

BEYOND TUDOR PARADIGMS:
POLITICS AND LANGUAGE IN RENAISSANCE
HISTORY PLAYS

BY

MITALI RAYCHAUDHURI PATI

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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ABSTRACT

Through close analysis of Renaissance rhetorical strategies and Tudor political paradigms in the speeches and speech acts of major historical characters in Bale's King Johan, Hughes's The Misfortunes of Arthur, Lodge's The Wounds of Civil War, Marlowe's Edward II, the anonymous Troublesome Reign, Shakespeare's King John, and the First Tetralogy, this study explores human reality and political reality via the language act. By studying humanity in conflict with politics through style, this study stresses the radically sociopolitical and mobile nature of the language act.

Rhetoric in sixteenth century English historical drama is intertwined with character development in relation to contemporary political paradigms. Recurring major political themes are those of strong rulership, stable government, the political responsibilities of the king, the peers, and the commons. Secondary themes are the need for monarchs to please their subjects, and the need for both princes and peers to confront political reality with wisdom.

This study concludes that Tudor dramatists were making the most of the politics of misunderstanding by exploiting the ambiguity inherent in rhetorical language, and to a great extent, in all political language. Tudor dramatists seriously questioned contemporary political doctrines by using oblique and 'politic' rhetoric. By stepping beyond Tudor paradigms, these dramatists shed light upon the past in terms of the present in a fundamentally different way.

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spares neither kings nor clowns. The primary criterion for the selection of these plays is the tragic inner suffering of political figures as they confront both the public and private values of their times. Major figures suffer in personal life and meet with destruction because of their political beliefs and actions. The tragic core of meaning evoked by such characterization suggests universal humane values which transcend Tudor paradigms.

Sixteenth century "history" plays which have come down to us include both those which develop subjects from English chronicles and those which use histories of other lands such as Roman histories. The Misfortunes, the King John plays, and the first tetralogy which are concerned with ancient and medieval English history most frequently address contemporary political issues. However, this study also selects a Roman history play, Wounds, for its similarity in tone with the English histories and its focus upon the inner sufferings of politicians caught in the midst of a civil war. The morality play King Johan, written much earlier than the later English histories, is also included in this study because of its concern with language, character, and ethos. Although King Johan may not have influenced the later King John plays, the play itself was a rhetorical instrument in Bale's "holy" war against English Catholics, and therefore deserves consideration in this study.

Apparent omissions in this study are Shakespeare's Richard II and Richard III. The Machiavellian Richard III

is indeed a rhetorical man and a consummate actor, but such observations have become commonplace in recent scholarship. The rhetoric of Richard II has received extended attention in James L. Calderwood's Metadrama in Shakespeare's Henriad (1979) and Joseph Porter's The Drama of Speech Acts (1979). Such scholarship emphasizes the richness of language and figure in Shakespeare's history plays. On the model of these studies, we can assume that other history plays of that period also invite close analysis. The examination of dramatic speech and characterization is conducted to a great extent from the point of view of the audience. Therefore, in a study concerned with the verbal processes in political speeches, the charisma of Richard II and the sheer evil of Richard III would temporarily distract the audience from attending to the language act itself.

The theory of the "speech act" has been adapted from Clæmen via Porter to enable this study to focus upon the political actions and views of leaders in these plays. The hardships of major historical characters such as Arthur, Marius, Edward II, King John, Henry VI, and Richard III are most clearly observed in the changes in their speech styles. These shifts in speech styles are explained by the use of Richard Lanham's theory of the homo rhetoricus and the homo seriusus.

By focussing upon rhetorical strategies and shifting speech styles, this study shows how sixteenth century history plays repeatedly explore the gap between

contemporary political theories and their applicability to real life, asking questions instead of offering any radical solutions. The findings of the following chapters support Herbert Lindenberger's view that history plays constitute a mode of historical thought where open questions are asked, and no replacement of one system of political thinking by another is called for. Lindenberger writes: "Historical drama, insofar as it reflects upon and interprets past events, can be considered a branch of historical thought, though one which projects hypotheses and individual theories about history more than it does fully worked out philosophies" (Lindenberger, 131). This study examines one aspect of questioning and interpreting the past in that political beliefs and political situations are often in conflict with the psychological and emotional concerns of human beings.

The phrase "beyond Tudor paradigms" in the title of this thesis describes the spirit of inquiry conveyed by the fascinating play on political signifiers in the sixteenth century history plays discussed in the following chapters. For example, the sixteenth century Homilies treat civil rebellion as a primal sin, and scholars have usually read the politics of the early history plays of Elizabeth I's reign as homiletic reiterations of the doctrine of obedience. Yet in two plays, widely divergent in sources, treatment, form, and style, The Misfortunes of Arthur and The Wounds of Civil War, both written and produced in the

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1580's, we find the recurring Tudor subjects of rebellion and civil war combined with surprising awareness of the more controversial political thought of the sixteenth century to emphasize the sufferings of those in power.

Thomas Kuhn originally used the term "paradigm" to indicate a larger applicability than our usual understanding of a model or pattern (Kuhn, 23). And it is in this larger sense that the concept of the paradigm is used in the following chapters. Modern scholars writing about history and politics in the Renaissance have adapted Kuhn's term to signify controlling theories and supporting examples in history and politics. In Politics, Language, and Time (1971), J.G.A. Pocock is very clearly influenced by the Kuhnian paradigm theory when he writes:

paradigms -- controlling concepts and theories--
so satisfactorily discharge the intellectual
functions expected of them that they
authoritatively indicate not merely the solutions
to problems, but the kinds of problems which are
to be conceptualized as requiring solution;(13).

This study uses the definition stated by Arthur B. Ferguson in Clio Unbound (1979) in which a paradigm is understood "to denote a pattern of shared ideas, values, and assumptions that provides the generally accepted language for the discussion of a given issue affecting the life of a society" (258).

Major sixteenth century English political paradigms

include the "orthodox" concepts of inherited right, non-resistance, the relation of the king to the laws of God and man, the possibility of absolute monarchy, the imaginative two bodies theory closely associated with the theories of monarchy, and the complex and controversial principles of Machiavellism. Most of these concepts were interpreted differently from one political writer to another. According to J.W. Allen, Elizabethan political writers deny the notion of absolute authority, and the relation of the Crown to Parliament and to the laws of the realm was becoming a major question (267). The medieval English aversion to absolute monarchy made the king subject to fundamental law, a subject treated at length in Sir John Fortescue's De Natura Legis Naturae (Baumer, 8-15).

However, the fears of civil war and of foreign invasion threatened the security of the Tudor state. Hence the doctrine of non-resistance, a precursor of the theory of divine right came to enjoy popularity.[1] Franklin Baumer writes:

The New Monarchy -- implying the absorption of all rival jurisdictions, secular or ecclesiastical, into the hands of the royal government -- needed just such a doctrinal justification to make its work permanent. So long as there was danger of England lapsing back into a state of feudal disorder or being destroyed altogether by continental invaders, or of the Royal Supremacy

being repudiated, Englishmen believed that the king was God's viceregent on earth, and that disobedience was a mortal sin. ... The doctrine of non-resistance, expanded into the theory of divine right, lived on, to be sure, into the seventeenth and even the eighteenth century (90-91).

It is in the above sense that sixteenth century English history plays frequently invoke the god-like position of the king as an "orthodox" Tudor paradigm.

The view that Renaissance history plays, especially those of Shakespeare, are not always conservative in addressing contemporary political and social issues has gained favour among Renaissance scholars since the 1970's.[2] Even though their methods of reading differ widely, most recent scholars agree as to the narrowness of the didactic interpretations by such earlier influential scholars as E.M.W. Tillyard, Lily B. Campbell, and Irving Ribner. To some extent, because of this dissent from earlier scholars as well as the writings of the new historicists, the resulting situation in contemporary scholarship on the history plays can be summed up in Robert B. Pierce's statement that the two pitfalls of recent scholarship are "one of pursuing a hobbyhorse at the expense of Shakespeare's plays and the other of bogging down in the conflict whether or not the history plays embody Tudor orthodoxy" (Pierce, ix). The focus on the fascinating complexity of politics and rhetoric in the text itself helps

this study to avoid the pursuit of a critical hobbyhorse.

The strongest plea to free the history plays from the didactic readings of earlier scholars comes in Robert Ornstein's A Kingdom for a Stage (1972). Even as he castigates these earlier scholars, Ornstein concedes that there existed a shared set of ideas in the Elizabethan community (10). In the following passage we clearly observe that Ornstein really refers to Renaissance political paradigms:

The appeal to Elizabethan attitudes is frequent enough in the literature on the History Plays for us to wonder why it should be easier to predict the responses of Shakespeare's audience than to interpret his artistic intentions from the thousands of lines which embody them. If we grant that there was in Shakespeare's England a community of shared values and beliefs, which scholarship can cautiously describe, we must grant too that a wide range of individual and group attitudes must have existed in his society, which knew more than its share of political turmoil and social and economic change (10).

The present study also concurs with Ornstein's attack on the earlier interpretations of the history plays where he finds that earlier scholars believed the Tudor rulers initiated a political orthodoxy that is often labelled the "Tudor myth" of history. Tillyard, Campbell, and Ribner

maintained that the sixteenth century history plays endorsed the views of the ruling dynasty. Hence they read the plays as didactic reiterations of the doctrine of obedience set forth in the sixteenth century Homilies.

Commenting on the relative unorthodoxy of Shakespeare's histories, Ornstein writes: "The pity of this scholarly insistence on the conventionality of the History Plays is that it threatens to turn living works of theater into dramatic fossils or repositories of quaint and dusty ideas" (Ornstein, 6-7). The following chapters examine the "shared values and beliefs" that Ornstein questioned or ignored, attempting to work in his spirit, paying attention to the genuinely significant political paradigms in three lesser known pre-Shakespearean plays, Misfortunes, Wounds, the Troublesome Raigne, and the slightly better known King Johan.

Ornstein's most useful reading of Hall is his principal point of departure from the earlier Tillyard-Campbell reading. According to Ornstein, Hall does not emphasize God's providential design in history:

Hall's conviction of the working of Providence in history never interferes with his strong common sense. Even as he can find God's judgment in the misfortunes of evil men, he can also condemn the superstition of those who went on moralizing every turn of fate (Ornstein, 20).

Ornstein points out that like other historians of his

generation Hall "dwells on the horrors of civil war, and, on the unnaturalness of dissension, strife, and factionalism in England" (17). But nowhere in the text does Hall "propagandize for the Tudor doctrine of obedience; he never postulates the sacredness of royal authority, nor does he exclaim against the sin of rebellion" (Ornstein, 17). Just as the historian Hall was not a spokesman for Tudor orthodoxy, the playwrights did not use historical plots to moralize constantly on God's providential design in history. In the words of Marie Axton:

Drama far from reiterating homilies and political truisms ... was, in fact, by virtue of its form and social ambience, ideally suited to question the validity of any conceptual explanation of human behaviour. In the best plays of the period between Gorboduc and King Lear it is precisely the tension between theory and enactment, between ideal political behaviour and the actuality of human life, which compels our lasting interest (14).

Axton, however, emphasizes the succession theme. Her study of the English historical drama of the 1590s focusses mainly on the debate over succession in the time of Elizabeth I as Axton tries to recover the "contemporary engagement of drama in the 1590's" (Axton, ix).

Campbell, Tillyard, and Ribner still provide starting points for research, despite their too selective and

moralistic reading of the Tudor history plays. Campbell views the plays as "mirrors of Elizabethan policy" stressing the frequent reading of the past in terms of the present. Tillyard is sensitive to changes in style and language in the histories, a feature that more recent scholars seek to explore more fully. Ribner traces the "development of the English history play from the late medieval political moralities". Even though he endorses the didactic reading, he recognizes that in the morality structure which was incorporated into Elizabethan history plays, there were "elements of symbol and allegory by means of which the matter of history could be identified with contemporary political situations and made to teach general political lessons" (Ribner, 37). This study shows that such political lessons frequently questioned contemporary theories instead of supporting propaganda in favour of the Tudor myth. By naming the rhetorical figures symbol and allegory, Ribner suggests in passing that these political lessons could be studied through language. The study of language has always been associated with the writing of history, and during the Renaissance history-writing was viewed as a branch of rhetoric (Burke, 105). Therefore, the examination of Tudor paradigms through style and language in the following chapters is based upon the traditional associations of rhetoric with history and politics.

The complexity of political language comes from its rhetorical nature, and the dramatist who uses political and

historical themes has an advantage over the historian in the multiple richness of the rhetorical strategies he can employ. On the subject of political rhetoric, this study agrees with Pocock who writes:

It is of the nature of rhetoric and above all of political rhetoric ... that the same utterance will simultaneously perform a diversity of linguistic functions. Because factual and evaluative statements are inextricably combined in political speech, and because it is intended to reconcile and coordinate different groups pursuing different values, its inherent ambiguity and its cryptic content are invariably high (Pocock, 17).

The ambiguous quality of rhetorical language thus permits dramatic characters [and their creators] to extend their meanings beyond the paradigms whose vocabularies they are ostensibly using. By using rhetorical figures when he writes political speeches to be delivered by historical characters in a play, the dramatist suggests a multivalency of meaning while he seemingly operates within the accepted paradigms of his age. Stephen Greenblatt, however, implies that such deliberate suggestiveness was unlikely in the Renaissance when he states: "we are free to locate and pay homage to the play's doubts only because they no longer threaten us" ("Invisible Bullets", 57). However, other scholars on Renaissance rhetorical modes suggest that sociopolitical referents could not only be incorporated into

literary works by means of Renaissance writing practices, but that they could also be recognized by readers of the time as contributing to ideological debates (Patterson, 140-141). We may therefore assume that the innovative and complex treatment of "contemporary" histories and political paradigms in the history plays would have been recognized by the more erudite members of the audience at times, if not all the time. And the obliquity of political references was all the more necessary because the dramatists of Renaissance England lived and worked in an era of censorship.

Renaissance dramatists were very well-versed in rhetoric, but only recently have scholars such as Maus, Parker, and Vickers started to probe the complex and sometimes deliberate use of rhetorical figures in Renaissance works.[3] William J. Kennedy points out that:

Style ...is not just a matter of apt diction, figures of speech, and elocutionary devices; it involves the speaker's concept of himself and the roles that he is playing, as well as his control over the audience. These aspects of style are implicit in the classical rhetorical concepts of ethos and pathos, though usually they are not enunciated in the medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, and Neoclassical taxonomies of tropes, and figures pertaining to the study of logos (Kennedy, 190).

Using the definitions in the well-known Renaissance taxonomy of tropes, Puttenham's The Arte of English Poesie,

this study analyses the speech styles of major historical characters. Through examining the rhetorical strategies used by leaders in significant dramatic situations, we can evaluate the extent to which received political wisdom is articulated, tested, and perhaps, none too convincingly applied to problems of statecraft in The Misfortunes of Arthur, The Wounds of Civil War, Edward II, King Johan, The Troublesome Reign, King John, and the first tetralogy.

