The Tragedy of Hoffman and Elizabethan Military Affairs

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The Tragedy of Hoffman (c.1602) was written by an Elizabethan minor playwright Henry Chettle (c.1560-c.1607); a play which has been long neglected by many critics. Although today he is less famous than other contemporary playwrights such as Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, yet in the Elizabethan period, he was famous enough to be enumerated as "best for comedy" by Francis Meres, a writer and translator, in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598). Chettle wrote 13 single written works, including only one extant play (*Hoffman*), and 35 plays in collaboration.¹

Hoffman is believed to have been written in 1602 on the basis of Henslowe's Diary. Philip Henslowe, the theatre financier, recorded on 29 December, 1602: "Lent vnto Thomas downton ... to geue vnto harey chettle in pte of payment for A tragedie called Hawghman." The quarto of 1631 is the only extant text, its title-page reading "it hath bin diuers times acted with great applause, at the Phenix in Druery-lane." These two points suggest that Hoffman may have been popular enough to have been repeatedly played during 1602 to at least 1631, a period when "revenge tragedy" was in vogue.

In the early 20th century, the term of "revenge tragedy" was first invented and defined by A. H. Thorndike: "The revenge tragedy, a distinct species of the tragedy of blood, may be defined as a tragedy whose leading motive is revenge and whose main action deals with the progress of this revenge, leading to the death of the murderers and often the death of revenger himself." This definition is still commonly held today.

In its critical history, this play has been generally regarded as one of many revenge tragedies or imitations of Shakespeare's enormously popular play, *Hamlet* in terms of its date, plot, and characters. ⁴ Since J. P. Collier, the first critic on Chettle, called it "a revolting mass of blood and murder," only the bloody scenes have been discussed among critics; for example, C. V. Boyer regarded it as "a tissue of improbabilities dependent for interest upon intrigue and violence," while J. D. Jowett thought of it as "a play which will excel all others in violence and horrific spectacle." *Hoffman* has been, on the whole, understood as a popular and thrilling entertainment, not as a political drama. ⁶

In an earlier paper, I discussed the traditional and radical aspects of *Hoffman* as revenge tragedy, focusing on the rogue protagonist, Hoffman's subversive revenge

on the superior characters. This play has other elements, however; namely, political issues such as the downfall of great men and the question of monarchical succession, which I have argued in another earlier paper, and there are also a number of socio-political aspects, such as piracy, rebellion, poverty and debt. 8

These topics seem more significant than the theme of revenge in this work, because these marginal points can be seen to have been elaborately described. This paper will focus on "poor soldiers" in the play and how they relate to Elizabethan military affairs, particularly the topical war/ peace debates on Spain, England's great opponent, revealing Chettle's consciousness of social problems and his negative feelings towards James VI and I (1566-1625; reigned 1603-25), who insisted on peace with Spain.

Religious issues had been a serious problem throughout the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1533-1603; reigned 1558-1603). Following the reign of her Catholic sister, Mary (1516-58), Elizabeth returned to the Reformation policies of her father, Henry VIII (1491-1547) and her brother, Edward VI (1537-53), enacting both the Act of Supremacy arrogating the monarch's authority over the church, and the Act of Uniformity requiring the use of the Book of Common Prayer in 1559. Catholic resistance to Elizabeth included the Northern Rebellion in 1569, and a number of attempted assasinations, as Chettle relates in his *Englandes Mourning Garment* (1603), which I will discuss below.

After Mary, Queen of Scots had been executed on a charge of conspiracy to assassinate Elizabeth in 1587, religious conflict and the relations with Spain grew worse. In 1588, the Spanish Armada attacked England, who had been supporting the Netherlands in their struggle for indepence from Spain, but the planned invasion failed. The Elizabethans exulted in the triumph over Spain, but the Spanish threat was never fully resolved during the reign of Elizabeth.

Military writers, most of whom were veterans, advocated the improvement of fortifications and arts of war, and insisted on the necessity of war against Spain, a popular position, as I discuss below. On the other hand, a few people including King James and his most important minister, Robert Cecil (1563-1612) were pacifists.

Warfare caused by religion was described by playwrights as well as by military writers. Famously, Shakespeare started his career with patriotic English history plays, and most of his contemporaries such as Marlowe and George Chapman dealt with warfare, as Paul Jorgensen and others have analyzed.⁹ Although no critic has considered this aspect of the play, *Hoffman* also reflects this military background, or rather, the play seems strongly to assert the need for war, and to oppose pacifists such as James and Cecil.

In this paper, I will discuss Chettle's attitudes towards Elizabethan military policy, analyzing the representation of "poor soldiers" and their problems in *Hoffman*, and in other literary works and the contemporary world, revealing more of Chettle's negative feeling towards the pacifist King James. The first section describes the Elizabethan military background; the second discusses the problems of soldiers such as the poverty of veterans, exploitation by captains and mutinies of soldiers; the third explores the representation of poor soldiers in the text of *Hoffman*, linking them with Chettle's attitudes towards war and his Elizabethan nostalgia.

1

Throughout the reign of Elizabeth, England had struggled with military matters, in particular in conflicts with Catholic powers. Elizabeth experienced the danger of internal intrigues by Catholics, such as the Throckmorton Plot (1583) and the Babington Plot (1586). After Mary, Queen of Scots had been executed in 1587 on suspicion of conspiracy against Elizabeth, the conflict between England and Spain grew intense. In 1581, the Netherlands declared their independence from the rule of the Spanish Hapsburg family (Oath of Abjuration or Plakkaat van Verlatinghe) and in 1585 Antwerp was invaded by the Spanish army. In the same year, Elizabeth decided to support the Netherlands despite the opposition of Parliament, and dispatched 6,000 infantrymen and 1,000 cavalry led by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (c.1532-88), courtier and magnate. In 1588, the Spanish Armada attacked England for its support of Dutch independence, but failed. In the following decades, England strived to suppress the Irish rebellion led by Hugh O'Neill, the Second Earl of Tyrone (c.1550-1616), who was a magnate supported by the Spaniards. The conflict between England and Spain thus never ended until the Treaty of London was signed in 1604 between James I and Philip III of Spain (1578-1621).

The victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588 eventually led England to prosperity, but the prospect of open war with Spain did not recede until the accession of James. People were still afraid of Spanish counterattack and rumors about Spanish invasions frequently spread. In February 1593, another Spanish invasion was "credibly advertised," and in 1595, William Camden (1551-1623), historian and herald, stated, "rumors were now abroad, and those not slight or uncertain, but unanimously

brought from all parts of *Europe*, that the *Spaniards* were ready to set Sail with a stronger and better appointed Armada than before for the Conquest of *England*."¹⁰

In the 1590s, the continuing military problems of Spain, the Low Countries, and particularly Ireland required an increasing number of common soldiers. All healthy men between 16 and 60 were to be recruited for military service¹¹ and they were to be dispatched to foreign conflicts as well as domestic.

People's consciousness of urgent warfare is reflected in the large number of military books printed at the time. Most of them were educational books, dealing with arts of war to prepare for a Spanish invasion, written by returning soldiers from the Continental warfront; for example, Barnaby Riche (1542-1617), Sir Roger Williams (c.1539-95), Sir John Smythe (1580-1631), Humphrey Barwick (fl.1591), Leonard Digges (1588-1635), and Matthew Sutcliffe (c.1549-1629); veterans of the wars in Holland and France.

In discussing the arts of war, writers proposed various practical measures; for example, on weapons, Williams and Barwick insisted on the efficacy of guns, while Smythe argued for a reliance on longbows, as did Henry Knyvett (1539-1598), both a soldier and a member of parliament.¹³ The debate had continued since the 1540s, as part of a "military revolution" in England, and subsequently the supremacy of gunnery had been accepted by the beginning of the 1600s.¹⁴

While the practical preparation for combat was thus discussed, the urgency of military means to defend England was claimed, in contrast with the danger of peace. Riche argued "although that peace be chiefly to be desired, yet many times by entring into warres it is the more safely & quietly maintayned."15 Geoffrey Gates (1566-80), soldier and polemicist, regarded "peace" as the situation in which people "may wax rotten in idlenesse, and become of dulle wittes, slowe of courage, weake hanged, and feeble kneede," and warned his nation not to delight in peace. 16 Robert Devereux, the Second Earl of Essex (1565-1601), soldier and politician, claimed, "Now it is no time to make peace with the chiefe enemie [Spain] of our Religion, when a conspiracy is in hand against al the professors of it." He also emphasized the danger of peaceful conditions: "Our nation growen generally vnwarlike; in loue with the name, and bewitched with the delights of peace: and the Spaniardes corage recouered, together with his strength; which is the naturall roote of all true confidence."17 Sir Dudley Digges (c.1582-1639), politician and diplomat, insisted "warre sometimes lesse hurtfull, and more to be wisht in a well gouernd State than peace."18

It appears that the pro-war view was dominant at this time, and a large number of military books suggest this general concern. Moreover, the popular consciousness of war is also reflected in late Tudor and early Stuart plays, especially in the genres of history. War is the main theme in Marlowe's Tamburlaine the Great (1587-88), 19 Shakespeare's Henry V (1599), which is the most patriotic among his other English history plays and notable for its allusions to the campaign of Essex in Ireland, Chapman's Caesar and Pompey (1599-1607) and The Conspiracy and the Tragedy of Charles Duke of Byron (1608).²⁰ Tragedy, including revenge tragedies such as Hoffman, also deals with warfare; for example, Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy (1582-92), Marlowe's The Jew of Malta, (c.1589-90), John Marston's Antonio's Revenge (1599-1601), Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus (1594), Julius Caesar (1598-1600), Hamlet (1599-c.1601) and Othello (c.1603-04), which has a great deal of reference to the arts of war, and the role of soldiers.

Specific campaigns are frequently alluded to in these dramas. The triumph of the battle of Agincourt, which occurred in 1415, was described in the anonymous *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (1583-88, pub.1598), *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1599) written by Thomas Dekker, *The Life of Sir John Oldcastle* (1599) by Michael Drayton, Richard Hathway, Anthony Munday and Robert Wilson, Shakespeare's *Henry V* and the anonymous *Triall of Chivalry* (1599-1603). The victory of Sir Francis Vere (c.1560-1609) at Turnhout in 1598 was dramatized in the anonymous *A Larum for London* (c.1598-1600) and the anonymous lost play *Turnholt* (1598-99).

The French Wars of Religion also provided topics for drama. These civil wars had started in 1562 and ended in 1598 with the Edict of Nantes between Catholics supported by Spain and the Huguenots (French Protestants) supported by England. English people were so interested in the French wars of Religion that the wars were dramatized on London stages. The most terrible specific event, the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572) was represented in Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris* (1593). The general civil wars were described in Dekker's lost play, *The First Introduction of the Civil Wars of France* (1599) and *The Trial of Chivalry*.

On the other hand, the danger of peace and necessity of readiness for wars, as advocated by such military writers as Riche and Gates, were suggested in Wilson's *The Cobbler's Prophecy* (1594) and the anonymous *A Larum for London*.

The subject of war has been infrequently discussed in criticism of Renaissance drama, even though, as I have shown briefly, many plays deal with military issues. People's concerns about war can be thus thought to be reflected in this large number of military books and plays. Moreover, as I will now discuss, the problems of soldiers as described in *Hoffman* are also referred to in several of

these prose and dramatic works.

2

The term itself, "poor soldiers," appears twice in Hoffman. It is first mentioned by the protagonist Hoffman, when he praises the feats of his deceased father as admiral, complaining that he was banished for debt in spite of having gained and offered spoils to his rulers, and "payd poore souldiors from his treasury" (1.1.60).21 The term recurs in the stage direction of Act III, Scene ii, where a rebellion is instigated against a Duke by citizen soldiers: "Enter Stilt, a rabble of poore souldiers: old Stilt his father, with his scarfe like a Captaine. A scuruy march." Also, although the term as such is not used, Hoffman's dying words seem to remind us of poor soldiers again. He criticizes those who "wring the poore, and eate the people vp" (5.2.2614) and "haue rob'd souldiers of/ Reward" (2617-18), in other words, the superiors who exploit poor inferiors or soldiers.

