from what the Duke does. Lucio claims that he knows "the very nerves of state" (1.4.53) and has an intimate knowledge about the Duke ("I was an inward of his"; 3.1.392). By duplicating the Duke's rhetorical and theater, Lucio proves himself "a spokesman for the play's political order" though maybe not for the Duke's (Hanson 65). Even when the Duke stages his dramatic return and the restoration of order in the trial scene, Lucio continues to meddle with the ducal theater of power. Thus I agree with M. Lindsay Kaplan that "The Duke condemns Lucio not so much for impugning his authority, but for competing with it. Lucio poses a threat to the state precisely because he usurps the Duke's ability to deploy slanders" (93). By the presence of Lucio the Duke is constantly reminded that "the cast of guises and personae is

not ultimately determinable from a single sovereign script" (Davis 102).

## DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH

The final scene of the play provides the Duke with a platform to stage his desire to preserve his reputation and avoid slander by putting Lucio and his tongue under control with an imposition of silence.<sup>11</sup> By taking advantage of the theatrics of the public trial, the Duke plays the role of judge and administrator at the same time. His theatrical machinations, as in the case of the head tricks, signify more than just a safe restoration of ducal power in Vienna. With the aid of rhetorical and theatrical arts, the Duke is able to mediate between his political maneuvering and the art of government. Shakespeare's play establishes a clear similarity and analogy between the prince's art and the art of theater, registering early modern governmentality in the form of collective entertainment. But such a hegemonic theater of the monarch is anything but unilateral.

In fact, the formal, ceremonial closure of the play at once glorifies and problematizes the pastoral fantasy of the Duke that can only come into existence with constant oversight and supervision. Insofar as the Duke here tries to imagine "a public reconciliation of law and morality," the ending qualifies his "redemptive wish-fulfillment of the status quo" (Dollimore 83-84). In his spectacular return to the city, in a contrasting way to his stealthy exit in the beginning, the Duke tries to foreclose the slippage of authority—not only in the precise Angelo's stumbling but also in the Duke's own fourteen years of laxity—by configuring the sovereign power both as mediation and as medium between violence and justice. Despite his initial claim that "I love people, / But do not like to stage me to their eyes" (1.1.68-69), he devises a plan for a pompous royal entry, which confirms the

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<sup>11</sup> For the significance of slander in the play, see Kaplan 92-108 and Knoppers 460-71.

power of theater and the theater of power.

The ritual of royal entry as a political and judicial platform paves way for the mercy and compassion that the Duke doles out to the accused. He is ready to peel off the layers of Angelo's secrets and deceptions before he metes out the rewards and punishments (guilt and suffering) in a way that signifies his dominance. By granting pardons and sentences, the Duke proves that his monarchial authority can rewrite the existing law and that the power of sovereign is above the penal power of the law. The Duke is able to legitimate that power—the sovereign power as the container of the law's virtues—only by making himself the exception to the rules he is supposed to uphold. In his parajudicial decisions about punishment and pardons, the Duke becomes a true governor of the realm, an executor of justice and mercy. The seemingly excessive festivity at the finale with the flurry of pardons allows the Duke to present himself as an object of respect, admiration, and awe. When the law is not the best way of "governing" the subjects, as the Duke's final resolution reveals, what is apparent is there is an urgent need to find ways to make individuals internalize normative values and ethics. By attending not only to past conduct but also to the future well-being of the realm, the Duke in this final scene is able to impose the normative definition of happiness on his subjects (including himself) through the juridico-religious institution of marriage.

The calculated theatricality of the Duke's spectacular return is doubled by the game of secrecy that comes to a climax with Lucio's histrionic revelation of his true identity. The Duke's confirmation of power relations is, to borrow Michael Taussig's words, "achieved through 'a drama of revelation' which, like unmasking, amounts to a transgressive uncovering [of] a 'secretly familiar'" (51). The Duke recovers or regains his royal power through unmasking first Angelo in public and then himself. The public unmaskings enable the Duke to transform the on-stage audience "from welcoming spectators into chastened criminals" (Kaplan 106). The public

spectacle in the final scene thus plays on the dialectic of concealment and revelation, or on the process of actualizing public secrets. The Duke's power lies in deciding when to hide and reveal the secrets. In other words, his true magic comes from not his mask or disguise but the act of unmasking himself and revealing his disguised identity in public. Hence comes the need for Lucio's dramatic unmasking of the Duke designed by the Duke himself. And this spectacular unmasking is not just for a recovery of his former status, but for a creation of new mystical power relations that can only emerge from the game of secrecy.