The use of Puttenham is justifiable for two basic reasons. One, Puttenham's listing and description of tropes is one of the most detailed of such Renaissance texts that have come down to us. And two, Puttenham himself supports the study of character through style:

because this continuall course and manner of writing or speech sheweth the matter and disposition of the writers minde, more than one or few words or sentences can shew, therefore there be that have called stile, the image of man [mentis character] for man is but his minde, and as his minde is tempered and qualified, so are his speeches and language at large, and his inward conceits be the mettall of his minde, and his manner of utterance the very warp and woofe of his conceits, more plaine, or busie and intricate, or otherwise affected after the rate (Puttenham, 160-161).[4]

Puttenham's definitions are used in the following

chapters to show how the use and misuse of tropes by major historical characters may reflect upon their worth as politicians. Lanham's theory of the two aspects of man, the actor-like homo rhetoricus and the more sincere homo seriosus is used to define and develop analyses of the shifts in the speech style[s] of major historical characters. The use of Lanham's theory enables us to examine the political roles of significant historical characters as dramatic roles in which the speakers are aware of the differences in public and private styles, and to test the successful politician's essential hypothesis that all politics is theatre. Because of this necessity of role-playing in political life, the homo rhetoricus style is more politically successful than the homo seriosus style, although the latter more frequently arouses our sympathy when used in speeches of suffering. In other words, the overall relationship of style and character in the plays discussed in this study corresponds to Altman's view of Marlowe's plays -- "that all invention is essentially self-referential" (Altman, 322). [5]

The use of the "speech act" concept in the following chapters provides the methodology for focussing selectively on speeches. Clemen had initially pointed out that speech substituted for action in pre-Shakespearean drama when he wrote:

In the rhetorical drama -- and pre-Shakespearian drama is to a very large extent rhetorical drama

--all these things are translated into words, into high-sounding speech. The characters in these plays must represent with their tongues alone everything that later on is conveyed to the audience in the various other ways (Clemen, 13).

Unfortunately, Clemen viewed the recurring substitution of speech for action as a somewhat primitive technique.

In political life, however, speech substitutes for action. Most political speech is rhetorical, and most political acts are speech acts. Therefore, the following chapters utilize Porter's theory of the speech act as a method for studying political speeches, actions, and characters. At first, "a speech act is an act performed in speech" (Porter, 6). Heavily indebted to the British philosopher J.L. Austin's How To Do Things With Words (1962), Porter derives three principal categories of dramatic speech acts, illocutionary, locutionary, and perlocutionary acts from Austin:

Austin ... also calls them "illocutionary acts", since they are performed in speech. ... in performing an illocutionary act a person also performs the act of uttering a sentence, the simple act of speech itself. Austin terms this the "locutionary act". ... Furthermore, in performing both these acts one may be performing a third, namely, the act of persuasion. Persuasion is an example of what Austin calls a

"perlocutionary act", one done through speech
(Porter, 6-7).

Most of the speech acts analysed in the following chapters are illocutionary acts or forceful performatives.[6] And many public utterances by politicians are also perlocutionary acts. The term "speech act" is used to avoid repetitions of the terms "locution", "illocution", and "perlocution", so that the focus upon Renaissance rhetoric, politics, and the sufferings of major historical figures is not blurred in the following chapters.

By studying humanity in conflict with politics through style, this study stresses the radically sociopolitical and mobile nature of the language act. Recent research in rhetorical theory continues to influence studies of the richness of language and figure in Renaissance drama.[7] Helped by the persuasive writings of the new historicists, in the late 1980's we have clearly recognized the need to put the text back into history. Edward Pechter agrees: "Putting the text back into history (or better, histories: our histories, its histories) is clearly a valuable project" (Pechter, 302). Yet, there exists a gap between studies of rhetoric and the new consciousness of history in the scholarship available on the English historical drama of the late sixteenth century. The interpretation of style in the following chapters seeks to bridge the gap between new historicist approaches and studies of language and character in sixteenth century history plays.

NOTES

1. Franklin Le Van Baumer in The early Tudor theory of kingship (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940): 92 distinguishes between the later interpretation of divine right and the Tudor theory of non-resistance:

the doctrine of non-resistance preached by the ruling groups in the Tudor state was by no means identical with the theory of the divine right of kings advanced by James I, Dr. Cowell, Archbishop Sancroft, and others, in the seventeenth century. According to Figgis, the divine right of kings includes four fundamental propositions, (1) that monarchy is a divinely ordained institution, (2) indefeasible hereditary right, (3) that sovereignty is invested entirely in the king who is incapable of legal limitation, and (4) non-resistance. As Allen notes, the Henrician political writers did not concern themselves with inquiring into the origins of monarchy, and certainly did not propound any idea of indefeasible hereditary right.

2. The theory of God's providential design in history in Renaissance historical drama was challenged by Henry A. Kelly in Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1970). Kelly protested against the Tillyard-Campbell over-emphasis of the "Tudor myth". Disagreement with the earlier readings is also present in James Winny, The Player King: A Theme of Shakespeare's Histories (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968), Michael Manheim, The Weak King Dilemma in Shakespearean History Plays (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974), David Riggs, Shakespeare's Heroical Histories: Henry VI and its Literary Tradition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), Moody Prior, The Drama of Power: Studies in Shakespeare's History Plays (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), John Wilders, The Lost Garden: A View of Shakespeare's English and Roman History Plays (London: Macmillan, 1978), Kristian Smidt, Unconformities in Shakespeare's Plays (London: Macmillan, 1982), C.G. Thayer, Shakespearean Politics: Government and Misgovernment in the Great Histories (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1983), and Paul N. Siegel, Shakespeare's English and Roman History Plays: A Marxist Approach (Rutherford, Madison, Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1986).

3. Katherine Eisaman Maus, "Taking Tropes Seriously:

Language and Violence in Shakespeare's Rape of Lucrece", Shakespeare Quarterly 37, No 1 (Spring 1986): 66-82. See also Patricia Parker, "Shakespeare and rhetoric: 'dilation' and 'delation' in Othello" in Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman eds. Shakespeare and the Question of Theory (New York: Methuen, 1985): 54-74; and Nancy Vickers, "'The blazon of sweet beauty's best': Shakespeare's Lucrece" in Shakespeare and the Question of Theory: 95-115.

4. The "f" has been modernized to "s", and the "u" to "v" in this quotation.

5. A somewhat similar idea is briefly mentioned, but not developed in Michael J. Chepiga, Politics and the Uses of Language in Shakespeare's English History Plays (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, October 1975).

In his conclusion Chepiga states:

Many, like George Orwell, would see a causal relationship between shabby politics and debased language. However enticing this view may seem and whatever incidental insights it may afford, it is more appealing than accurate. ... Politics and language are related, but not in a direct cause and effect manner. Rather they are two different but similarly functioning manifestations of the same symptoms or qualities in man. What gives one's language and politics their characteristic quality is one's objective regard for the truth or one's subjective regard for one's interests (221-222).

6. Joseph A. Porter in The Drama of Speech Acts: Shakespeare's Lancastrian Tetralogy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) states:

He [Austin] begins by analyzing utterances of the form "I hereby christen (deny, accuse, etc.)" ... calling these utterances "performatives". Austin notices two further things about performatives. First they are acts ... done in speech. Second, in a performative the act is done explicitly: ... the acts which are done explicitly in performatives may also be done nonexplicitly. Christening, for instance, might be done with sentence "This ship is now the Queen Mary." What is constant, whether or not it is made explicit, is the force of the utterance ... Austin calls such acts "speech acts" (Porter, 6-7).

7. Influential recent studies of language in Shakespeare's histories include Joel B. Altman's The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama (Berkeley: University of California

Press, 1978) where he probes the connection between sixteenth century non-Shakespearean drama and formal rhetoric seeking not to "prove the importance of this influence, ... but rather to consider its deepest resonances in the minds which were fashioned by it, and to come to some better understanding of what this meant for the dramatic literature that such minds produced" (3). Alvin B. Kernan's ethical and mythic reading in "The Henriad: Shakespeare's Major History Plays", William Shakespeare Histories and Poems: Modern Critical Views ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1986) studies image, symbol, and metaphor. Joan Webber in "The Renewal of the King's Symbolic Role: From Richard II to Henry V", Texas Studies in Literature and Language 4 (1963): 530-538 finds The Henriad to be "an analysis of the nature of kingship and royal rhetoric which directly concerns the relationship between language and reality" (530). James L. Calderwood disagrees with Webber in Metadrama in Shakespeare's Henriad: Richard II and Henry V (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) where he states:

Instead of regarding language as a means toward political ends, I would find Shakespeare solving problems of language by means of politics. Political affairs, in other words, become metaphors for art (4).

CHAPTER TWO

Civil rebellion and leadership in The Misfortunes of Arthur and The Wounds of Civil War

The Misfortunes of Arthur and The Wounds of Civil War, two plays widely divergent in sources, treatment, form, and style, focus on the private and public dilemmas faced by those in power. Although conforming to the accepted Tudor moral pattern in terms of overall structure, both plays examine the world of sixteenth century realpolitik, frequently indicating the limitations of the moral interpretation of history and ideal political behaviour when applied to the reality of human life and private emotions. The principal characters in Misfortunes and Wounds are not marionettes who walk on stage reciting lines that endorse Tudor political orthodoxy. They are recognizable types of public personalities who command our sympathy and interest. Mark Anthony's rhetorical question, "What, then, are men that 'gainst themselves do war?" in Thomas Lodge's The Wounds of Civil War [I.i. 265] emphasizes the self-division ever present in the leaders of opposing factions in times of civil discord. The inner conflicts experienced by the principal characters are of lasting interest to us, and clearly illustrate the difficulties of choice and political responsibility.

Thomas Hughes's The Misfortunes of Arthur [1587] depicts with realism the personal and practical problems

facing the sixteenth century monarch. Despite the uneven quality of its poetry, Misfortunes presents its antagonist Mordred and protagonist Arthur, both as seriously involved in political thought and action, and as terribly confused.

The political situations in Misfortunes contain general lessons in statecraft that have very limited topical significance. In terms of its stage history, Misfortunes was presented before Elizabeth I in February 1588 by the lawyers of Gray's Inn. David Bevington in Tudor Drama and Politics attempts to find topical meaning and states:

When the gentlemen of Gray's Inn wrote The Misfortunes of Arthur and presented it before Elizabeth in February of 1588, they accordingly exercised a restraint missing from the earlier Gorboduc. Experience had taught these lawyers the wisdom of speaking in distant parables about the true prince and the tyrant, in the vein of Horestes, with no open reference to Parliament or succession. The parable of Arthur and Mordred is a mirror for princes, of course, but does not spell out its contemporary application. Only in their handling of sources do Thomas Hughes and his fellow authors reveal topical intent, and even here any allusions to Mary and Scotland are most oblique (153).

Bevington also compares Misfortunes to Pickering's Horestes only to find that the parallels in the two plots are of no

real significance (155). Bevington's dismissal of similarities with Horestes and with Elizabeth I's problems with Mary, Queen of Scots are helpful insofar as they encourage us to focus more upon questions of ideal political behaviour instead of topical issues. Misfortunes is a discussion of the genuine human problems of sovereignty in which two kings, Arthur and Mordred, are clearly contrasted with one another in an effort to determine what ideal political behaviour should be. The play eventually develops Arthur as the rightful monarch and a devout prince and Mordred as a usurper and a tyrant. Misfortunes is a "history play" in the sense that Arthur was "the great ancestor of mythological Tudor genealogy" [Bevington, 154]. Spenser's The Faerie Queene [Book III, Canto iii] emphasizes the Arthurian descent of the reigning house of Tudor. A medieval work of "history", Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae, is the principal source of Misfortunes. Marie Axton points out that for Elizabethan writers:

History, 'faerie' and legal precedent were united in the figure of King Arthur. Elizabethan lawyers did not argue about Arthur's existence, Polydore Vergil had questioned Arthur's historicity in the early years of the Tudor reign but only under the Stuarts were his arguments systematically vindicated (75).

Axton adds: "Bacon affirmed Arthur's legal importance ... when he wrote dumbshows for The Misfortunes of Arthur, a

Gray's Inn play which anticipates the conflict of loyalties in Elizabeth's Catholic subjects posed by Philip's Catholic 'crusade'" (76). The chronicle sources have been altered by the lawyers who wrote Misfortunes to stress the legal significance of Mordred's rebellion and Gawain's loyalty (Axton, 78). While Axton's argument is relevant to the purpose of her book, it is too limited when the whole play is taken into account, because the play develops the personal and practical difficulties of sixteenth century monarchy as its chief thematic concern. As in other plays of the time, the crown becomes a symbol of private suffering for kings, and of public suffering for the people:

Who sawe the grief engraven in a Crowne,
Or knew the bad and bane whereto it's bound:
Would never sticke to throwe and fling it downe,
Nor once vouchsafe to heave it from the ground,
Such is the sweete of this ambitious powre,
No sooner had, then turnde eftsoones to sowre:
Atchiev'd with envie, exercise with hate,
Garded with feare, supported with debate.
O restlesse race of high aspyring head,
O worthlesse rule both pittyed and invied:
How many Millions to their losse you lead:

[Misfortunes, II. iv. 17-27, Chorus].

This concern with the people, their political power, and their suffering in times of war is constantly emphasized in Misfortunes.

The author[s] of Misfortunes modified Geoffrey by introducing the character of Mordred from Malory's Morte d'Arthur. This alteration makes Mordred, the antagonist, a usurper and a tyrant, the natural son and successor of Arthur who is a good and pious king. It appears almost as if the evil personified in Mordred is present inside Arthur himself, and certainly within the royal family. These evil conflicts within the royal house are to be reflected macrocosmically in the civil war and destruction that takes place in the state. From this perspective, Arthur is battling the evil that he himself has created, and is contending with the immoral forces in his own nature personified by his incestuous progeny.[1] The creation of Mordred was an unnatural and immoral act on the king's part, and the king is ultimately destroyed by his incestuously begotten heir.

From the beginning the play depicts sin and treachery in the royal family. Misfortunes opens with the effective use of a Senecan stage convention, the ghost of Gorlois reciting the past of the house of Arthur and craving revenge. The first living character to come onstage, Arthur's neglected and adulterous wife, Guenevora, then discusses her grievances against her husband. After the manner of Clytemnestra in the Agamemnon, she contemplates the murder of her husband, but the parallel goes no further, for she is dissuaded by Fronia. One of the principal arguments offered by Fronia against killing Arthur is that

Guenevora's husband is also her monarch:

Fron. To kill your spouse ? Guen. A stranger
and a foe:

Fron. Your liedge and king ? Guen. He wants
both Realme and Crowne
[I.ii. 78-79].

Aside from the fact that we instantly become aware of Arthur's difficult predicament in which he has been deprived of crown, kingdom, and wife by the usurper Mordred, we are also alerted to the Tudor concept of sovereignty in which the king was first and foremost a public personage before he was a private individual. The special status of kings is mentioned in I.iv. when Mordred evaluates their mutual guilt in their adulterous relationship in the light of Arthur's impending return. Guenevora points out that a king is not subject to the rules that other men must regard:

Why dost thou still steere up my flames delayde ?
His strayes and errors must not move my mind.
A law for private men bindes not the King.
What, that I ought not to condemn my liedge.
Nor can, thus guiltie to mine own offence ?

[I.iv. 37-40].

The rhetorical figure "flames delayde" is an instance of Puttenham's metonimia or the misnamer (191). In Guenevora's "still steere up my flames delayde" we clearly observe how tropes can become speech acts when the queen states that Mordred's words may easily incite her to deeds of passion.

The speech act implicit in the queen's figure "flames delayde" pinpoints the source of evil to Mordred who appears unrepentant while the queen admits her guilt [1. 40].