Thus, this play seems to emphasize poor soldiers deliberately. In the next section, I will undertake further analysis of the poor soldiers in *Hoffman*, while this section will deal with the contemporary problems of soldiers, that is, the plight of poor soldiers caused by unemployment and exploitation of captains in society and drama in general.

"Poor soldiers" are familiar figures in contemporary plays. The words including variants such as "pore souldier" or "poore souldiers" are mentioned 30 times in 25 other Elizabethan and Jacobean plays: for example, the anonymous plays The Contention between Liberaltie and Prodigalitie (1601) and The Life of Sir John Oldcastle, Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois (1600-04) and The Widow's Tears (1603-09), Thomas Heywood's The Royal King, and Loyal Subject (1602-18), Thomas Middleton and Dekker's The Roaring Girl (1604-10), Shakespeare's Henry V and Cymbeline (c.1608-11).

For instance, in *The Contention between Liberaltie and Prodigalitie*, when a suitor entreats money of Liberality, a steward of Virtue, he calls himself "a poore souldier."

3 SUITOR. Now, good my Lord, vouchsafe of your charitie,

To cast here aside your pittifull eye,

Upon a poore souldier, naked and needy,

That in the Queenes warres was maimed, as you see.

LIBERALITY. Where have you served?

3 SUITOR. In Fraunce, in Flaunders, but in Ireland most.²²

The suitor has served as a soldier, mainly in Ireland, which suggests a reference to the Irish conflicts in the Elizabethan period,²³ and he is now poor, unclothed, and lame, which was true of most veterans in Elizabethan society. His petition is accepted and he is finally given money.

In another example, in *The Life of Sir John Oldcastle*, "foure poore people, some soldiers, some old men" come to an outer court before the house of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham. One of them complains about lack of almshouses:

God helpe, God helpe, there's law for punishing, But there's no law for our necessity:

There be more stockes to set poore soldiers in,

Than there be houses to releeue them at.²⁴

Each of them insists on their miserable state; poor, lame, and starving. Lord Cobham finally accepts their petitions and helps them in the court.

Poor soldiers may thus be considered to have attracted the audience's attention and the question arises of why soldiers tended to be depicted as poor, from the lack of welfare for veterans and through the exploitation of their captains. According to Description of England (1587) by William Harrison (1535-93), historian and topographer, there were three sorts of the poor in those days; first, such helpless people as fatherless children, aged, blind, lame, diseased persons; second, such casualties as the wounded soldier; third, such idle people as vagabonds, rogues and strumpets. The first and second, namely the aged, the sick and wounded soldiers were regarded as true poor, while the third were counted as false. Wounded soldiers included "rafflers" ["rufflers"], who pretended to be lame and begged for money, but mostly such poor soldiers really suffered from poverty, and also they were in fact illtreated by captains or superiors.25

According to A. L. Beier, sailors and soldiers were the occupation groups showing the biggest increase in vagrancy in the period from 1560 to 1640. Before 1580, the number of soldiers and sailors who turned vagrant was 1.5 percent, but from 1620 to 1640, this figure grew to 12 percent.26 Most of the returning wounded soldiers found no job and thus they were forced to beg. Although there were three statutes of relief for returning veterans and maimed soldiers (1593, 1597, 1601), these measures did not work efficiently because of their rudimentary nature.27 Many veterans complained about their status. For example, in the early 1590s, Sutcliffe, an old soldier mentioned above, claimed, "Warres in our times being ended [...] are the beginning of beggarrie and calamitie to many poore souldiers."28 On the other hand, in the mid 1590's, Thomas Churchyard (1523?-1604), writer and soldier, complained about the neglect of veterans who had once been rewarded: in former times, "Kings gaue them [soldiers] grace, and honor great,/ Fame sounded trumpet in their praise,/ World placst them in the highest seate,/ So that like gods they raigned those daies," but these days, "When Kings forget to giue good turns/ For good desarts: then soldier shrinks,/ The lampe of loue, but dimly burns."²⁹

Moreover, these veterans are reflected in late-Elizabethan and early Stuart plays, which shows their continual miserable status despite the three acts of relief for maimed and old soldiers and the accession of the pacifist King James. 30 Maimed soldiers are familiar figures and they appear, as we have seen, in *The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality* and *The Life of Sir John Oldcastle*. For other examples, they appear in Shakespeare's histories, George Peele's *Edward I* (1590-93), *A Larum for London, The Trial of Chivalry, The Cobbler's Prophecy*, Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1599) and *If This Be Not a Good Play, the Devil Is in It* (1611) among others.

The economic plight of veterans is often suggested in these plays. Although Falstaff himself plans to gain a pension, asserting "Tis no matter if I do halt; I have the wars for my colour, and my pension shall seem the more reasonable" (2 Henry IV, 1.2.239-41), he predicts the fates of survivors of his company after war, stating, "They are for the town's end, to beg during life" (1 Henry IV, 5.3.37-38).³¹

Exploitation of soldiers by captains was another reason for the increase of poverty amongst veterans. Smythe, an old soldier mentioned earlier, criticized captains: regarding their apparel, "Captaines themselues verie gallant in apparel, and their purses full of gold; that their Soldiers should be in such poore and miserable estate"; food, "some of our such men of warre vpon their occasions of marches and enterprises, haue prouided plentie of victuall onlie for themselues and their followers, suffering their bands & regiments to straggle, & spoyle the people of the Countrie of tentimes to their own mischiefe, & in the rest to take starue, their aduentures and sometimes to starue, or at least to be driven to great exremitie of hunger"; weaponry "for powder, shot, and ouerplus of weapons, they have provided no more than that which their soldiers haue carried about them, which haue been with great scarcity; which doth argue their small care of the health & safetie of their soldiers, & their little intention to doo any great hurt to the ememie, and there withal a great ignorance in the Art and Science Militarie."32

Thus captains were rich and self-interested, while soldiers were vulnerable, "naked and needy" (*The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality*, F2v). And with regard to monetary payment, the behavior of captains

was worse. Soldiers were supposed to receive half of their payment per week and the other half every six months from the captains. Their weekly wages were too low to buy food, clothes, gunpowder, and other things, as Smythe pointed out. Captains not only exploited the payment of their men, but also killed or sent off soldiers to dangerous areas in order to rob them of payment: this payment for dead soldiers was called "dead pay."