If the Duke employs "his disguise in a symbolic effort to disown culpability and separate himself from Vienna's corruption" (Berger 382), it is essential in the unmasking scene to dramatize "the disguised monarch's recognition that only his own unique wisdom and authority can restore and maintain his kingdom" (Cohen 449). If the Duke's histrionic distribution of justice and mercy vindicates his voyeuristic practice and surveillance under the guise of priesthood, his triumphant power comes only with his grasp of information and knowledge not only of what happens, but also of the inner mind of those involved. His secretive project generates the mystical aura in the dramatic experience of death and life and thereby the power relations relying on the dynamics of concealment and revelation. The dizzy circularity of secrecy and discovery thus crystallizes the desire to get hold of knowledge about individuals, as well as the demand for inwardness or the sense of a self reflecting upon itself. In other words, the Duke enjoys the play of secrecy—the dynamic of concealment and revelation—as a way of binding his subjects with the system.

## CONCLUSION

If *Measure for Measure* is seen as a process of the Duke's becoming a

consummate governor, we cannot but notice among his subjects certain reluctance to go along with the theatrical resolutions. In a sense, Lucio's "act of revelation and unmasking suggests the contained subversion that deconstructs what the Duke constructs" (Goldberg 239). The possibility of resistance to such governmentality, if any, is certainly something Shakespeare leaves open at the end when he stops immediately after the Duke's proposal to Isabella. Even if the restoration of order through marriages is theatrically effective and vivacious, it is doubtful whether or not the resolution can work well as a political resolution of social problems. The euphoric epithalamiums may not be a terminus of the problems, but rather a beginning of new ones in Vienna. The uncomfortableness many critics have felt about the ending might be a confirmation that the playwright, in fact, does not endorse either Angelo's strict application of law or Vincentio's exercise of power. Some of the audience may leave the theater disturbed by the arbitrary resolution and sentences. For some, Isabella's silence is acquiescence; for others, defiance. The often-ironic portrayal of the Duke rather points to the playwright's declining to participate in the sovereign mystery that many of disguised monarch plays tended to join. What Shakespeare puts to the test is, after all, the government of Vincentio whose success is dependent upon the willingness of his subjects to govern themselves. If, as many critics have argued, this play was intended as homage to James I, I would argue that it offers not a simple deference to the new king but a speculative and complicated meditation of governmentality. If the Duke's initial project begs the question of why, in the past, he has not tried to activate the existing law, then we now have yet to hear of any imminent plan to revise the austere law that almost killed Claudio.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The main argument of this article is derived from my doctoral dissertation.

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**ABSTRACT****Pastoral power and Theatricality: Early Modern Governmentality in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*****Tai-Won Kim**

This essay attempts to read Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* from the perspective of early modern governmentality in both senses of statecraft and self-government. While assuming that the early modern art of government is involved not only in the proper administration of law and justice, but also in mastering one's self, I attempt to locate a Shakespearean critique of pastoral power—a politico-theological form of government in early modern Europe—in the Duke Vincentio's disguise, delegation of authority, and histrionic distribution of justice and mercy. The Duke's furtive actions as an eavesdropper and voyeur, along with his confessional counseling, lend themselves to an idea of government based on pastoral power. The Duke Vincentio's pastoral disguise enables individual subjects to make themselves available for the monarch's inquisitive probing as objects of knowledge. And the delegation of his monarchical power helps himself mobilize political subjection that at once separates and conflates private likings and public duties. His guise as a friar places him at the apex of power through the intelligence he gathers about what people think and do, which, in turn, gives him access to individual motives and intentions. With the power derived from the information he withholds, the Duke can control each of his subjects whose knowledge of the situation is insufficient. If the failure of Angelo's government is utilized to establish a close relationship between political government and the government of one's self, it becomes apparent, particularly in the final scenes, that the success of Vincentio's government cannot but be dependent upon the (un-)willingness of his subjects to govern themselves. So when he Duke's histrionic distribution of justice and mercy vindicates his voyeuristic practice and surveillance under the guise of priesthood, his secretive project generates not only a mystical aura of pastoral power in the dramatic experience of death and life, but also the power relations relying on the dynamics of concealment and revelation.

**Key Words** | Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, Pastoral Power, Theatricality, Governmentality, Early Modern Subjectivity, Surveillance, Delegation of Authority

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