Mordred then prepares to wage war upon Arthur's return [I.iv. 72]. The experienced statesman Conan attempts to provide Mordred with good counsel. The debate between Conan and Mordred provides the most exciting "speech action" in this play full of long, wordy monologues. The principal political questions in the state are discussed in this debate.[2] Conan points out that usurpers and tyrants are always insecure in their power, and he voices sound worldly wisdom in that "Mischiefe is sometimes safe" when he states:

Even then you feare

The worst. Feares follow hopes, as fumes doe
flames.

Mischiefe is sometimes safe: but ne'er secure:

The wrongful Scepter's held with trembling hand

[I.i. 91-94].

We also read the character of Mordred as a thinly disguised prosopopoeia for 'Mischiefe' (Puttenham, 246). There is, however, no hint that the hand of God will smite the one who holds the "wrongfull Scepter" as might be expected according to the orthodox Tudor position on the providential design of history. Mordred responds with a practical view of political power, one that has been echoed over and over again by totalitarian politicians in history:

Whose rule wants right, his safety's in his Sword

For Sword and Scepter comes to Kings at once.

[I.iv. 91-94].

Even in a play written and performed before the queen in an era of political censorship, Mordred is granted a fair chance to air his troublesome views. Mordred in Misfortunes is not incorrect in his evaluation of the reality of absolutism in that because of their military strength many rulers have survived blatantly immoral/unlawful actions. The successes of Pendragon and Arthur who also committed immoral acts are instances of this amoral judgment of history, even though the choric commentary attempts to reassert the moral view:

Who sowes in sinne, in sinne shall reape his
paine:

The Doome is sworne: Death guerdon's death
again.

.....

In Brytain warres and discord will not stent:
Till Uther's line and offspring quite be spent.

[I.v. 11-12, 23-24].

Mordred provides valid arguments on political dissent from the orthodox position throughout I.iv. even though Conan supplies the moral viewpoint on sovereign power: "The Kingliest point is to affect but right" [V. iv. 97]. Mordred's reply could almost be a commentary on Arthur's later dilemma, his reluctance to bring his guilty son to justice by waging war:

Weak is the Scepters hold, that seekes but right,
The care whereof hath danger'd many Crownes.

As much as water differeth from the fire,
So much man's profit iarres from what is just

.....

The Sword must seldom cease: a sovereign hand
Is scantly safe, but whiles it smites. Let him
Usurpe no Crown, that likes a guiltless life:
Aspiring power and Iustice sield agree.

He alwaies feares, that shames to offer wrong.

[I.iv. 98-108].

Mordred is using the rhetorical figure Puttenham terms antitheton or the quarreller (219), and his speech style suits his role of a troublesome and immature politician. Although Mordred's speech is somewhat in "the tyrant's vein" it is not without political truth. Mordred's speech encapsulates what has been the reality of Arthur's career as a monarch. Arthur has repeatedly had to wage war in the interests of his own safety and that of Britain.

In fact at the centre of Misfortunes is the Tudor concern with war against external enemies and civil war. The protagonist Arthur has spent nine years abroad fighting against Rome.[3] And even while celebrating Arthur's martial prowess in his victories, the play points to the senseless suffering and bloodshed caused by war:

Nuntius. The foes inforc't withstand: but much
dismaide

They senselesse fight, whiles millions
lose their lives.

At length Tiberius, pierst with point of
speare,

Doth bleeding fall, engoard with deadly
wound.

Hereat the rest recoile, and headlong
flie,

Each man to save himselfe. The battaile
quailes

And Brytaines winne unto their most
renowne

[II.i. 41-47].

Arthur's war against Mordred to regain his crown similarly
results in pain and suffering for his people:

Nuntius But let this part of Arthurs prowesse
lurke,

Nor let it e'er appeare by my report,
What monstrous mischiefes rave in civill
warres.

.....

What best deserveth mention here is
this:

That Mordred vanquisht trusted to his
flight,

That Arthur ech where victor is returnd.

[II.i. 67-74].

Even though Arthur wins the first round of combat,
Mordred will not give up his usurped crown easily:

Then thinke not Arthur that the Crowne is wonne:

Thy first successe may rue our next assault.

[II.ii. 6-7].

There follows a lengthy debate between Mordred and Conan on the nature of kingship where they discuss points of statecraft more complex than the doctrine of obedience. Mordred is the usurper and tyrant, and his views are officially the "wrong" ones, but Mordred has all the emphatic lines in II.ii. We must conclude that Mordred's lines were meant to be heard and weighed carefully by the audience before judgment was passed on him. The jealousy, suspiciousness, and worldly wisdom suggested in Mordred's political views are close to those of the prince in the Tacitean vision of the prince (Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, 351-353).

The Mordred-Conan conference begins with the relation of the king to his subjects in the time of war:

Mord. 'Tis better for a King to kill his foes.

Conan So that the Subjects also iudge them foes.

Mord. The Subjects must not iudge their Kings
decrees

Conan The Subjects force is great.

Mord. Greater the King's.

Conan The more you may, the more you ought to
feare.

[II. ii. 15-19].

Mordred's quick, short, contradictory sentences emphasize his quarrelsome speech style. Because Mordred is inexperienced in politics, Conan cautions him with regard to the great power possessed by the people of the realm. Misfortunes repeatedly emphasizes the theme of the dependency of the sovereign on the strength and goodwill of his subjects. Later in a battle situation, Mordred clearly realizes how much he needs the total co-operation of his men:

Wherefore make speede to cheer your Souldiers
harde,
That to their fires you may add yet more flames.

[II. iv. 72-73].

Similarly, Arthur, the experienced military leader, is even more aware of how much his men have contributed to his valorous exploits abroad, and is reluctant to sacrifice more lives in civil war:

Eche where my Souldiers perisht, whilst I wonne:
Throughout the world my Conquest was their spoile.
A fair reward for all their deaths for all
Their warres abroad, to give them civill warres
What bootes it them reserv'd from forreine foiles
To die at home ?

[III.i. 215-220].

In "What bootes it them ... die at home?" Arthur is using a rhetorical question. This figure of speech

Puttenham terms eroteina or the questioner and explains thus: "when we ask many questions and look for none answer, speaking indeed by interrogation, which we might as well say by affirmation" (220). By using this figure, instead of making a plain statement of the futility of war, Arthur makes us aware of his hesitancy. The self-division experienced by Arthur is to be macrocosmically reflected in the later civil war in his kingdom. Arthur's hesitant speech style -- saying one thing when he means the opposite -- essentially displays his awareness of the causes of war and the heavy price paid for it in terms of human suffering.

The theme of popular support for the crown continues as Conan advises Mordred further on the necessity of just and legal government. Mordred constantly asks questions in the style of a rebellious schoolboy. Indeed Conan characterizes him (in II. ii. 61-65) as a troublemaking son who is wrecking what his father has built up. Conan's political views are unacceptable to Mordred who would have the monarch wield absolute power:

let terrour teach,
What Kings may doe, what Subjects ought to beare.
Then is a Kingdom at a wished stage,
When whatsoever the Sovereigne wills, or nilles,
Men be compelde as well to praise, as beare,
And Subjects willes inforc'd against their willes.

[II.ii. 76-81].

Mordred's immature disregard of the politically

sensible conclusions that he has come to earlier in his discussion with Conan further undermines his credibility as a leader:

Conan O spare, tweare saffer to be lou'de,

Mord. As safe to be obaide.

Conan Whiles you command but well:

Mord. Where Rulers dare commaund but what is
well:

Powre is but prayer, commaundment but
request.

Conan If powre be ionde with right, men must
cbey.

Mord. My will must goe for right.

[II.ii. 36-42].

Mordred almost wavers in the right direction, but he is convinced that mildness in a king is a sign of weakness, and reverts back to the tyrant's vein with "My sword shall force assent" [II.ii. 42]. Conan warns Mordred that immoral and unjust actions are punished by God's providence:

Thinke not that impious crimes can prosper long,
A time they scape, in time they be repaide.

[II.ii. 94-95].

Mordred immediately contradicts Conan by stating: "The hugest crimes bring best successe to some" [II.ii. 96]. Conan is compelled to admit that Mordred has made a valid observation, because even though "Those some be rare" [II.ii. 97], they do exist. History thus interpreted

teaches that justice has not prevailed universally in the past. Political wrongdoers have often escaped punishment in history, and still do so. But Conan does not wish to investigate this subject so he changes the topic with "It was their hap" [II.ii. 98].

In the character of Conan we find the figure of the good counselor who understands the importance of his political role, possesses adequate intellectual and political capabilities, and sees the realm as an association of the ruler and subjects whose "relationships might be defined in terms of their reciprocal obligations to seek counsel and to give it" [Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, 339].

Despite all wise counsel, the usurper Mordred refuses to be dissuaded by his peers from his resolution to fight a civil war against Arthur. He even suggests that it is Arthur who is hungry for power and not himself:

Mord. T'is his insatiate minde, that is not so
content,

Which hath so many Kingdoms more besides,

Gawi. The more you ought to tremble at his powre.

Mord. The greater is my conquest, if I winne.

[II.iii. 21-24].

Mordred's criticism of Arthur applies just as obviously to himself, and the above speech is an instance of Mordred's flawed reasoning. However, the play does raise the question of whether Arthur's involvement in a civil war is wholly justifiable. Arthur himself is unsure throughout. It is not

in the interest of the people and the state that any civil war be fought, although the orthodox Tudor view held that civil rebellion was a primal sin and the king was obliged to punish the rebels. This theme of the doubtful justification of all civil war recurs in Shakespeare's first tetralogy.

Most of the political advice in Misfortunes is of a practical rather than a philosophical nature. For instance, the reason offered by Gawin to Mordred to dissuade him from taking on Arthur's army in battle is Arthur's military experience [II.iii. 46-52]. When Mordred cannot be persuaded by politic suggestions, Gawin appeals to family sentiments:

Consider then your Fathers grieffe, and want:

Whom you bereave of Kingdome, Realme, and Crowne.

[II.iii. 79-80].

Still Mordred does not change his mind. Gawin's comment is most pertinent in this case: "Warre seemeth sweete to such as have not trid" [II.iii. 118]. The contrast between Mordred and Arthur, veteran of many wars ["What warres were left for him, but civill wars?" III.i. 29], is sharply stressed in Misfortunes, perhaps to point out the dangers of having an inexperienced and aggressive king. The political stance of Misfortunes is essentially pacifist, and is reminiscent of Erasmus's well-known adage "Dulce bellum inexpertis" ["War is sweet to those who are ignorant of it"].

With Arthur's entry in III.i. a discussion of the

rightful king's duties in time of civil rebellion ensues. Arthur is reluctant to fight a civil war against his own son, and his dilemma is almost Davidic. Howell reminds him that a king must always place his public duties above his private affections:

A King ought alwaies to preferre his Realme,
Before the love he beares to kin or sonne.
Your Realme destroide is neere restord againe.
But time may send you kine and sons inough.

[III. i. 45-48].

Because civil rebellion was a sin, the king was required to punish the wrongdoers. The Tudor audience would have appreciated Howell's conservative argument.

But the king himself is not satisfied with this view of war that held princes too subject to obeying the laws of the realm. To uphold this view, Mordred the lawbreaking prince, was destined to perish [III.i. 75-80]. [4] Arthur wishes to be merciful both as a king and as a father:

Ah too severe, farre from a Fathers minde.
Compassion is as fit for Kings as wrath.
Lawes must not lowre. Rule oft admitteth ruthe.

[III. i. 84-86].

Arthur is using Puttenham's parison or the "figure of even" where there is even and euphonious repetition of similar syllables. Puttenham comments that this figure gives "good grace to a ditty, but especially to a prose" (212). Arthur's use of parison in a blank verse speech is graceful

and appropriate being suited to his unhappy mood as in the melancholy and reflective example of parison cited by Puttenham (212).

It requires all the persuasive skills of Cado and Howell in IV.i. to induce Arthur to fight his son. The nobles insist that this war will be in the interest of the people. Cado points out Arthur's weakness:

Can blinde affection so much bleare the wise,
Or love of gracelesse Sonne so witch the Sire ?
That what concernes the honour of a Prince
With Countries good and Subjects iust request,
Should lightly be contemned by a King ?

[III.i. 186-190]

The aging Arthur is no longer keen on military glory. He is weary of war, tired with the duty of pleasing his subjects, exhausted with the incessant demands of sovereignty:

What deeme you me ? a furie fedde with blood
Or some Ciclopian borne and bred for brawles ?
Thinke on the minde, that Arthur beares to peace:
Can Arthur please you no where but in warres ?

[III. i. 227-330].

The theme of the inability of a king to please his subjects except by winning wars recurs in the King John plays and in the three parts of Henry VI. In the above speech Arthur once again uses the eroteina both to express his reluctance to fight, and his reluctance to plainly state his difficulty with his kingly position. Arthur's style of speech suggests

his leniency as he vainly attempts to silence further persuasion from his noblemen on the subject of going to war. The speech act implied in "please" [l. 230] suggests Arthur's view of kingship as intended for his subjects' happiness, and poses a direct contrast to Mordred's tyrannical views. Arthur knows that despite his personal reluctance he must go to war again for the welfare of the kingdom in the service of which he has spent so many years fighting in foreign lands [III.i. 231-237].

Mordred's speech style shows his quarrelsome, aggressive disposition. His poor logic is clearly contrasted to Arthur's rational, gracious arguments and compassionate view of kingship. In Mordred and Arthur we have two different styles of monarchy, those of the tyrant and of the merciful prince. The destruction of both in the civil war illustrates the failures of both their approaches to statecraft when confronted with the problems of their own creation.

Among the peers, the princely counsellors Gildas and Conan discuss the difficulties of coping with princely whims, as well as the troubles that arise in the state when the private emotions/interests of princes cloud their better reasoning, and they are confused as to what is best for the kingdom [IV.i. 1-12]. Gildas's metaphor of the mental illness of "Brytaine" sees the state itself as its sovereign, as he refers to the Tudor theory of the macrocosm-microcosm:

Mordred. Yet before he dies, Arthur is devastated by the grief and ruin the civil war has caused. He even feels it would have been better for him to have abdicated in Mordred's favour [V.i. 39-44].

Misfortunes repeatedly emphasizes that peaceful negotiations are preferable to war [IV.i. 1-12]. Arthur's last major speech [V.i. 39-44] raises a question which the play dare not answer, but which perceptive members of the audience must have thought about in retrospect: Is it better for a king to abdicate, if by doing so he may prevent civil war? By giving these lines to the wounded and dying Arthur, veteran of wars abroad and at home, the playwright[s] may have cleverly hinted at controversial republican ideas. The action and dialogue of Misfortunes repeatedly emphasize the limitations of the contemporary monarchical paradigm in the face of the complexity of sixteenth century power politics. In its characterization of Arthur and Mordred, the play depicts the difficulties of making correct choices when faced with princely responsibility, and the personal dilemmas of these two princes are dramatized with realism.

In Thomas Lodge's The Wounds of Civil War, we find the two politicians Marius and Sylla confronted with the problems of choice and responsibility in a republican state during times of civil war. The play focusses on their characters as well as on the orator Antony and shows how the power struggle affects/afflicts these politicians in terms

of personal suffering. Wounds is the earliest extant classical history play in English, but it does not appear to have had much direct influence on later playwrights. David Bevington finds that: "Structurally, Lodge's play is noteworthy for its anticipation of dramas like Richard II and Julius Caesar in which the political orientation shifts midway and brings about a realignment of sympathies" (234).