Smythe also discussed "dead pay": captains were supposed to "preserue by all meanes possible the liues of their soldiers"; nevertheless, they sent their soldiers to "manie daungerous and vaine exploites and seruices, without any reason Militarie, hauing sure regard to their owne safetiness; as though they desired and hoped to haue more gaine and profite by the dead paies of their souldiers slaine, than encrease of reputation by the atchieuing and preuailing in anie such enterprises."³³

This pervasive and notorious corruption of captains is also alluded to by Shakespeare in *2 King Henry VI* (c.1590-92). York suspects that Gloucester has received bribes and robbed soldiers' payment, saying "Tis thought, my lord, that you took bribes of France,/ And being Protector, stayed the soldier's pay,/ By means whereof his highness hath lost France." (3.1.104-06)³⁴

Many people sympathized with these poor soldiers. Riche pitied "a poore man" who "hath spent his bloud in the defence of his Country," and who "being returned home, hurt, maimed, lamed, dismembered and should be suffered to crouch, to creepe, to begge, and to intreate for a peece of bread, and almost no body giue it him." Riche, therefore, hoped that these people would be relieved. Secil emphasized the importance of relief for wounded soldiers, stating "I have seen soldiers deceived by their captains," and "A captain is a man of note, and able to keep himself; but a soldier is not."

The problems of these poor soldiers sometimes extended to mutiny, riot and social unrest. Such violent unrest was usually due to lack of payment.³⁷ For instance, in 1589, a band of 500 veterans, who had returned from the expedition to Portugal, threatened to loot Bartholomew Fair.³⁸ The government suppressed this mutiny, but similar events occasionally re-occurred until 1604.³⁹

In Dublin in 1590, a mutiny over pay arrears took place; the soldiers "made no submission nor show of their ordinary duty" and one of them threatened the Lord Deputy, Sir William Fizwilliam (1526–99), with his musket. Subsequently the mutiny was resolved, and the Deputy was moved by "the pitiful complaints of the poor unclothed soldiers, footmen."

Sir John Norris (c.1547-97), an able soldier, reported miserable conditions and complaints of soldiers in Ireland to Cecil by mail in 1595, "there cometh daily such pitiful

complaints from the borders of the misery of the soldiers, who have neither money, victuals, nor clothes, as no man but hath compassion thereof, and the fruit will be the overthrow of the services; for the soldier growth into desperate terms, and spare not to say their officers, that they will run away and steal rather than famish [...]."⁴¹

Such military problems were particularly serious in the late-Tudor period, when English armies were fighting in Ireland, the Netherlands, and France among other countries. After the Armada, England achieved a degree of naval supremacy, but the prosperity did not last; and war expenditure helped to contribute to the economic plight of unemployment and inflation. Thus war gave jobs to people, but once the campaign was over, returning wounded, they could not find jobs and many wandered in the street as beggars, and these problems were reflected in many literary works. In the next section, I will analyze how these matters are dealt with in *Hoffman* and consider the author's personal view on war.

3

The main plot of Hoffman is the revenge of the protagonist, Hoffman for his father, who has been executed for piracy with a hot iron crown before the play begins. As a "most warlike" (5.2.2609) admiral, he contributed many spoils to the Duke of Luninberg and his brother-in-law, the Duke of Prussia, but ran into debt to aid poor soldiers, and was exiled to an island, where he turned pirate. The order for both banishment and execution has been given by the two Dukes, who have prospered thanks to Hoffman's father. Hoffman has a deep feeling of resentment towards the Dukes and plans to take revenge not only on them, but also on their innocent family members. Through disguise and other tricks, Hoffman succeeds in killing five of his enemies, but his love for the Duchess of Luninberg prevents him from taking further revenge. While Hoffman attempts to have her, she plots to kill him with her surviving family members. Hoffman is finally trapped and executed with the hot iron crown as his father had been.

Unlike earlier revenge heroes, Hoffman is a commoner. In previous plays, the protagonists are of higher rank; princes such as Hamlet and Antonio, or the Knight-Marshal, Hieronimo, who is the top judge responsible for any legal matters concerning the king or his estate in the Spanish government. Hoffman, however, is a poor outlaw living in a cave in the middle of the woods, while his opponents live luxuriously in courts, enjoying such aristocratic pastimes as tilts. The poor status of Hoffman is thus described in contrast with the aristocrats, but the poverty of soldiers in general seems to be emphasized even more strongly in this play, being crucial elements on

three occasions, as I mentioned in the previous section.

The first mention occurs in Act I, Scene i. Before killing his first victim Otho, Hoffman reveals his grudge against the Duke of Luninberg (Otho's father) and Prussia (Otho's uncle, his father's brother in law) who badly treated Hoffman's father. The revenger emphasizes the poor status of soldiers:

Still you suspect my harmelesse inocence?
What though your father with the powerfull state
And your iust vncle duke of *Prusia*After my father had in thirty fights
Fill'd all their treasures with fomens spoyles,
And payd poore souldiors from his treasury
What though for this his merrits he was nam'd
A prescript out law for a little debt,
Compeld to flie into the Belgique sound
And liue a pirate? (1.1. 155-64)

Hoffman here complains about arbitrary and ungrateful rulers, who have used his father, and at the same time he refers to social inequalities and injustice: the poor status of soldiers and the prosperity of cunning monarchs. Such poverty was one of the most pressing problems of the Elizabethan period, as enactments of Poor Relief (1563, 1598, 1601) suggest, and most returning soldiers were poor because they could not find employment, as discussed above. Their poor conditions were well-known and pitiable.