The discrepancy of styles and the constant shifting of sympathy between the two principal characters and the orator Antony is explained in the present study by the application of Richard Lanham's concepts of homo rhetoricus and homo seriusus. If this play were a simplistic condemnation of the horrors of civil war, then Lodge would not have manipulated audience sympathy in favour of Marius, whose speeches in adversity are indeed sincere and reflective. Nor perhaps is the contrast between Marius and Sylla altogether accidental. Lanham's theory provides a suitable framework for understanding their differences in style. Sylla falls in the category of homo rhetoricus who "must have felt an overpowering self-consciousness about language" (Lanham, 3). Lanham states:

Rhetorical man is an actor; his reality public, dramatic. His sense of identity, his self, depends on the reassurance of daily histrionic reenactment. He is thus centered in time and concrete local event. The lowest common denominator of his life is a social situation. And

his motivations must be characteristically ludic, agonistic (4).

The above definition fits Lodge's portrayal of Sylla with respect to Sylla's ranting dialogues and Tamburlaine-style displays of power both in his forcing captive kings to draw him in a chariot, and in his treading on the neck of the Consul Carbo. As Bevington has pointed out, these episodes are not in Lodge's Roman sources. Hence Lodge must have interpolated these episodes so that Sylla could take his role-playing as a strong man to its fullest extent (Bevington, 234).

If Sylla is homo rhetoricus, then Marius is Lodge's experiment in depicting homo seriusus. Perhaps the uncomfortable shifting of sympathy in Wounds illustrates the depiction of the two aspects of political man's self, "a shifting and perpetually uneasy combination of homo rhetoricus and homo seriusus, of a social self and a central self" (Lanham, 6). The theory of homo rhetoricus vs. homo seriusus is a theory "of knowledge, of self, of style". Lanham views his theory as a means of holding together the two ways of knowing which together make us human (35). By depicting the political conflict between Marius and Sylla in their contrasted styles of public utterance and private emotion, Lodge has tried to show politicians as all-too-human. Lodge modified the almost unfeeling monsters depicted in Appian and Plutarch, his Roman sources, to produce two recognizable types of human nature in the

leaders Marius and Sylla.[5]

Lodge's The Wounds of Civil War, like The Misfortunes of Arthur, had a topical motivation and mirrored the anxiety present in English minds about the contemporary political situation in the 1580's. With regard to the play's topical relevance, Charles W. Whitworth writes:

After the discovery of the Throckmorton plot in October 1583, the fierce feelings which resulted in the Bond of Association and subsequent anti-Marian legislation, and the severe anti-Catholic measures of the Act of 1585, made civil war a very real danger in England. The Babington conspiracy in the summer of 1586 and the execution of Mary Stuart in February 1587, occurred in the period during which Lodge probably wrote his play (8-9).

On the other hand, there is then no evidence that Wounds allegorized the political conduct of Elizabethan statesmen (Bevington, 234). It is impossible to identify either Marius or Sylla with any individual statesman because Lodge follows Appian quite faithfully. He stays fairly close to Appian's and Plutarch's Roman histories except in his modification of the characters of Sylla and Marius. Were it not for this close adherence to the Roman histories, Lodge's view of rhetoric would have been disquieting, for there were famous contemporary orators such as the Queen herself and Raleigh.

Three main historical characters stand out in Wounds--

Marius, Sylla, and the orator Anthony -- all three politicians and public figures. Most of their speeches are in the nature of public utterances and must be read more as political rhetoric than as the expression of private emotion. If Marius is largely homo seriusus, and Sylla, homo rhetoricus, Antony is an old-fashioned orator who combines flowery rhetoric with sincerity in his speeches, trusting the power of words over the power of arms. But Antony fails to satisfy the requirements of the homo rhetoricus category, because he does not use rhetoric to play a politic word game. Nor does he conform completely to the category of homo seriusus, because he consistently and self-consciously uses rhetoric for public performance. Antony's character suggests that, without the awareness of realpolitik, any attempt to combine the two types of rhetorical man and serious man in a single politician results in failure.

The few scholars who have discussed Wounds have not agreed whether Marius or Sylla is more important as a character, because this play contrasts them instead of developing one as the central figure. This lack of understanding of the play's characterization may be caused by the conservative political view of Wounds that these scholars favour. Bevington provides a typical instance when he writes: "As its pointed title suggests, the play hammers away at the horrors of rebellion, urges a cautious approach to reform that must not challenge the existing political

structure, and pleads for toleration between factions" (234). According to Bevington:

Even though Sylla behaves like the conventional tyrant, murdering his opposition and governing through whim rather than through counsel, the moderates must offer criticism and aim for some rapprochement instead of taking to arms. The personal risk for such a mediating effort is great, as both Granius and Anthony discover, but any extreme of rebellion will only destroy what little hope remains for slow improvement and well-intended free speech (234).

Bevington comes to the conclusion that in Wounds the state is ultimately more important than any of the leaders. He observes that, "It is for such reasons that the Mariuses' counter-rebellion, although seemingly justified by Marius' senatorial authority, represents a further assault on responsible government. "'Twere better Sylla learnt to mend in Rome, Than Marius come to tyrannize in Rome'" (ll. 869-870) (Bevington, 235). Yet, in terms of realpolitik, we cannot study the welfare of the Roman state separately from the characterization of Marius and Sylla in Lodge's Wounds.

Lodge makes an effort to depict the two warring leaders Marius and Sylla as convincing politicians, even though Wounds has such a large number of characters, a fact which limits adequate character development of any depth. In Appian and Plutarch, both Marius and Sylla are almost

uniformly depicted as cruel and insensitive warriors. But in Lodge's play, these leaders display credible human emotion in their speeches, whether in victory or in defeat. Whitworth seems to doubt Lodge's control of his characters when he observes:

Though Scilla has nearly half as many lines again as Marius ... it is Marius, if anyone, who, as Collier felt, absorbs the reader's interest. Scilla's favoured place as fortune's chosen one is emphasized repeatedly and Lodge may have meant for him to be the major character, Marius's lines just make better reading than Scilla's. Scilla is a cartoon tyrant, while Marius almost comes to life, is almost three-dimensional (7).

Whitworth links these faults with the uneven quality of Lodge's poetry (5-7). But the real source of difference in style between the speeches of Marius and Sylla is Lodge's deliberate effort to depict the different ways in which politicians use rhetorical language.

Other than the two warring leaders Marius and Sylla, the only other prominent character is Anthony. Significantly, Anthony is a famous orator. Joel B. Altman finds:

The true hero of the piece is Anthony consul, moralist, and singularly unsuccessful orator. ... In this play, the stern moral counselor of the neo-Senecans has been re-imagined as a poet-

orator, and his "tragedy", such as it is, is closely connected with the inadequacy of his "terms of art" in the face of political reality (Altman, 286-287).

Anthony's failure is not so much a failure of his art, as a style of political action that has become obsolete because it does not combine rhetorical skill with military power.[6] Machiavelli in his The Arte of Warre states that a fine rhetorical style is essential to military leadership:

It was requisite that the excellent Capitaines were oratours: for that without knowyng how to speake to al the army, with difficutly maie be wrought any good thing ... This speakyng taketh awaie feare incourageth the mindes, increaseth the obstinateness to faight, discovereth the deceiptes, promiseth rewardes, sheweth the perilles, and the waie to avoid them, reprehendeth, praieth, threateneth, filleth full of hope, praise, shame, and doeth all those thynges, by the whiche the humaine passions are extincte, or kindled (Arte of Warre, sig. R1),

If we turn Machiavelli's advice around, we understand that successful orators had also to be "excellent Capitaines" to succeed in the world of power politics. We recall that in Misfortunes Mordred is advised to encourage his army with fiery speech (II.iv. 72-73). The connection between oratory and military skill was obviously a familiar one at the time

Wounds and Misfortunes were written. In the face of this new Machiavellian paradigm, Anthony's failure is the failure of the old-fashioned moral rhetorician who assumed that his words alone had the power to spur men on to either good or evil deeds. Puttenham makes strong connections between decent behaviour and decorum of speech (273-304). Robert Y. Turner sums up the traditional moral position on rhetoric:

The rhetorician assumes that in language resides a great potential power to stir men to virtuous behaviour. Implicit in this assumption is another about the nature of moral truth: that it can be clearly revealed and that it is generally applicable. Much of the orator's power arises from the fact that he need become entangled neither in demonstrating the truth of moral standards nor in justifications of them. Instead he can devote his energies to devising a variety of artful restatements to enforce a general truth. Argument and anecdote stimulate listeners to behave according to moral law, not to enlighten them about moral law (228).

Anthony is the spokesman for the welfare of the Roman state throughout. On his first appearance he describes the function of his rhetoric:

Stay, Scilla, hear Anthony breathe forth
The pleading complaints of sad declining Rome.

[I.i. 246-247]

Sylla is off to a major battle against silver-haired Marius, "six times Consul, fit peace or war." He is quite openly moved by Anthony's rhetoric, his "honey words":

Scilla. Anthony, thou know'st thy honey words do

pierce

And move the mind of Scilla to remorse.

Yet neither words nor pleadings now must

serve

Whenas mine honor calls me forth to fight

Therefore, sweet Anthony, be short, for

Scilla's haste.

[I.i. 248-252].

In terms of action, Anthony's rhetoric does not prevent Sylla from going to war. However, Anthony asks Sylla several relevant questions as to the justification for civil war in a long speech:[7]

What wars are these thou stirrest up in Rome ?

What fire is this is kindled by thy wrath ?

A fire that must be quench'd by Roman's blood,

And, last, an act of foul impiety

.....

What, then, are men that 'gainst themselves do

war?

Thou'lt say, my Scilla, honor stirs thee up.

Is't honor to infringe the laws of Rome?

What greater titles should our Scilla have?

[I.i. 255-272].

Anthony's speech conforms to the definition of the insultatio (or "the disdainfull") which Puttenham considers a suitable strategy for upbraiding someone (218). Yet such is the graciousness of Anthony's style that he sounds euphonic even while he chides. Anthony is also using the eroteina to arouse moral recognition, and criticism of Sylla is implied rather than stated in his reproaches. Sylla confesses to being temporarily moved by Anthony's rhetoric:

Enough, my Anthony, for thy honied tongue,
Wash'd in a syrup of sweet conservatives,
Driveth confused thoughts through Scilla's mind

[I.i. 231-283].

No sooner does Sylla admit to feeling confused, than he exits hastily before he starts to yield to Anthony's persuasion.

Anthony continues to stress the importance of the state and its people as he laments the fate of a nation in the grip of civil war:

Unhappy Rome and Romans thrice accurst
That oft with triumphs fill'd your city walls
With kings and conquering rulers of the world,
Now to eclipse in top of all thy pride
Through civil discords and domestic broils.
O Romans, weep the tears of sad lament

[I.i. 298-303].

Anthony is using the ecphonisis or outcry to address his fellow citizens (Puttenham, 221). Lodge piles up euphonic

lines in Anthony's speech to illustrate their political ineffectiveness. But even though his own society appears deaf to his pleading, Anthony is the "good" rhetorician [III.i. 36-4], and his recognition of the horrors of civil war is sixteenth century English in content and mood.

After Sylla's first major victory over Marius, Anthony counsels him to desist from civil discords and to wage wars against foreign enemies [III.i. 172-177]. Fighting against foreign foes was obviously regarded as an acceptable political method of keeping people united at home in the Renaissance. But in Wounds the dispatching of Sylla and his army to foreign lands ultimately turns out to be a major political error, for the elder Marius returns to seize power in Rome for a brief interval. Anthony takes a conspicuously un-political view of the defeat of his faction [Sylla's faction]:

Octavius, these are but the scourges for our sins,
 These are but the ministers to heap our plagues;
 These mutiries are gentle means and ways
 Whereby the heavens our heavy errors charms.

.....

And since we perish through our own misdeeds,
 Go let us flourish in our fruitful prayers.

[IV.i. 7-14].

In the above speech Anthony is using the sententia [or sage saying] to moralize upon the adverse fortune of his faction (Puttenham, 243).

Despite his foreknowledge that he is about to die at the hands of Marius's men, Anthony makes a last attempt to save his own head by giving a magnificent performance of his arts of language before his killers in IV.ii., but his style is out of date in the new world of power politics. The speech act in which Anthony tries to save himself is ultimately unsuccessful:

O Romans, hath not Anthony's discourse
Seal'd up the mouths of false seditious
men,
Assoil'd the doubts and queint controls
of power,
Reliev'd the mournful matron with his
pleas?
And will you seek to murder Anthony?
The lions brook with kindness their
relief,
The sheep reward the shepherd with their
fleece,
Yet Romans seek to murder Anthony.

1 Soldier Why, what enchanting terms of art are
these,

That force my heart to pity his distress?

[IV.ii. 104-113].

Anthony's cluster of similes is impressive in terms of language, but not enough to save his life. His use of eroteina is ineffectual, and emphasizes that the power of

Anthony's rhetoric is now a thing of the past. Sylla remains susceptible to flowery rhetoric, but he combines oratory with military strength. Even as he dies at the hands of Marius's soldiers, Anthony sums up the part he has played in public life: "O blissful pain, now Anthony must die,/Which serv'd and lov'd Rome and her empery." [IV.ii. 150-151]. His very executioners praise his art which is now out of date as a political strategy. It is significant that when the executioners wax eloquent in praise of Anthony [IV.ii. 154-161], the business-like captain from Marius's army abruptly cuts them off with: "Leave this presumptuous praises, countrymen!" [IV.ii. 162]. The speech act implied in "leave" suggests the abandonment of the values Anthony stood for, and brings us into the world of Marius's new regime where individual political ambition has supplanted the importance of the state and the welfare of its people.

In political terms Marius stands for military dictatorship, as we observe from his speeches and speech acts. Charles Whitworth considers Marius's speeches better written than the more publicly oriented speeches of Sylla, because they are more serious, more reflective, and more expressive of inner feeling. Marius allows his central self to show forth in his words in contrast to Sylla who is an actor role-playing his political part. Marius does not use language as an art for political ends. He comes onstage as an aging and serious personality:

Marius. If then, grave lords, my former passed

youth

Was spent in bringing honor unto Rome,
Then let my age and latter date of years
Be seled up for honor unto Rome

[I.i. 134-137].

Marius is using the figure Puttenham terms etiologia or "the reason rend" which suits his logical, plainspoken style (Puttenham, 236). To Sylla's challenge stated in purple rhetoric, Marius responds with gravity, and what appears to be sincerity, as in the first open confrontation between the two leaders in the play:

Scilla. Graybeard, if so thy heart and tongue
agree,

Draw forth thy legions and thy men at arms,
Rear up thy standard and thy steeled crest,
And meet with Scilla in the field of Mars,
And try whose fortune makes him General.

Marius. I take thy word, Marius will meet thee
there

And prove thee, Scilla, a traitor unto Rome,
And all that march under thy traitorous
wings.

Therefore, they that love the Senate and
Marius

Now follow him.

[I.i. 230-238].

In his direct challenge to Marius, Scilla uses

insultatio and Marius's retort uses sarcasmus as he bitterly flings the word "traitor" in Scilla's face (Puttenham, 200). The contrast between Sylla's flamboyant "meet with thee in the field of Mars" and Marius's gruff, matter-of-fact, soldierly "will meet thee there" emphasizes the difference in style between the two men. The use of hyperbole is frequent in Sylla's speeches, and contributes to our overall impression of Sylla as a self-conscious actor-like politician, who seldom means what he says (Puttenham, 202). Lodge is obviously drawing upon the knowledge shared by the more educated members of his audience that stylistic differences indicated differences in character (Puttenham, 160-161).

Marius's defeat at Sylla's hands [II.i.] is not only historical fact, but the victory of a younger man over an older man, of homo rhetoricus over homo seriusus. Marius in defeat is a rugged and sincere figure who elicits our sympathy when he attempts to philosophize on his predicament:

What? The moonshine on the water?

Thou wretched stepdame of my fickle state

Are these the guerdons of the greatest minds,

To make them hope and yet betray their hap,

To make them climb to overthrow them straight ?

[II. ii. 45-49].

Marius is trying to use the eroteina to lament his fate. But his rhetoric is confused almost to the point of

The natural images in Marius's speech fit their context, and for a brief instant Marius gains a dignity befitting his silver hairs when he expresses his belief that the mind can conquer adversity. He is certainly more preoccupied with his central self than are any of the other characters in Wounds. However, in the larger context of the play's action, Marius's speeches in the Numidian mountains represent only a passing mood in which he is painted as a sympathetic figure. Shortly afterwards, his son finds him, and they sail away to make trouble in Rome to further their personal ambitions [III.iv. 106-110].

Marius changes his style of speaking once he has captured Rome. When he is avenging himself upon Sylla's followers, his flamboyant style seems to resemble that of Marlowe's Tamburlaine and later stage tyrants in other plays of the sixteenth century. This is shown in his purple rhetoric when he addresses Cornelia and Fulvia, and has them put in chains:

Marius. The bands that should combine your snow-
white wrists

Are these which shall adorn your milk-white
necks;

.....

The river Ganges and Hydaspes stream
Shall level lie, and smooth as crystal ice.
Whilst Fulvia and Cornelia pass thereon;

.....

Ay, unto Scilla, ladies shall you go,

.....

Tell him for them old Marius holds revenge,

And in his hands both triumphs life and
death.

[IV.i. 393-414]

These lines are almost in Sylla's ranting conceited style,
and Sylla's family can hardly believe their ears:

Cornelia. Doth Marius use with glorious words to
jest

And mock his captives with these glosing
terms?

[IV.i. 415-416].

Marius's shift in style is accompanied by a change in his political strategy, because he sets up a tyrannical regime in Rome and has the orator Anthony murdered. These unnatural acts herald the death of the homo seriosus figure in this play, for we soon hear of Marius's death from his son [V.iii.9], and of the strange omens at the time [IV.iii. 183-196].

Finally power belongs to Sylla who puts an end to the sedition and civil wars in Rome. Sylla does not favour the masses, for he blames all the unrest on the people of Rome in the following speech where he uses sarcasmus:

And why? The reasons of this ruthless wrack
Are your seditious innovations,
Your fickle minds inclin'd to foolish change

Ungrateful man, whilst I with tedious pain
 In Asia seal'd my duty with my blood,

.....

You called my foe from exile with his friends,
 You did proclaim me traitor here in Rome,
 You raz'd my house, you did deface my friends,
 But brawling wolves, you cannot bite the moon,
 For Scilla lives so forward to revenge
 As woe to those that sought to do me wrong.

[V.i. 8-22].

Sylla's lines not only affirm the Tudor position on rebellion and civil war, they also openly state how adversely political leaders involved in such discord are themselves affected. In the above passage, we find Sylla speaking in a style more subdued than his usual one because he is describing his personal losses in the wars with Marius. His usual flamboyant performance of a tyrannical ruler is most clearly demonstrated earlier in the victory pageant when he forces the captive kings to draw his triumphal chariot:[8]

Scilla. Arcathius, these are the fortunes of the
 field.--

Believe me these brave captives draw by
 art,

And I will think upon their good desert:--
 But stay you strangers, and respect my
 words.

Fond heartless men, what folly have I
seen?

For fear of death can princes entertain
Such bastard thoughts that now from
glorious arms

Vouchsafe to draw like oxen in a plow ?--

[IV.iii. 76-83].

The oxen image is a Roman, perhaps "Georgic" touch, and is also similar to the "Jades of Asia" in Tamburlaine Part II IV.ii. 11-12.[9] Sylla is very obviously picking his words self-consciously since he knows that he is making a tremendous public impact in this scene ("respect my words"). The sudden shift in tone from the patronizing benevolence in the first few lines of the above speech to open ridicule for the princes' cowardice [l. 81] is typical of Sylla's method, and he is fond of using sarcasmus to provoke reaction. Even though he is successful in his speeches and speech acts, Sylla does not inspire confidence or trust in a larger sense. Since he is always the actor-politician giving a performance, it is difficult to gauge when he is sincere and when he is not. Sylla is the new type of successful leader who combines rhetorical skill with military power, and who treats the political arena as theatre. Our overall uneasiness with the insincerity and shiftiness of the new political style indicates Lodge's distrust of the Machiavellian paradigm.[10] Yet by depicting Sylla's success, in spite of distrust, Lodge draws our attention to

the fact that in the Rome of Wounds "Machiavellism" had come to stay. For Sylla, the victor of the civil wars, the political reality is what he himself shapes with his words.

Sylla yields to no force but that of death itself. And this eventual "conquest" of Sylla's style is similar to the end of Tamburlaine. In the final scenes Sylla's style is more muted. As he has aged, he has grown more philosophical. There is still very little personal feeling in his speeches, but he successfully plays the part of an elder statesman preparing for death and the final surrender of power [V.v. 80-95, 113-120, 139-156]. He dies with dignity, bidding farewell to his wife and daughter, committing them to the care of his fellow Roman politicians [V.v. 339-362].

In contrast to most history plays of the 1580's and 1590's, The Wounds of Civil War does not have the form and structure of a tragedy. Lodge makes no attempt to show the fortunes of Marius and Sylla as tragic. Nor does he moralize at length on the evils of civil war. Even though Anthony points out that Sylla's leadership is better for Rome than that of Marius, finally there is less interest in Wounds as to what happens to the people of the state than in how the leading politicians themselves are affected/afflicted in times of civil war. Lodge clearly emphasizes that the power struggle between Marius and Sylla leads to inner turmoil and suffering in the personal lives of the leaders themselves.

NOTES

1. Marie Axton, The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977):80. Axton discusses the political meaning of Ephesians II. 12-16. Fleshly evil committed by the king manifested itself in troubles within the state.

2. Joel B. Altman, The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Inquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978): 107. Altman finds the debate structure important in pre-Shakespearean drama.

3. Rome or the Pope was still popularly considered an enemy in Elizabeth I's time.

4. Judith R. Weil, Christopher Marlowe: Merlin's Prophet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977): 96. An excuse for war [Dulce bellum inexpertis] was that it was comparable to punishing a criminal.

5. Plutarch wrote of Marius: "So in the case of Marius, if only someone had persuaded him to sacrifice to the Muses and Graces of the Greeks, he would not have brought his career, so splendid both in war and peace, to so ugly a conclusion, and would not have been cast up upon the shores of a bloodthirsty and savage old age, ship-wrecked by his passions, his ill-timed ambition, and his insatiable greed" in Fall of the Roman Republic: Six Lives by Plutarch trans. Rex Warner (New York: Penguin, 1972): 15. Of Sulla's capture of power in Rome Plutarch commented: "Sulla now devoted himself entirely to the work of butchery. The city was filled with murder and there was no counting the executions or setting a limit to them" (104).

6. J.S. Watson ed. Cicero on Oratory and Orators (New York: Harper Brothers, 1890): 103. In De Oratore, Cicero relates the episode of the orator Phormio who presumed to give instructions on military moves, and called forth criticism from Hannibal who was no orator. And in Brutus: Or Remarks on Eminent Orators Cicero actually discusses the involvement of historically famous Greek and Roman orators in politics. Therefore, Lodge's depiction of Anthony would have been of interest to the classically educated members of his audience.

7. Antony's speech conforms to the seven part model oration described by Thomas Wilson in The Art of Rhetorique, The Renaissance in England eds. Hyder E. Rollins and

Herschel Baker (Lexington: D.C. Heath & Co, 1954): 593. Antony's oration [I.i. 259-281] demonstrates that Lodge was well-versed in the rhetorical theories of his time as he wrote the major speeches in Wounds.

8. George Gascoigne, Jocasta in The Posies ed. John W. Cunliffe (New York: Greenwood Press, 1907, rpt. 1969): 246.

In the dumb show at the beginning of the play Sesostres, king of Egypt, appears in a chariot drawn by kings and princes. Jocasta (Gray's Inn, 1566) may have influenced Lodge.

9. David Bevington in Tudor Drama and Politics: a critical approach to topical meaning (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962): 234 finds echoes of Marlowe's Tamburlaine. This episode is probably a case of "intertextual revision". If Whitworth's dates of 1586-87 are acceptable, then Wounds be almost contemporary with Tamburlaine.

10. Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince trans. George Bull (Baltimore: Penguin, 1975): 99-102. In section XVIII, Machiavelli discusses the need for rulers to be shifty and circumspect in their style of speech.

CHAPTER THREE

The 'mystery of blood' in Edward II

Marlowe's Edward II [1594] exposes the contradictions inherent in the Tudor paradigm of the sovereign's two bodies, a theory which viewed monarchy as transcendent. During the play, several different but related Tudor beliefs on kingship such as the sovereign's mystic body, divine right, inherited right, and the relation of the king to the law are tested and to some extent caricatured through the speech style of the unreliable and self-destructive monarch Edward II. In his characterization of Edward II, and in the depiction of the confusion of his court with its perplexed queen and corrupt courtiers, Marlowe reveals the gap between Tudor political theories and their application to real life.

In his own style of public utterance Edward II clearly tends to misuse rhetoric. Edward's speech acts are inconsistent, varying from immature temper tantrums to extremes of misplaced persuasion, even seduction. The present reading argues that Edward perverts images and myths in his speeches, and that his unstable, ranting style deludes no one except himself. Edward's abuse of government, of political theory, and of the passions is to a great extent paralleled in his abuse of rhetorical strategies in his speeches. He provides a clear stylistic contrast to Tamburlaine who achieves the political goals he aims at in his "high astounding terms" (Tamburlaine I

Prologue). Edward is sometimes homo rhetoricus as in: "Why, so; they barked apace a month ago:/ Now on my life, they'll neither bark nor bite" [IV.iii. 12-13], and sometimes homo seriosus as in "I am too weak and feeble to resist:/ Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul" [V.v. 107-108]. And his see-sawing styles of speech and government lead to his downfall.

Edward's changing styles of speech and his failure to use rhetoric effectively display the sad poverty of his imagination. They indicate the problems that can arise when a potentially dualizing paradox such as the theory of the two bodies falls into the hands of unimaginative and power hungry leaders. When in power, Edward plays at being homo rhetoricus as he attempts to justify his physical self-indulgence: "I'll either bandy with the barons and the earls/ And either die, or live with Gaveston" [I.i. 137-138]. Stripped of power, he seeks spiritual self-justification and his style changes to one of sincerity: "My nobles rule, I bear the name of king;/ I wear the crown, but am controlled by them" [V.i. 28-29]. By his very obsession with the personal, Edward II draws attention to the political implications of his speech acts both actual and intended. And Edward renders himself more vulnerable to the horrible physical torments that are inflicted upon him because he is so confused about his concept of himself as a king. By focussing upon Edward's narrowly legalistic and magical view of kingship, the playwright draws our attention

to the limitations of the Tudor concept of the king's two bodies.

Recently, scholars have examined the use of the metaphor of the king's two bodies in Renaissance plays both in terms of the wholeness of the sovereign and his subjects, and in the context of Elizabethan property laws. Robert Ornstein and others have stressed the traditional, monistic nature of the body politic metaphor:

Whatever role the Prince may play -- magus or scapegoat -- the King's Body is the living presence of the nation and his royal We a communion of multitudes. He is the Host upon which a people feed, in whose veins flows the blood of twenty thousand or a hundred thousand men, and whose illnesses infect his meanest subject. His sacred right is a mystery of blood that raises the throne above the gross purchase of political ambition but makes the common weal subject to accidents of birth and death. (A Kingdom for A Stage, 30).

In contrast to the above view, in Edward II, the literal-minded king and his people try to live out the metaphor thereby exaggerating the duality only potential in this doctrine. The problems of Edward's reign arise because the king never comprehends that he could not love only a few of his subjects at the expense of the many whose collective life he symbolized.

Ernst Kantorowicz and Marie Axton study plays to illustrate the presence of the doctrine of the body politic. One source of this metaphor has been traced to St. Paul. Axton writes that "Paul's language settled easily over the king's mysterious second body -- tailor made":

at that tyme ye were without Christe, beyng
 aliantes from the common wealth of Israel ...But
 nowe in Christe Jesus, ye whiche sometye were
 sometye farre of[f] are made nigh by the blood of
 Christe. ... And that he might reconcile both unto
 God in one body through [his] crosse, and slue
 hatred thereby. (Bishop's Bible, Ephes. II. 12-
15). (80).

In an earlier and most influential discussion of this theory, Kantorowicz stated:

The tenet, however, of the Tudor jurists definitely hangs upon the Pauline language and its later development: the change from the Pauline corpus christi to the medieval corpus ecclesiae mysticum, thence to the corpus republicae mysticum which was equated with the corpus morale et politicum of the commonwealth, until finally [though confused by the notion of Dignitas] the slogan emerged saying that every abbot was a 'mystical body' or a 'body politic', and that accordingly the king too, was, or had, a body politic which 'never died' (506).

While Kantorowicz most influentially has stressed the body politic metaphor, Axton is more interested in property law. She finds that it was "because the future stability of the realm seemed at stake during the succession controversy that a legal metaphor defining the relationship between sovereign and perpetual state reached out beyond the courts of law to influence writers, polemicists, and playwrights." (Axton, 17-18).

Edward's problems with his people and England's laws illustrate the popular Tudor association of the theory of the body politic with lawful government. Edward II is punished physically for his misgovernment. Donna B. Hamilton writes:

Comparing the body politic and the natural body, Fortescue explains that ... The life-blood that flows to the king from the people also flows from them to the laws, which, according to Fortescue, comprise "byndyng" sinews that allow the body to function properly [sig. Dviii] ...ultimately the king, the head of the body politic, receives a measure of his 'power of the people', a situation that makes it possible to 'measure the power, which the king thereof may exercise over the lawe and subjects of the same' [sig. Ei]. (9-10).[1]

By failing to recognize the exploration of Tudor paradigms through characters in Edward II, scholars have

wrestled with the "confusing" genre of this play. According to Irving Ribner, Edward II has all the ingredients of a formal tragedy, but the character of Edward has neither the stature of Marlowe's other tragic heroes, nor that of Shakespeare's portrayal of the weak king as a tragic hero in Richard II (136). Nicholas Brooke points out that the entire drama of Edward's crime and its punishment is depicted in sensual terms. Brooke finds that, "The play has, then, the material of a Christian moral drama, and totally excludes the moral" (101-102). Wilbur Sanders comes to an even stronger conviction of the uncertain moral position in Edward II, especially in the physical and psychic horror of the scenes in which the weak king is tortured and killed. Sanders finds that the working upon our human sympathy for Edward's personal sufferings destroys the dramatic integrity of the play as tragedy and history:

It is as if the concerns which in the first place, directed his attention to this reign -- the weak homosexual king, the sensational violence of his death, the Machiavellian ambition of a Mortimer--take charge of his pen; and when their momentum is spent, he is obliged to trace meaningless patterns on the paper until the imaginative fit seizes him again (108).