The second mention of this problem occurs in the middle of the play, at Act III, Scene ii, where an idiot prince, Jerome, rebels against his father, the Duke of Prussia, because Prussia has disinherited him for his foolishness and adopted his favorite nephew, Otho, in reality, the disguised Hoffman, as his successor. Jerome's uprising involves civil soldiers supporting him as the true heir and extends into civil war.

This scene begins with the stage direction "Enter Stilt, a rabble of poore souldiers: old Stilt his father, with his scarfe like a Captaine. A scuruy march," as I quoted above. Stilt is a servant of Jerome, who is regarded by the common people as the most suitable heir and who has rebelled against their Duke. Stilt asserts that "wee' 1/ haue a Prince of our owne chusing, Prince Ierome," and his father and "noble, ancient Captaine" (1156), Old Stilt, counsels Prussia "let your owne flesh and blood bee inherited of your Dukedome, and a stranger displac'd in his retority [territory]." In contrast with this army, Prussia with his magnificent army arrives to suppress them; the stage direction declares "Enter with Drum, and Colours, Duke Ferdinand [Prussia], Hoffman [,] Lorrique, Captaiue to leade the drum, the souldiers march and make a stand;

All on Ierome side cast up their caps and cry a Ierome." The rebels make a poor impression militarily, while the Duke's army makes a rich impression with drum and military standards. The Duke scorns the common traitors and orders his "valiant gentlemen" to attack them, in a discriminatory and arrogant speech;

Vpon those traytors valiant gentlemen:
Let not that beast multitude confront,
With garlicke-breath and their confnsed [confused]
cries
The Maiesty of me their awfull Duke,
Strike their Typhoean body downe to fire,
That dare 'gainst vs, their soueraigne conspire.
(1189-94)

According John Jowett, an editor of the play, "garlick" (1191) was a food for poor people in Elizabethan Age, and the phrases, "Let not that beast multitude confront,/ With garlicke-breath and their confnsed [confused] cries" (1190-91) indicate that the Duke sneers at the poor living conditions of the common soldier. Moreover, Prussia calls himself loftily "maiesty of me their awfull Duke" (1193) and "vs, their soueraigne" (1194) and disdains "the beast multitude." The class distinction in these lines seems to increase the emphasis on the poor conditions of commoners.

In the same scene, the character of Old Stilt, a 67 yearold military veteran, is remarkable. Fibs, a citizen soldier, calls Old Stilt "noble, ancient Captaine" (1156) and praises him, stating:

ye haue remou'd mens hearts I haue heard that of my father (God rest his soule,) when yee were but one of the common all souldiers that seru'd old *Sarloys* [Hoffman's father] in Norway. (1156-59)

Old Stilt served Hoffman's father and he seems to have been a good soldier, but the times have changed, and he is now a captain of a poor army in rebellion against his monarch, supporting the ruler's idiot son claim as true heir. He is one of the poor multitudes who eat "garlick" (171). His miserable status can be thought to reflect the social problem of veterans, which I have already discussed above. He is poor and has complaints about the Duke, and then finally rebels against him, which reminds us of the mutinies caused by veterans in the real Elizabethan world.

The third reference to the conditions of soldiers occurs in Hoffman's dying speech. Hoffman's revenge works well up to Act IV, but his evil-doing in revenge is finally revealed by his tool, and he is executed for treason. Exposed and condemned, Hoffman curses his opponents

and authorities:

But Hell the hope of all dispayring men,
That wring the poore, and eate the people vp,
As greedy beasts the haruest of their spring:
That Hell, where cowards haue their seats prepar'd
And barbarous asses, such as haue rob'd souldiers of
Reward, and punish true desert with scorned death.
(5.2.2613-18)

Hoffman criticizes those who, like the Dukes, extort and exploit the common people, and who have deprived the ordinary soldiers of their pay and other benefits. These phrases seem to suggest the complaint of the author about magistrates and officers, who take personal advantage from their service, as Richard Brucher asserts. 42 Officers are again attacked as cunning intermediary agents in *Englandes Mourning Garment*, where Chettle criticizes them through the voice of Collin, a shepherd and a narrator in this work:

base Ministers, and vnder officers, curtall [curtail] the liberalities of great and potent masters. Some haue in her [Elizabeth's] time beene taken with the manner, and, besides bodily punishment and, fines, displaced: (93)⁴³

According to Chettle, some ministers and officers wronged their inferiors against the wills of their masters. When such wrongs were revealed, they were punished with forfeit or dismissal, and "Many such false ones she [Elizabeth] hath punished with death" (93).

Chettle thus clearly describes poor soldiers with considerable sympathy in Hoffman. In the reign of Elizabeth, poverty was a general problem of great concern, as I discussed earlier. The state endeavoured to assist the poor by means of Poor Laws (1563, 1598, 1601), but in practice not all poor people were helped thereby, as Beier observes. 44 The late-Elizabethan period witnessed terrible economic conditions, though earlier periods had already suffered from royal financial trouble due to war expenditure in Spain, the Low Countries and Ireland. With the enclosure of previously common lands, many country people were forced to go to London, due to unemployment and underemployment. Bad harvests (1594-97), plague (1592), and rapid inflation increased the number of the poor, and riots over food frequently occurred in such rural areas as Essex and Oxfordshire as well as in London. The complaints of the poor are described in such contemporary literature as the pamphlets of Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe, and Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, King Lear (1604-05) and The Winter's Tale (c.1610-11). 45

Chettle also seems to have been very conscious personally of poverty, since he had often been imprisoned for debt and his close friends, Greene and Nashe, both died in poverty. Chettle dealt with money matters in other works, especially in such pamphlets as Kind-harts Dreame (1592) and Piers Plainnes Seauen Yeres Prentiship (1595), both of which attacked money-lenders. As with the cases of contemporary writers such as Greene and Nashe, Chettle's own experience of poverty seems to be reflected in his works. Henslowe's diary includes numerous records of his debts in marginal spaces, which implies the close relationship between the two, and there are also some records of his imprisonment. On 17 January, 1598 (i.e.1599), Henslowe records: "Lent vnto Thomas downton the xvii of Janewary 1598 to lend vnto harey chettell to paye his charges in the marshallsey the some of xxx shillings"46 A little later he was again imprisoned for debt and again helped by Henslowe, who says: "Lent Thomas dickers & harey chettell the 2 of maye 1599 to descarge harey chettell of his A Reste from Ingrome the some of twentyshellyngs in Redy money I saye lent ..."47