Because of the confusion over the play's genre, scholars have also found it difficult to determine the function of the torture-scenes which follow Edward's

deposition. Clifford Leech finds that Edward's play builds up to the nerve-wracking torture-scenes; it is as if the cell waits for Edward all the time and the play's action leads up to it (163). In contrast, Michael Manheim prefers to underplay the torture and death scenes when he states that "the symbolic association of the homosexual act with Edward's murder is one I doubt Marlowe or any Elizabethan would have made obvious as it may seem to some today" (51).

The emphasis on the horror of Edward's end is to be found in Marlowe's source, Holinshed. In their edition of Edward II, Charlton and Waller point out:

Holinshed's harrowing account of Edward's last days is based on the extract from Geoffrey le Baker which used to be called the chronicle of Sir Thomas de la More. How much of it is true nobody will ever know; but according to Geoffrey Sir Thomas actually visited the King at Kenilworth in the train of Bishop Stratford, a member of the deputation which went to demand Edward's abdication in January 1327 (49).

Marlowe's criticism of the dualism inherent in the theory of the two bodies is clear from the manner in which he manipulates our sympathy in Edward's favour in the torture scenes. The deposition of the king is completed only with his death. His physical body is punished in a hellish medieval torture chamber for sins which are chiefly

sins of government. This extended and excessively literal rendering of the Tudor political metaphor of the king's two bodies is obviously intended to be viewed ironically. The play provokes us into considering the limitations of the doctrine of the king's mystic body, both from the viewpoint of the monarch and from that of his subjects. Edward is depicted as having very little understanding of political situations. His political rhetoric is largely unreliable, and we are meant to reconsider critically the political doctrines that invest so much power in a human being so unworthy of it.

The sympathy which the torture-scenes arouses for Edward II undermines the overall didactic pattern of this history play, making us question the ethical rationale of such a terrible purgation of the king's sins. The Renaissance humanist tradition frowned upon physical torment. Erasmus, for example, treats violence in man as unnatural in his Dulce bellum inexpertis (Phillips, Erasmus on His Times, 107-141).

Not only does Marlowe emphasize the torture-scenes, the entire play is structured somewhat episodically to overemphasize the relationships of the king with his favourites. Marlowe edits his Holinshed to make the favourites the principal reason for Edward's misgovernment thereby emphasizing Edward's physical self-indulgence. The sources had stressed homosexuality without being politically radical, but Marlowe draws attention to the political

implications of Edward's wrongs. And this play blames more than one character for the chaos in the realm. The leaders who overthrow Edward -- the Queen and Mortimer -- have misconceptions of the nature of monarchy and legal government similar to Edward's. In the opening scenes of the play we learn that Edward has broken God's law and must face punishment:

Lancaster My lord, will you take arms
against the King ?

Canterbury What need I? God himself is up in
arms
When violence is offered to the
church.

[Edward II, I.ii. 39-41].

However, Canterbury's reference to "the church" lessens the seriousness of Edward's wrongs for Marlowe's largely Protestant Tudor audience. We are also reminded of the animosity of the Catholic clergy to the English monarch in the King John plays. The opening scene of Edward II also incorporates the doctrine of obedience, when Mortimer Junior's rebellious sentiments are rebuked by the Archbishop of Canterbury:

Mortimer Junior The King shall lose his crown, for
we have power,
And courage too, to be revenged at
full.

Canterbury But lift not your swords against

the King.

[I.ii. 59-61]

The power of the king and his right to rule came from God, but the same divine right also rendered the king subject to the law according to Fortescue (Hamilton, 9-10). These ideas have been summarized by Moody E. Prior: "It was also a commonly held opinion that the king should regard himself as subject to the law. This followed from his position as God's representative" (Prior, 95).[2]

In the opening scene Marlowe gives Edward passionate rhetoric in which Edward states that a king's actions cannot be questioned by his subjects:

I cannot brook these haughty menaces,
Am I a king, and must be overruled ?
Brother, display my ensigns in the field;
I'll bandy with the barons and the earls
And either die, or live with Gaveston.

[I.i. 134-138].

Here Edward is homo rhetoricus, playing the part of a powerful king according to his own limited understanding of sovereignty. His extravagant language is an instance of what Puttenham calls bomphiologia or pompous speech (Puttenham, 266). Edward seems more immature and petulant than seriously motivated in the above bomphiologia. An irresponsible and self-indulgent king, Edward is ready to go to war for wrong reasons. Edward's misuse of rhetoric works against him when his confusions of pun ["bandy"/"die"] are

enacted literally. He fights against the barons and earls because of his favourites. Deposed and defeated, he is tortured and killed for his friendships. Latent [homo]sexual connotations may lurk in Edward's "die" in ll. 138. But, in his bomphiologia, Edward has no inkling of his brutal end at Berkeley Castle.

Throughout the play, Edward fails to understand his close relationship to the people and the law. Instead he feels that he is being forced to yield to pressure from the powerful barons [his subjects], and that his royal authority is being unfairly undermined. All his attempts at self-assertion centre upon these feelings [III.ii. 1-9; V.i. 26-29]. The "smooth-tongued scholar" Baldock counsels him against yielding to the barons. Baldock's lines are a sad commentary on a sovereign:

This haught resolve becomes your majesty,
Not to be tied to their affection,
As though your highness were a schoolboy still,
And must be awed and governed like a child

[III. ii. 28-31]

Even though Baldock is seeking his own advancement, there is a grain of truth in these lines, for Edward seems to acquiesce in Baldock's image of what he has formerly been. Edward's only claim to political power is that he is the hereditary monarch. Royal right by inheritance, though common practice, was by no means an undisputed topic:

Starkey, writing during the reign of Henry VIII,

rejected the theory that succession by inheritance was demanded by nature and right reason, and viewed it rather as a system imposed by 'tyrants and barbarous princes', yet he approved of the practice as an expedient way of avoiding 'discord, debate, and confusion' (Prior, 88-89).

Edward's need to prop himself up on his right to rule through hereditary succession emphasizes his lack of actual political strength.

Like Marlowe's earlier heroes Edward is also a peculiarly obsessive character. Edward is preoccupied with his belief in his own rights. M.M. Mahood compares Edward to Mycetes: "Edward is insignificant besides Marlowe's other heroes, a Mycetes in the throne of Tamburlaine" (119). Mahood's analogy seems to point to Edward's lack of understanding of the nature of kingship, even though the comparison of Edward and Mycetes is almost like parody. Edward's political position is complicated because his right to the crown is hereditary and this conflicts with his belief that he has a right to private relationships as a man. He is affronted by the strong barons both as a king and as a man:

King. By earth, the common mother of us all,

.....

Despite of times, despite of enemies.

[III.ii. 127-147]

Edward is not speaking in Mycetes's vein, but more in

that of Tamburlaine. We can only be horrified at the cruelty, callousness, and childish tantrums of a monarch who can speak as irresponsibly as in the following exchange:

Mortimer Junior Then, Edward, thou wilt fight it
to the last,
And rather bathe thy sword in
subject's blood,
Than banish that pernicious
company.

King. Ay, traitors all, rather than thus be
braved,
Make England's civil towns huge heaps of
stones,
And ploughs to go about our palace-gates.

[III.iii. 26-31]

Edward's reasons for fighting a civil war are wrong, but he uses a figure of reasoning -- etiologicalia-- to justify himself. The verbal aggression implied in the above speech act [ll. 30-31] suggests that Edward's victory will mean a cruel and tyrannical rule in England. However, Edward is not required to live up to his threats of destroying England's towns, since he wins the first round of his combat against the barons:

King. Thus after many threats of wrathful war,
Triumpheth England's Edward with his friends;
And triumph, Edward, with friends
uncontrolled.

[VI. i. 1-31]

In his reiteration of "triumph/triumpheth" Edward is using ploche [Puttenham's doubler] to emphasize that he has had his own way, and can now revel with his friends "uncontrolled" (Puttenham, 211). The lack of control suggests Edward's total disregard for the will of the people and the laws of the realm. Edward appears to revel in the large number of heads he has had struck off:

Why, man, they say there is great execution

Done through the realm

[IV. iii. 6-7]

Spencer Junior reads out the names of the executed barons [IV. iii. 11]. Edward responds as if he has slaughtered curs, using Puttenham's sarcasmus:

Why, so; they barked apace a month ago:

Now on my life, they'll neither bark nor bite

[IV . iii. 12-13]

The barking curs may also be read as instances of Puttenham's icon (250). Edward's triumph is to be short-lived, because we know that Mortimer has escaped to France in IV. i. In his clemency toward Mortimer, Edward displays an absence of recognition of his enemies and of political necessity that no despotic ruler can afford; he thereby hastens his own downfall.

Edward's image of the sun (Phoebus) galloping through the sky is reminiscent of the myth of Phaeton because it is inappropriate to the occasion:

King. Gallop apace, bright Phoebus, through the
sky,

And dusky night, in rusty iron car,
Between you both shorten the time, I pray,
That I may see that most desired day,
When we may meet these traitors in the
field.

[IV. iii. 45-49]

Edward's use of myth in his apostrophe to the sun conforms to Puttenham's Renaissance definition of paradigma which is a likening of a case from the past with the present in human history for purposes of wise counsel (Puttenham, 252). Coming at the moment of Edward's victory over the barons, this analogy with Phaeton seems to foreshadow his ultimate fall, two scenes later in IV. v., and is proof of Edward's inability to understand the significance of his own inflated language.

Edward's myth-clichés block his perception of his actual political situation. The savage irony of "that most desired day" is fulfilled within the space of one short scene [IV.v.] as the Queen and Mortimer seize power. Edward's choices steadily lead him toward self-destruction. Spencer Junior warns the king:

Fly, fly, my lord, the Queen is overstrong;
Her friends do multiply, and yours do fail.

[IV.v. 4-7]

Edward responds with a vain attempt at majesty:

Give me my horse, and let's r'enforce our troops;
And in this bed of horror die with fame

[IV. v. 4-7]

Edward is speaking pompously using paradox ["horror"/"fame"], still playing at being rhetorical man. He wants to uphold his honour because he was born to be a king, the crown being his birthright and his inheritance. But despite his excessive concern with his crown, he does not comprehend in entirety what it is to be a king. For instance, he fails to understand the significance of the death of his friends chiefly because they were the friends of a king and the partners of his mistakes when he complains: "O Gaveston, it is for thee that I am wronged/ For me, both thou and both the Spencers died".[V. iii. 41-42].

Much of the imagery in Edward's speeches is exaggerated and self-destructive. This is particularly evident in the final scenes after his defeat. In IV. vi. the appearance of the mower, the traditional symbol of death, makes us aware of the inevitability of what is going to happen to Edward [l. 116]. Edward poeticizes on the nature of his predicament; he says that he is going to hell. Once again he uses paradigma which is quite prophetic and oddly euphonic:

And to the gates of hell convey me hence;
Let Pluto's bells ring out my fatal knell
And hags howl for my death at Charon's shore,

[11. 86-89]

He has previously said that his imprisonment is the rebels' vengeance for the love of his friends, whom he has loved passionately:

then, in Isabella's name

To take my life, my company from me ?

Here, man, rip up this panting breast of mine,

And take my heart in rescue of my friends.

[11. 64-67]

In the above improper etiologia [11. 66-67] with its violent, ugly, and grotesque images, Edward plays into the hands of the power-mad "dualizer" Mortimer. While he still does not take his rhetoric literally, his innate self-destructiveness is evident in his images. The dignity of his speeches in adversity is significantly undermined by excessive emotion. We recall Mortimer Senior's 'Quam male conveniunt' [I. iv. 8]. Edward has lived by excess of emotion.

In this context, Edward's journey to Killingworth invites a reading of "Killingworth" as a drastic pun. In V. i. at Killingworth, Edward surrenders his crown. In terms of the deranged metaphor of the two bodies, the deposition scene represents the climax of the play. The "killing" is the act of deposing Edward as king, rather than the act of murdering him physically as a man. Edward himself sees this episode in terms of self-destruction:

But, when the imperial lion's flesh is gored,

He rends and tears at it with his wrathful paw,
 Highly scorning that the lowly earth
 Should drink his blood mounts up into the air.
 And so fares it with me, whose dauntless mind
 The ambitious Mortimer would seek to curb,

[V. i. 11-16]

In using the myth of the lion's royal behaviour when injured, Edward again uses Puttenham's icon. His self-delusion in the above lines is obvious, as he makes a false claim for his own mental prowess. Throughout the play, Edward's actions have shown his imperial wrath, but his decisions have never revealed the intellectual control and grasp of affairs of a "dauntless mind". By his very obsession with the personal, Edward II draws attention to the political implications of his speech acts both actual and intended. From the image of the imperial lion in a speech where he is still rhetorical man, Edward changes to homo seriosus as his descent to the reality of his situation is inevitable and rapid:

But what are kings when regiment is gone,
 But perfect shadows in a sunshine day ?
 My nobles rule, I bear the name of king;
 I wear the crown, but am controlled by them.

[11. 26-29]

Edward is using eroteina, and as in the case of the politicians in Misfortunes and Wounds, Edward's use of the rhetorical question illustrates his feelings of

ineffectuality and political frustration. Edward has his only moment of political realization while he is tormented by suspicions of Mortimer's intentions to wear the crown. He suddenly bursts out with the truth of his predicament. It seems as if this intense pain is what he had felt all along about the crown he inherited:

But if proud Mortimer do wear this crown,
Heavens turn it to a blaze of quenchless fire;
Or, like the snaky wreath of Tisiphon,
Engirt the temples of his hateful head.

[11. 43-46]

The crown functions as the central icon, in our contemporary sense of the term, in Edward's speeches in the scenes after his defeat. If being alive to Edward means wearing the crown as king, 11. 43-46 suggest his fear of the destructive qualities of life itself.

Edward's use of the myth of Tisiphon provides yet another instance of paradigma. But Edward's curse against Mortimer rebounds against himself as the play's action unfolds Edward's terrible fate. Like Marlowe's other heroes, Edward projects. What Marlowe's heroes say of another character is often true about themselves. The tormented and genuine emotion in Edward's speech suggests that wearing the crown was never an easy task for him, and has only brought him great pain and suffering. An even deeper realization follows, as he speaks in Faustus's vein [Faust. Oh Faustus,...hath deprived thee of the joys of

heaven (Doctor Faustus, V. i. 274-323)] as he finds the time approaching when he must surrender his crown: "let me be king till night, ...needs must I resign my wished crown" [ll. 60-70]. The crown is a symbol of the body politic, and in a displaced manner, Edward seems to comprehend finally what it was to have been England's king. Faustus's description of his vision of Christ's blood, of salvation moments before his eternal damnation (Doctor Faustus, V. i. 286-289) is comparable in the intensity of its passionate rhetoric to Edward's vision of his kingship. Both Edward and Faustus recognize the symbols of life fearfully and much too late.

In his abdication, Edward is neither the imperial lion nor a Mycetes. He is suddenly almost an ordinary man in his voicing of a commonplace emotion, regret, and he earns our sympathy as homo seriosus when he says:

And in this torment comfort find I none,
But that I feel the crown upon my head,
And therefore let me wear it yet awhile

[ll. 81-83]

Then we are back again in the world of symbolic action where the potential but extreme duality present in the doctrine of the two bodies is recognized, and deposition equals regicide:

He of you all that most desired my blood,
And will be called the murderer of a king,
Take it.

[ll. 100-102]

In the above lines we have one of the clearest instances of Edward's narrow and magical conception of kingship as he equates his own physical being with the act of wearing the crown. It is in keeping with the pattern of self-destruction inherent in many of Edward's speeches and speech acts that he surrenders the crown voluntarily. As in Richard II, the crown cannot be taken from the king without destroying him as a man, because the king has helped create a situation wherein the extreme duality only potential in this doctrine is realized:

Richard I give this weight from off my head

And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,

[Richard II, IV.i. 204-205].

Edward equates his surrender of the crown with death as he gives vent to personal emotion using a conventional form of prosopopoeia:

Come, death, and with thy fingers close my eyes,

Or if I live, let me forget myself.

[ll. 110-111]

In this symbolic death and/or loss of selfhood that he embraces, Edward makes no act of contrition for his disordered and tyrannical rule. The tragic irony of his situation is that he has little awareness of anything else except his good qualities as a ruler. He only suspects that he was not powerful enough. In another inaccurate use of etiologia he states:

Commend me to my son, and bid him rule
 Better than I. Yet how have I transgressed
 Except with too much clemency ?

[11. 121-123]

If Edward's 'etiological' style is characterized by wrong reasoning, and his understanding of sovereignty incomplete, these failings are also present in the Queen and Mortimer who overthrow Edward to further their own corrupt ambitions. Edward is correct when he mentions "too much clemency" in referring to his lenient treatment of Mortimer as he remembers his reign.

When in power Mortimer has no respect for monarchs and monarchy. His desire to remedy the evil caused by Edward's reign is prompted less by the need to have just government in the land than to further his own need for power. His corrupt intentions and selfish, flawed reasons provide a direct contrast to the roles played by powerful feudal lords such as the Bastard in Troublesome Reign and King John and the good Duke Humphrey in 1 and 2 Henry VI who place the weal of the state above self-interest. For Mortimer, kings are no more than puppets when he states his reasons for seizing power:

Fair Isabel, now we have our desire;
 The proud corrupters of the light-brained King
 Have done their homage to the lofty gallows,
 And he himself lies in captivity.
 Be ruled by me, and we will rule the realm.

.....
 Think therefore, madam, that imports us much
 To erect your son with all the speed we may,
 And that I be protector over him;
 For our behoof will bear the greater sway
 Whenas a king's name shall be under writ.

[V. ii. 1-14]

Queen Isabel is as weak as the deposed king in allowing her passions to rule her judgment in matters of statecraft. She has been so negatively influenced by her lover that she too has no respect for the throne. She is less concerned with her son's rightful succession than with her own emotions. Prompted by maternal affection, her only concern is for his safety in troubled times when she says:

Sweet Mortimer, the life of Isabel,
 Be thou persuaded that I love thee well,
 And therefore, so the prince my son be safe,
 Whom I esteem as dear as these mine eyes,
 Conclude against his father what thou wilt,
 And I myself will willingly subscribe.

[V. ii. 15-20]

We recall that safety or security is Edward's vice as well. The queen's flattering acquiescence to Mortimer's wishes indicates the complete corruption of Edward's court where all concepts of political justice have become totally lost.

When the correctors of the evils caused by Edward in the realm are politicians as nakedly ambitious and power

hungry as Mortimer, and as foolishly doting and confused as Queen Isabel, Edward's torture and terrible end are the result of the Mortimer regime's perversion of the paradigm of the two bodies. The torments to which Edward's body is subjected in V.iii. and V. v. appear to be the new government's method of "purging" the evil in the kingdom. In these scenes Edward's understanding of his irrational purgation remains, as usual, incomplete, when he says:

Within a dungeon England's King is kept,
Where I am starved for want of sustenance.
My daily diet is heart-breaking sobs
That almost rents the closet of my heart:
Thus lives old Edward not relieved by any,
And so must die, though pitied by many.

[V. iii. 19-23]

Edward's lament is an instance of ecphronisis [outcry], and here too there is excess of emotion and language. "Heart-breaking sobs" / "closet of my heart" is an instance of Puttenham's tautologia, an improper rhetorical figure which Edward uses to arouse sympathy for his condition (Puttenham, 261). Although deposed, Edward still considers himself England's king [V. iii. 19], but he does not comprehend why he is being subjected to such punishments. He remains firm in his belief that he is king as he attempts to save his own life in another passionate outburst using tautology [in the sense of hopeless repetition] as he bribes the assassin Lightborn [3]:

Let this gift change thy mind, and save thy soul.
 Know that I am a king; Oh at that name
 I feel a hell of grief ! Where is my crown ?
 Gone, gone, and do I remain alive ?

[V.v. 87-89]

It is as if in realization of Edward's worst fears that Lightborn has appeared. This name itself is satanic, and its cruelty parallels "Killingworth". Edward surrenders to his killers:

Edw. I am too weak and feeble to resist:
 Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul.

[V. v. 107-108].

In the structure of Edward II there is a kind of secondary climax in the final torture scene [V.v.] as both stage audience [ll. 1-6] and theatre audience tensely await the king's death. The exact circumstances of Edward's murder were carefully selected out of Holinshed to reinforce the impact of this underground Marlovian chamber of horrors, unparalleled in its physical and psychic ferocity even in the episodes of torture and cruelty at a later date in Jacobean drama:

with heavie feather beddes, [or a table as some write] being cast upon him, they kept him downe, and withall put into his fundament an horne, and through the same they thrust into his bodie a hote spitte ... the which passing up into his intrayles, and being rolled to and fro, burnt

the same, but so as no appearance of any wounds or hurt outwardly might bee once perceyved (Fraser and Rabkin, 353).

The phallic symbolism of Lightborn's red-hot spit {V. v. 30} indicates that the king is ultimately punished for his abuse of the passions. Edward's false use of rhetorical language also catches up with him as his misused figures of speech [paradigma, IV. vi. 86-89; etiologia, IV. vi. 64-67] are translated into almost literal terms.

While the dead literal rendering of the two bodies metaphor in the final scenes exposes the dualism inherent in this Tudor political paradigm, our sympathy for Edward never goes so far as to dismiss the necessity of just, competent, and constructive government in a state. Edward II calls into question the issue of inherited right as the sole justification for rulership where the inheritor is as unsuitable for monarchy as Edward II, and this question is also present in Shakespeare's First Tetralogy. At the same time, in the triumph of Edward III who restores order in the realm [V.vi], it is suggested that a ruler could be capable in himself despite his paternity. In the support Edward III receives from his lords as he rids the kingdom of Mortimer's rule, the idea of a law-abiding and just sovereign receiving popular support is clearly emphasized.

Through the derangement of the political metaphor of the king's two bodies in Edward II, Marlowe depicts a political world soulless and corrupt. The play emphasizes

that the right and wrong of politics ultimately rests with individuals, and not in theories. The metaphor of the body politic, implicit in so many Renaissance plays, suggested harmony between the one and the many. But the distortion of the paradigm of the two bodies by both Edward and the politicians who execute him shows that a potentially dualizing paradox such as this one could be cruelly misused by unimaginative, unstable, power-hungry, and vindictive leaders to make a weapon of an essentially imaginative theory.

NOTES

1. Like Moody E. Prior, Hamilton too uses Fortescue to discuss the relation of the king to God and to the law in Donna B. Hamilton, "The State of the Law in Richard II", Shakespeare Quarterly, Vol 34 [1983]: 9-10. Original footnote numbers in this quotation have been deleted, and this practice is followed in all subsequent quotations in this study.

2. Moody E. Prior, The Drama of Power: Studies in Shakespeare's History Plays (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 95. Prior also cites influential sixteenth century writers such as Tyndale and Fortescue to show the prevalence of such views on the relation of the king to God and to the law:

Tyndale cautioned kings to "remember that they are in God's stead and ordained of God not for themselves but for the weal of their subjects ... The king is in the room of God, and his law is God's law and nothing but the law of nature a natural equity which God graved in the hearts of men." If the law of nature be of God, then the king is not above the law. According to Sir John Fortescue, the most distinguished political writer of the late Middle Ages, the king was bound to rule by the laws to which his people assented, and morally obligated to obey the highest law himself: "Wherefore as oft as such a king doth wrong notwithstanding the said law declared by the prophet." The law of nature and the king's subordination to it persists throughout the sixteenth century.

The intricacies of the monarchical paradigm were probably familiar to many of the educated members of Marlowe's audience.

3. Stephen Greenblatt, Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980): 200. Greenblatt too picks up on the repetitiveness of Edward's rhetoric. Edward's repetitive rhetoric is part of what Greenblatt terms the repetition compulsion of Marlowe's heroes. Of the pattern of action in Edward II Greenblatt says that "after spending the first half of the play alternately embracing and parting from Gaveston, Edward immediately replaces the slain favorite with Spencer Junior and thereby resumes the same pattern, the willful courting of disaster that is finally

rewarded' in the castle cesspool."

CHAPTER FOUR

The ideal Protestant king in King Johan

John Bale's morality play King Johan [1539] depicts a saintly monarch who is a true prophet and the type of the Christian martyr. Johan is murdered because he lacks political realism like Shakespeare's Henry VI, even though he tries to confront the conspiring Catholic clergy in a plain, strong "Protestant" style. Johan is too saintly to cope with the evil forces of discord in his kingdom. Typologically, Johan's reign may be read as a captivity in Babylon, while the Pope is identified with Antichrist. King Johan alters facts about the troubled reign of King John from medieval English history in order to depict the conflict between the playwright's idealized desires for a perfect ruler in a perfect state, and the grim realities of monarchy, power, and treason in the historical world both past [thirteenth century] and present [sixteenth century].

By dramatizing the sufferings of King Johan, Bale blended medieval historical facts and allegorical treatment of the contemporary Tudor conflict of church and state to produce a uniquely transitional play that combines techniques of structure, characterization, stage spectacle, and dialogue from the medieval morality form with the active political interest that is present in Renaissance historical drama. According to scholars, King Johan is the earliest of

the sixteenth century history plays with recognizable political content, even though it may not have influenced later plays on King John and other Renaissance history plays. F.P. Wilson states:

Bale's originality rests in his choice of a theme from English history as the base for a political morality. In a sense, but not perhaps an important sense, he is a precursor of the historical plays on English themes in Elizabeth's last years. His play remained in manuscript, however, and as far as we can tell had not the slightest influence upon later drama (37-38).

Robert Potter points out that King Johan was viewed as a political work in its own time:

In its initial form this play was probably written in 1538 and performed at Christmas before the household of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. Records indicate that Cromwell paid for the performance; it is likely that the play was presented subsequently in public performances. Audiences evidently understood clearly the message of the play, and outbreaks of disorder occurred. One spectator remarked that 'it was a great pity that the bishop of Rome should reign any longer, for he would do with our King as he did for King John' (95).

Bale catered to the tastes of his contemporaries and

attempted to win them over to the Protestant cause by creating a king of England who is a Protestant saint. Bale's King Johan speaks in a plain style, that conforms to the principles of "Protestant poetics" discussed by such scholars such as Barbara Lewalski and John King. King points out:

The English Protestant literary tradition emerged and flourished during the radical Reformation in the middle of the sixteenth century ... this literature introduced Protestant themes and a plain style that would continue to influence English literature throughout most of the seventeenth century (3).

King places Bale's work in this sixteenth century Protestant tradition (56-75).

King Johan is concerned with truth in language, a theme which also runs through Troublesome Reign and King John. But in the latter plays, the king's own language is often false. King Johan's speeches stress signification, recording, and allegory, and his speeches are steeped in Biblical allusions. In contrast to the king's plain style, clear arguments, and presumably sober manners, the stage "Catholics" wax flowery in speech, speaking figuratively: "Here is nowther Awsten, Ambrose, Hierom nor Gregory We of the Chirch now are the fower generall proctors" [King Johan in Tudor Plays ed. Edmund Creeth. New York: Anchor Books, 1966, I. 807-810], and use singing and chanting: "A

Johanne Rege iniquo, libera nos, domine" [I. 650]. We also assume that they wear rich costumes as a satire on Catholic abuse. The Catholics' physical disguises parallel their false rhetoric. The Protestant king's plainness indicates his righteousness and sincerity, while the Catholic opposition's speeches and manners suggest their hypocrisy and intemperate ways of living [a favourite concern of Bale's].

Johan's Protestant government brings on his suffering, so like the other leaders discussed in this study, Johan's style indirectly suggests humanity in conflict with doctrine. However, Lanham's definition of homo seriosus cannot be applied to King Johan, because this play is less concerned with the characters' realization of self than with the propagation of Protestant doctrine through the king's speeches. Bale upholds the Protestant view without questioning the hero's suffering. Instead, he explains this suffering by blaming Catholics, and by pointing to analogies with sainthood and martyrdom. When Sedicyon feels that he himself belongs with Thomas Becket, Imperyall Majestye protests:

Kyng Johan ye subdued for that ponnysshed treason

.....

But Thomas Becket ye exalted without reason,

Because that he dyed for the Churches wanton
lybertye,

[II. 1477-1480].

While the medieval chroniclers had recorded King John's cruelty and impiety, Bale transformed the earlier view altogether by presenting an ideal king in his play. John R. Elliot states that the medieval King John

is said to have reveled in cruel and unnatural punishments such as slitting noses, plucking out eyes and teeth, and crushing bodies under lead weights. He extorted money, seized property, and raped the wives and daughters of his barons. He despised Christianity and even, according to Matthew Paris, concocted a scheme to make England subservient to the Moslem ruler of North Africa in return for the latter's protection against the Pope (65).

Sixteenth century writers mostly focussed on John's defiance of the Pope, and chose to ignore the evils of his reign. Elliot finds that the earliest attack upon the Catholic conspirators was made by William Tyndale in The Obedience of a Christian Man in 1528 (66). Elliot continues:

The new image of John as an heroic king and Protestant martyr soon made him one of the most popular of English historical figures.....
In particular, Bale attacked Polydore Vergil, who, as we shall see, was primarily responsible for continuing the adverse medieval view of John into the

sixteenth century.....Bale took Polydore severely to task for his treatment of King John (67).

Bale's King Johan is the ideal head of state that a zealous Protestant minister's imagination created. King Johan is also the type of the true prophet like the kings from David to Solomon, confirming Lewalski's view that ... "the ancient mode of Christian symbolism we call typology was alive and well after the Reformation and prominent in sixteenth and seventeenth century theology and literature" (111). According to David Bevington: "The idealized ending of King John moves avowedly out of the thirteenth-century time and approaches the millenium. Imperial Majesty, patently King Henry, is 'supreme lord of the church'" (104). Bevington sees Bale's treatment of kingship as typical of the Protestants' dilemma in Reformation England:

Bale's fictional king is thus not simple flattery of Henry but a potential standard for criticism. Bale specifically endorses Tudor divine right (1. 103) but insists that God's instrument on earth must take firm charge of God's Reformation (102).

King Johan incorporates much more than "potential" criticism, because Bale, like other writers of history plays dramatizes the past to reflect the present. The depiction of Johan as the type of the religious saviour similar to Moses and King David is part of the typological emphasis of

this play. According to The Interpretour:

This noble Kyng Johan, as a faythfull Moyses,
Withstode proude Pharao for hys poore Israel,
Myndynge to brynge yt owt of the lande of
darkenesse,

But the Egyptanes did agaynst hym so rebell,
That hys poore people ded styll in the desart
dwell,

Tyll that duke Josue, which was our late Kynge
Henrye,

Clerely brought us in to the lande of mylke and
honye.