In his descriptions of the poor, Chettle seems to have been most sympathetic towards soldiers. For example, in *Englandes Mourning Garment*, Chettle praises Elizabeth for her charity in giving money to sick and aged persons and building almshouses, and admires her mercy towards poor soldiers and pleaders:

As for the poore and decrepit with age, her Royall Maiestie had this charitable care; so for soldiers, and suters, she was very prouident [...] For souldiers, and men of seruice, her decrees of prouision are extant: besides, it is most cleare, no Prince in the world, to land- or Sea-men, was more bountifull or willing, than her Highness: (92-93)

"Soldiers" in this reference may be thought to be casualties of war or veteran soldiers like Old Stilt in *Hoffman*. As I observed earlier, according to Harrison, there were three sorts of the poor in those days; the first such helpless people as fatherless children, the aged, blind, lame, diseased persons; the second such casualties as the wounded soldier; the third such idle people as vagabonds, rogues and strumpets. The first and second, namely the aged, the sick and wounded soldiers were regarded as true poor, while the third were counted as false. The second, "the wounded soldiers" were probably true of poor soldiers like the veteran, Old Stilt in *Hoffman*.

Chettle thus strongly shows his sympathy to soldiers in this play, although his concern about war generally seems more clearly expressed in his other works, such as *Englandes Mourning Garment*, *The Downfall of Robert*, Earl of Huntington (1598), which is a two-part play with The Death of Robert, Earle of Huntington (1598), The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green (1600), and two lost plays, Troilus and Cressida (1599) and Agamemnon (1599) among others.

Here the question arises of why Chettle was so interested in soldiers, especially in *Hoffman*. One reason may lie in Chettle's political views about military policy. Chettle seems to have been anti-Catholic and also anti-James, who was pacifist in Spanish issues. These points are clearly raised in *Englandes Mourning Garment*. This pamphlet, popular enough to be republished soon after the first edition was published in 1603, is a pastoral elegy for Queen Elizabeth, composed of three parts. The first and main part describes laments of shepherds for the death of Elizabeth; the second part records her funeral on 28 April 1603; the last part briefly relates the entertainment of shepherds for King James I.

In the first half of the first part, Chettle looks back on the early Elizabethan period, and criticizes Catholics, particularly Mary, Queen of Scots and Spain, relating some intrigues against Elizabeth caused by Spanish Catholics and Irish rebellions supported by Spain (86-91). Chettle observes that Elizabeth was "much pitted" by people when she "was proclaimed Queene with generall applause," "for that busie slander and respectlesse enuy had not long before brought her into the disfauour of her royall Sister *Mary*" (86). These criticisms may imply Chettle's hostility to Catholicism and James.

This hostility is also expressed in the latter half of the first part. Chettle asserts that Elizabeth "established the true Catholicke and Apostolicall Religion in this Land," and criticizes Roman Catholics, who "condemned her sacred gouernement for Antichristian, when, to the amazement of superstitious Romanes, & selfe-praysing Sectuaries, God approued hir faith by his loue towards her"(100). Chettle thus opposes the Catholic and the Puritan separatists ("Sectuaries") and displays his Anglican feelings strongly.

The last part of the pamphlet, on James, is much shorter than the sections on Elizabeth, which may indicate Chettle's antipathy towards James, since praise of Elizabeth in the Stuart period was an indirect means of criticizing James, and later, his son, Charles I.⁴⁸ Chettle, therefore, appears to have been anti-Catholic and anti-James, whose mother, Mary had been the principal Catholic claimant to the English throne, and who wanted to reconcile with Spain, the leader of the Catholic nations.

The debate over peace and war was of great interest and topical concern in the period. Shakespeare, also, was conscious of these issues as a pacifist, according to critics such as Steven Marx and Theodor Meron.⁴⁹ Marx claims that Shakespeare described soldiers heroically in history plays like *Henry VI* (c.1590-94), but that he came

to criticize the futility of war in later plays, especially in *Troilus and Cressida* (1602-03), which was written at the time of the accession of peacemaker, James.

Like many Elizabethan people, Chettle would have supported the wars between England and the Catholic leagues led by Spain, considering the description of soldiers in Hoffman. This idea is also suggested in his criticism of Spain in Englandes Mourning Garment. He shows his strong hostility to Spain in the work, as we have seen. In addition, he insists on the justification of wars in the Low Countries, where the Dutch fought against the Spanish over their independence with the aid of England: "if she would cease to defend the low Countries, restore the goods taken by reprisall from the Spaniards, build vp the Religious houses diverted in her Fathers time, and let the Romane Religion be received through her Land; why then she might have peace:"(94). Therefore Chettle can be thought to have regarded the wars against Spain as just and right.

The figure of the soldier seems not only to have been the symbol of warfare, but also that of patriotism and nostalgia for the Elizabethan Golden Age, when the English navy led by Sir Francis Drake (1540-96), sea captain and explorer, defeated the Spanish Armada, and when such chivalric icons as Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86) and Earl of Essex gave energy to people, evoking their patriotism and anti-Catholicism. In the 1590s, successive political and economic crises troubled the Elizabethans, among which the most sensational was the execution of Essex, which happened a year before Chettle's play was written.

Through these sympathetic descriptions of poor soldiers, Chettle thus implicitly contrasts the previous merry Elizabethan period with the current dark, corrupt society and shows his anxiety for the coming reign of James, his wistfulness for the past time suggesting criticism of current society.⁵⁰ It was the very turn of the century and a time when people's ideas on religion, politics and science were changing.⁵¹ Some were conservative and others were radical. Chettle, in his early forties, can be thought to have still admired the soldiers and described them in the figures of Hoffman's father and Old Stilt, while courtiers like Cecil, who took sides with the potential King of England, James, began to occupy the place where warlike heroes like Sidney and Essex had dominated. This play is thus a fully political drama written in a time of great social change.

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I have discussed the relations between "poor soldiers" in *Hoffman* and those in the late-Elizabethan society, presenting Chettle's military concerns, the topical war/

peace debate, and the problems of veterans. Chettle was strongly conscious of these concerns, and sympathetic to "poor soldiers," who had money neither for food nor clothes, nor could they disobey their corrupt captains and superiors. He described sympathetically these soldiers in Old Stilt, and in Hoffman's downfallen father and criticized such exploiters as the Dukes.

Chettle had a clear antipathy towards Catholics, particularly the Spanish, and also seems negative towards James, at least from *Englandes Mourning Garments*. With respect to the peace/ war debate, he was apparently prowar against Spain, regarding the campaign as a "Just War." At the end of the Elizabethan Age, Chettle, like many others, must have been very anxious for political future of the nation. This worry and nostalgia for Elizabethan Golden Age is expressed in *Hoffman*.

Nostalgia for the Elizabethan period, or the Tudor period may be seen also in Chettle's other works, such as *Sir Thomas More* (c.1593-c.1601), *The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green* (1600), which is set in the reign of Edward VI, *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey* (1601), *The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey* (1601) and *Lady Jane* (1602), though English history plays came to be censored by the Master of Revels strictly after 1599.⁵² Also, he praised all Tudor princes including Elizabeth in *Englandes Mourning Garment*.⁵³

Chettle thus cautiously observed society and politics in the late-Tudor period, and military backgrounds are particularly described in both pamphlets and dramas. He dealt with this topical war theme in *Hoffman* from a pro-war viewpoint, in other words, anti-Catholic and anti-James. Although it is unclear whether he planned to write the elegy for Elizabeth, *Englandes Mourning Garment* at this point, he must have, though implicitly, placed things reminding audiences of their glorious days into his last Elizabethan play.

The plight of common soldiers appealed to the audiences, because as Nashe observed, large numbers of them were or had been soldiers, whether they were captains or common soldiers. ⁵⁴ Chettle described them in this play to evoke patriotism as well as popularity, as soldiers devoted themselves to the state and they were the very symbol of patriotism. In the description of old stories in which Hoffman's father and Old Stilt flourished, Chettle probably attempted to reflect military heroes like Sidney and Essex, who also flourished in Elizabethan Golden Age, and at the same time, he implicitly criticized current society.

In the last years of Elizabeth, common soldiers were neglected and exploiters feathered their nests, as we have seen. Chettle suggested these situations in this work with the heroic episodes of Hoffman's father and Old Stilt, since yearning for Golden Age implies criticism of present society. In conclusion, *Hoffman* is a very strongly political play reflecting Elizabethan topical military issues.

Notes

- Most of Chettle's plays are lost. Surviving plays include The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington (1598) and The Death of Robert, Earl of Huntington (1598) with Anthony Munday; Patient Grissil (1599) with Thomas Dekker and William Haughton; The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green (1600) with John Day.
- ² R. A. Foakes, ed., *Henslowe's Diary*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002) 207.
- ³ A. H. Thorndike, "The Relations of *Hamlet* to Contemporary Revenge Plays," *PMLA* 17 (1902) 125.
- For Hoffman as a revenge tragedy, see Thorndike 125-220; Fredson Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy 1587-1642 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1940); Eleanor Prosser, Hamlet and Revenge (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1971) among others. For Hoffman as imitation of Hamlet, see N. Delius, "Chettle's Hoffman und Shakespeare's Hamlet, "Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft 9 (1874) 166-94; J. J. Jusserand, A Literary History of The English People—From the Origins to the Civil War, vol.3 (1909; London: Unwin, 1926) 316; Percy Simpson, "The Theme of Revenge in Elizabethan Tragedy," Proceedings of the British Academy (London: Oxford UP, 1935) 125-28.
- J. P. Collier, The History of English Dramatic Poetry (London: George Bell, 1831) 51. C. V. Boyer, The Villain as Hero in Elizabethan Tragedy (1914; New York: Russell& Russell, 1964) 143. Henry Chettle, The Tragedy of Hoffman, ed. J. D. Jowett (Nottingham: Nottingham Drama Texts, 1983) iii.
- ⁶ Thorndike 193. Harold Jenkins, The Life and Work of Henry Chettle (London: Sedgwick & Jackson, 1934) 84-85. M. A. Saunders, The Tragedy of Hoffman: A Critical Analysis (Ann Arbor: Dissertation Abstracts International, 1983) 106.
- ⁷ See my paper, "Ryuketsu bamen no daigomi [The Relish of the Blood Shedding Scene: An Essay on *The Tragedy of Hoffman*]," English Literature 89 (Tokyo: Waseda University English Literature Society, 2005): 15-26.
- ⁸ See my paper, "Downfall and Usurpation in *The Tragedy of Hoffman," English Literature* 90 (Tokyo: Waseda University English Literature Society, 2005): 1-20.
- Paul Jorgensen, Shakespeare's Military World (Berkley: U of California P, 1956) is a pioneer in this area. Other studies include John Hale, "Shakespeare and Warfare," William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influence, ed. J. F. Andrews (New York: Scribner, 1985): 85-98; Theodor Meron, Bloody Constraint: War and Chivalry in Shakespeare (New York: Oxford UP, 1998); Nick de Somogyi, Shakespeare's Theatre of War (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998); Nina Taunton, 1590s Drama and Militarism: Portrayals of War in Marlowe, Chapman and Shakespeare's Henry V (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).
- ¹⁰ Acts of the Privy Council of England, new ser. 1 (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1921-74) 53; William Camden, Annals, or the Historie of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princesse

- Elizabeth, Late Queene of England, tr. R. N., book 4, 4th ed. (London, 1688) 496-97.
- ¹¹ C. G. Cruickshank, *Elizabeth's Army* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966) 23.
- ¹² There is no biographical record on Humphrey Barwick in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* or other materials.
- ¹³ Sir Roger Williams, A Briefe Discourse of Warre (London, 1590); Humfrey Barwick, A Breefe Discourse Concerning the Force and Effect of all Manual Weapons of Fire (London, 1591); Sir John Smythe, Certain Discourses Military (London, 1590); Henry Knyvett, The Defence of the Realme (London, 1596).
- ¹⁴ For military revolution, see M. Duffy, ed, *The Military Revolution and the State 1500-1800* (Exeter: U of Exeter P, 1980); Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988); David Eltis, *The Military Revolution in Sixteenth-century Europe* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1995).
- ¹⁵ Barnaby Riche, Allarme to England (London, 1578) A3v.
- Geoffrey Gates, The Defence of Military Profession (London, 1579) 20.
- ¹⁷ Robert Devereux, the Second Earl of Essex, An Apologie of the Earle of Essex (London, 1603) F1v-F2r, F3r.
- ¹⁸ Dudley Digges, Foure Paradoxes, or Politique Discourses (London, 1604) 96.
- ¹⁹ All dates of plays in this paper follow Alfred Harbage, ed., *Annals of English Drama 975-1700*, rev. ed. (London: Routledge, 1964).
- $^{\rm 20}$ For further analysis on each plays, see Taunton.
- ²¹ All citations from *Hoffman* are based on Harold Jenkins, ed., *The Tragedy of Hoffman* (Oxford: Malone Society Reprints, 1951).
- ²² A Pleasant Comedie Shewing the Contention betweene Liberalitie and Prodigalitie (London, 1602) F2v.
- ²³ Somogyi 18.
- Anon., The First Part of the True & Honorable History of the Life of Sir Iohn Old-castle, the Good Lord Cobham (London, 1600) B3v.
- John Dover Wilson, ed., Life in Shakespeare's England (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1944) 296. For a definition of "ruffler," see The Rogues and Vagabonds of Shakespeare's Youth: Awdeley's 'Fraternity of Vacabondes' and Harman's 'Caveat,' eds. Edward Viles and F. J. Furnivall (London: Chatto and Windus, 1907) 3, 29-31.
- ²⁶ A. L. Beier, Masterless Men: The Vagrancy Problem in England 1560-1640 (London: Methuen, 1985) 93, 224.
- ²⁷ Somogyi 142-43. Also, Beier 95; Penry Williams, The Tudor Regime (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1979) 212-13; J. S. Nolan, "The Militarization of the Elizabethan State," The Journal of Military History 58 (1994): 416; Norman Jones, "Shakespeare's England," A Companion to Shakespeare (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999): 35.
- ²⁸ Matthew Sutcliffe, The Practice, Proceedings, and Lawes of Armes (London, 1593) 298-99.
- ²⁹ Thomas Churchyard, A Pleasant Discourse of Court and

- Warres (London, 1596) B3v, B4r.
- ³⁰ Somogyi 12-13.
- ³¹ William Shakespeare, 2 Henry IV, ed. Rene Weis (New York: Clarendon P, 1998); 1 Henry IV, ed. David Bevington (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987).
- 32 Smythe iii, 1.
- ³³ For further discussion of "dead pay," see Acts of the Privy Council of England 26, 336; Cruickshank 143, 153-58 and passim; Charles Edelman, Shakespeare s Military Language: A Dictionary (London: Athlone, 2000) 327.
- ³⁴ William Shakespeare, Henry VI, Part Two, ed. Roger Warren (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002).
- ³⁵ Barnaby Riche, Faultes Faults, and Nothing Else But Faultes (London, 1606), M4r.
- ³⁶ Hayward Townshend, *Historical Collections* (London, 1680) 307.
- ³⁷ Cruickshank 168. Beier 94. Gervase Philips, "To Cry 'Home! Home!" : Mutiny, Moral Indiscipline in Tudor Armies," *The Journal of Military History* 65 (2001): 329.
- ³⁸ A. V. Judges, *The Elizabethan Underworld* (London: G. Routledge, 1930) xvii-xviii.
- ³⁹ Beier 94.
- ⁴⁰ Hans Claude Hamilton, ed., Calendar of the State Papers, Ireland 4 (Nendeln: Kraus, 1974) 51.
- ⁴¹ Calendar of State Papers, Ireland 5, 356-57.
- ⁴² Richard Brucher, "Piracy and Parody in Chettle's Hoffman," Ben Jonson Journal 6 (1999): 220.
- ⁴³ C. M. Ingleby, ed., Shakespere Allusion-Books, Part I (London: N. Trübner, 1874) 93. Subsequent quotations from Englandes Mourning Garments are based on this edition and the figures indicate page numbers.
- 44 Beier 28.
- ⁴⁵ For Greene and Nashe, see Sandra Clark, *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets 1580-1640* (London: Athlone P, 1983); for Shakespeare see William C. Carroll, "Language, Politics, and Poverty in Shakespearian Drama," *Shakespeare and Politics*, ed. Catherine M. S. Alexander (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004): 142-154.
- ⁴⁶ R. A. Foakes 103.
- ⁴⁷ Ingleby 119.
- ⁴⁸ Christopher Hill, "Censorship and English Literature," The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill, Volume One: Writing and Revolution in 17th Century England (Brighton: Harvester, 1985) 57. See also Penry Williams, The Later Tudors: England, 1547-1603 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) 388.
- ⁴⁹ Steven Marx, "Shakespeare's Pacifism," Renaissance Quarterly 45 (1992): 49-95. Theodor Meron, Bloody Constraint: War and Chivalry in Shakespeare (New York: Oxford UP, 1998) 16-46.
- ⁵⁰ Peter V. Marinelli, *Pastoral* (London: Methuen, 1971) 16.
- ⁵¹ Christopher Hill, The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill, Volume Three: People and Ideas in 17th Century England (Brighton: Harvester, 1986).
- ⁵² All of these works are lost, excepting *The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green*.
- 53 For Tudor monarchs excluding Elizabeth, see Ingleby 83-84.

⁵⁴ Thomas Nashe, Pierce Penilesse his Supplication to the Diveill, The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.1, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1958) 212.