As a stronge David, at the voyce of verytie,

[I. 1107-1114].

Because Bale's patron was Thomas Cranmer, the obvious flattery of Henry VIII would have been in keeping with the custom of the Tudor court. Superficially the play does laud Henry VIII, and Johan and Henry have their zeal for reform in common, but the differences between Johan and Henry VIII would have been obvious to contemporary audiences. Bale's royal hero is a saintly prince, but Henry VIII hardly represented such virtue.

Bale's hero king begins by introducing himself plainly and firmly declaring his noble purpose: "To reforme the lawes and sett men in good order./ That trew Justyce may be had in every border" [I. 20-21]. Johan exaggerates his own power, and states that his ancestry and family ties make him

what he is: "My granfather was an empowre excelent,/My father a Kyng, by successyon lyneall" [I. 10-11]. As in the reigns of other kings in the sixteenth century history plays discussed in this study, hereditary kingship did not automatically denote political strength. Widow Englande enters seeking his help, complaining that she has been "ungodly usyd" by the clergy "ageynst all ryght and justice". Johan cannot recognize Englande who has been "chaungyd thus". And Johan's lack of recognition of the state of England contributes to his painful end (Potter, 97). As if in response to this complaint of change, Sedicyon enters with a bawdy low-life threat: "What, you two alone ? I will tell tales, by Jesus,/ And saye that I se yow fall here to lycharye" [I. 43-44].

The rapid transitions from the serious to the mean and commonplace are a characteristic feature of Bale's style in King Johan. While this does little to enhance the quality of Bale's art, it gives a sense of energy to many of Bale's characters [Bevington, 101]. Excepting the king, the other characters in King Johan are not recognizable either as real people, or even historical characters from the middle ages. They are two-dimensional beings who enact their thoughts and emotions on stage in words. Given the allegorical nature of characterization in morality plays, this two-dimensional depiction is understandable, but sometimes we feel simply that Bale is speaking, not a dramatic creation. In his most powerful attacks on contemporary problems, Bale forgoes the

"willing suspension of disbelief" that dramatic dialogue is expected to induce, and gives vent to his own spleen, notably against Roman Catholics. He exhibits a tendency to lapse into doggerel verse. Profanity frequently erupts into the text and Bale excels in condemning his opposition.[1]

In the opening scene Englande's complaints and King Johan's responses immediately demonstrate Bale's vehement anti-Catholic views:

King Johan By the bore of Rome, I trow, thou
menyst the pope

.....

Englande For that he and hys to such bestlynes
incline.

They forsake Godes word, which is most
puer and clene.

And unto the lawys of synfull men they
leane.

[I. 75-80]

The beast imagery confirms Bale's hatred of Romish divines. Englande's attack on the Pope and the Roman Catholic clergy is interrupted by Sedicyon with abuse:

Hold yowr peace, ye whore, or ellys by Masse, I
trowe.

I shall cause the pope to curse thee as black as a crowe

[I. 87-88].

In what is to become his characteristic inquiring

Solomonic manner, the king asks Sedicyon who he is: "What art thou, fellow, that seeme so braggynge bolde ?" [I. 89]. Later, the Solomonic analogy is clearly emphasized in the king's own comment supporting divine right: "The power of princys ys geuyn from God above,/ And, as sayth Salomon, ther hartes the Lord doth move" [II. 225-226]. Sedicyon, however, identifies himself with profanity: "I am Sedicyon, that with the pope wyll hold/ So long as I have a hole within my breche" [I. 90-91]. Once Johan is adequately apprised of Englands pitiful condition and her specific needs, he pledges to become her defender and patron: "For God hath sett me by his apoyntment just/ To further thy cause, to mayntayne thi ryght,/ And therfor I will supporte thee daye and nyght" [I. 137-139]. Johan pledges to consult with the clergy and the noblemen of the realm. And even if they do not help in diagnosing and solving Englands problems, he alone will try to help her as best as he can.

The character of the protagonist King Johan is vividly drawn, while the king's principal foes, Sedicyon and his associates, are less clearly realized. Sedicyon and his "Catholic" associates are in direct opposition to Englands and her "Protestant" champion Johan. Even though basically detestable, the character of Sedicyon has vigour and vitality. He belongs in the category of Spivack's "hybrid image" of whom Spivack writes: "Such a villain and his history wrap the perennial role in the surface texture of human vision and appetite, beneath which it goes its ancient

bravura way in the homiletic dimension" (339). Sedicyon openly and boldly mocks the king who refuses to be dissuaded from his holy task of solving Englande's problems. The verve and noise of Sedicyon's speeches is reminiscent of the Wycliffite style:

Sedicyon Alas, that ye are not a pryst to here
confessyon.

Kyng Johan Why for confessyon ? Lett me know thi
fantasye.

Sedicyon Becawse that ye are a man so full of
mercye,

Namely to women that wepe with a heavy
harte

Whan they in the churche hath lett but a
lytyl farte.

Kyng Johan I perseyve well now thou speakyst all
this in mockage,

Because I take parte with Englandes
ryghtfull herytage.

Say thou what thou wylt, her mater shall
not peryshe.

(I. 167-169)

Johan reads Sedicyon's vulgar little allegory quickly, because of his concern with truth in language. The Catholic opposition's abuse of speech mocks the Catholic rite of confession, a clear instance of Bale's witty anti-Catholic propaganda. Johan's dialogue with Sedicyon clearly

establishes the latter's falsehood and knavery. The king uses antitheton [the quarreller/ the encounter], almost his only rhetorical device, to challenge his foes. His tone is more emphatic than imperious and commanding. Johan asks Sedicyon to provide more information about himself. Sedicyon says that he is to be found in every sect of the Popish faith:

Serche and ye shall find in every congregacyon
That long to the pope, for they are to me full
swer,
And wyll be so long as they last and endwer.

[I. 190-192]

Sedicyon's "Serche and ye shall fynd" parodies Biblical language, and is among numerous instances of Bale's use of Biblical language for political purposes. More direct use of the Bible is to be found in the King's speeches. Bevington cites Johan's use of the tales of Solomon, David, Mary, and Joseph, Jehosephat, Ezekias, Maccabeas, Dathan, and Abiram, Susanna, and Balaam, as well as the Book of Ecclesiastes, Revelation, the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul to prove certain contemporary political concepts such as the subservience of church to state in secular issues (101). In contrast to Sedicyon's parody, Johan's use of Biblical parallels provides an instance of Protestant style in which according to King: "Insisting that truth inheres in the literal text, the Protestants used the Bible as the touchstone for their experience in the world" (17).

As an ideal Protestant sovereign, Johan is also a sound theologian who recognizes only the Biblical text as Word and Law. Johan's speeches in II. 290-300, 380-389, 392-401 provide characteristic instances of his serious concern with signification and recording. He emphasizes the need for obedience to monarchs by interpreting the significance of history as recorded in the Bible:

Mary and Joseph at Cyryus appoyntment

In the descripcyon to Cesar were obedyent.

Crist ded paye trybute for hymselfe and Peter
to[o,]

For a lawe prescrybyng the same unto priestes also.

To prophane princes he obeyed unto dethe.

[II. 293-297]

In II. 380-389 and 392-401, Johan further strengthens his Protestant arguments by citing supporting instances from Biblical history.[2]

In keeping with concepts of good government, King Johan confers with the noblemen [Nobilitye] and clergy [Clergye] of the realm to decide upon the future of Englande. The outcome of their discussion is Nobilitye's decision to remain the protector of Holy Church, and the revelation of Clergye's self-seeking. The quandary of the ignorant nobility [I. 326-331] in choosing between loyalty to the king and loyalty to the church parallels the quandary of the citizens in the Angiers episodes in the later King John plays. Clergye wants to know whether Johan will be as good

to the monks as his predecessors were, and remain subservient to the pope. Nobilitye and Clergye declare their allegiance to one another, and their ideological differences with their sovereign:

Nobilitye To the Church, I trust, ye wyll be
obedyent.

Kyng Johan No matter to yow whether I be so or
no.

Nobilitye Yes, mary is yt, for I am sworne
thereunto

I toke a great othe when was dubbed a
knyght

Ever to defend the Holy Churches ryght.

Clergye Yea, and in her quarrel ye owght onto
deth to fyght

Kyng Johan

I rew yt in hart that yow, Nobilitye
Shuld thus bynd yowrselke to the grett
captyvyte

Of bloody Babulon, the grownd and mother
of whordom,

The Romysh church I meane, more vyle
than ever was Sodom.

[I. 359-370]

Although the abusive typological analogies in Johan's speech are anachronistic from the viewpoint of a medieval monarch, they would have appealed strongly to the zealous new

Protestant members of a Tudor audience. Johan's old testament images are set against chivalric ones.

At this time in Act One, Bale wishes to emphasize the Protestant view that the king's word has more weight in both politics and religion than the views of any other group in the court and the church (Bevington, 98-100). Hence despite the major differences of opinion, Johan still expects Nobilitye and Clergye to co-operate with him when he sets about solving England's problems.

Lacking support at home, Clergye takes off to Rome to complain to the Pope. As the scene changes to Rome the anti-Catholic satire in the play intensifies in terms of the stage characters' attire and theatrical gestures. Dissimulacyon and Sedicyon appear in conference, presumably wearing rich but clerical attire. Dissimulacyon is singing the litany when he is joined by Sedicyon. From the conferences of these villainously caricatured stage clergymen we learn that their principal purpose is to save their hoarded wealth from the king's strict new taxation policies [I. 902-911]. This conflict between Catholic feudalism and Protestant sovereignty prefigures the Reformation. In a dramatically effective exchange, Sedicyon and Dissimulacyon turn out to be cousins. Their conspiratorial manner is similar to that of the Yorkist family in the Henry VI plays:

Sedicyon for we come of two brethrene.

Yf thou remember, owr fatheres were

on mans chylderne.

Thou comest of Falsed and I of Prevy

Treason.

Dissimulacyon Than Infydelyte owr granfather ys

by reason.

Sedicyon Mary, that ys trewe, and his begynner

Antycrist,

The great pope of Rome, or fyrst veyne

popysh prist.

[I. 674-678].

This is no longer the thirteenth century, or even the church-state controversy of the sixteenth century; this is Bale attempting to arouse popular hysteria against the Catholic faith by emphasizing the duplicity and treasonous intentions of the pope's followers (Bevington, 99). The actual events and personages of England in King John's time are blended with Protestant attitudes to government and religion by Bale in a uniquely propagandist use of morality drama. Bale discovered the roots of the Reformation in an earlier age (Bevington, 103-104).

The final episodes of Act One emphasize the Catholic conspiracy against the king in Rome. Dissimulacyon actually sings out: "A Johanne Rege iniquo, libera nos, domine" [From Johan the bad king free us, Lord] (I. 650). The discussions of Sedicyon and Dissimulacyon caricature the licentious ways of monks and friars in the abbeys. Indeed, the Catholic conspirators are like one big family.

Dissimulacyon introduces the bishop Private Welth, "a chylde of myn owne bringyng uppe", who is "lyke to be a Cardynall". And Private Welth brings in Usurpyd Power who has always favoured Sedicyon. Sedicyon sums up their status in the Catholic church thus, comparing the past and the present using an outrageous metaphor: "Here is nowther Awsten, Ambrose, Hierom nor Gregory,/ But here is a sorte of companyons moch more mery./ They of the Chirch than were fower holy doctors,/ We of the Chirch now are the fower generall proctors" [I. 807-810]. "Proctor", which means supervising officer, comes from the Latin procurator [procurare: to take care of]. The contrast between the early church doctors and its caretakers in the world of Bale's play is shocking. As a former Catholic clergyman, Bale deplored the corruption of the Roman Catholic clergymen in his own time.

The tone of the play changes from Act One l. 890 onwards as actual medieval English history becomes a vehicle for expressing Reformation sentiments. The clerical figures cease to be allegorical morality figures, and take on the identity of actual historical characters of the thirteenth century who opposed King John. Among the four evil friars, Usurpyd Power is the one in authority, and Dissimulacyon appears to be a messenger from the English clergy sent to deliver to Rome papers on the conflict of Johan with the English clergy. The principal issues of conflict between the king and the clergy are those of private wealth, and the

refusal of the clergy to accept the king's authority.

Gradually, Usurpyd Power assumes the identity of the Pope, and Dissimulacyon informs us that the English bishops have excommunicated Johan [I. 927-934] by the pope's authority.

Shortly afterwards, the allegorical garments of the stage clergymen are exchanged for their historical costumes and they re-enter as thirteenth century characters: Usurpyd Power is the Pope, Private Welth is the Cardinal Pandulphus, and Sedicyon is Stephen Langton. At the Pope's meeting a conspiracy is formed to depose John [ll. 1005-1009], and in a solemn ritual which would be awesome in a stage production, King Johan is excommunicated by the Pope [the parallel with the reigning Tudor monarch is obvious].

The slow ritual gestures, repetitive lines, assonance and alliteration emphasize the visual and oral force of the act of excommunication:

The Pope Forasmoch as Kyng Johan doth Holy Church
so handle,

Here I do curse hym wyth crosse, boke,
bell and candle.

Lyke as this same roode turneth now from
me his face,

So God I requyre to sequester hym of his
grace.

.....

As this burnyng flame goth from this

candle in syght,
 I take hym from Crist, and after the
 sownd of this bell,
 Both body and sowle I geve hym to the
 devyll of hell.
 I take from hym baptym, and with the
 other sacramentes
 And suffrages of the churche, both ember
 dayes and lentes.
 Here I take from hym bothe penonce and
 confessyon,

[I. 1034-1045]

Even sound is dangerous in the speech acts of the Catholics as in the later ritual of forgiveness [II. 850-861] which, like the excommunication, emphasizes their religious and political power. Though earnest and strong in his arguments, Johan's plain "Protestant" style is less showy in theatrical terms, and despite his virtue Johan is destroyed by the Catholic conspiracy.

After repeated conflicts and confrontations with the clergy, the king becomes more and more politically isolated in the second act. Potter detects parallels between Johan's isolation at the end with the desertion of Everyman's attributes and with the deposition and death scenes in the later history plays (100). Nobilitye recants in favour of the Church, after being suitably brainwashed by Sedicyon or the pope's agent Pandulphus. Johan openly proclaims that

clergymen have no right to interfere in politics:

The office of yow ys not to bere the sword
But to geve cownsell accordyng to Godas word:
Yet are ye becum soche myghty lordes this hower
That ye are able to subdewe all princes power

[II. 230-236].

In ll. 235-236 he even uses sarcasmus to taunt the clergymen, but in a more controlled way than other mockers. Nevertheless, King Johan loses the allegiance of Commynaltie [ll. 481-489] to the persuasions of Cardinal Pandulphus, and he realizes that Stephen Langton is the former Sedicyon when the Catholics regain power.[3]

Johan is full of concern for the sufferings of his people caused in the expensive wars of his troubled reign, and like Arthur in Misfortunes he contemplates abdication:

I have caste in mynde the great displeasures of
warre,
The daungers, the losses, the decayes both nere
and farre,
The burnynge of townes, the throwynge downe of
buyldynges,
Destructyon of corne and cattell with other
thynges,
Defylynge of maydes, and shedynge of Christen
blood,
With such lyke outrages, neyther honest, true, nor
good.

These thynges consydered, I am compelled thys
houre

To resigne up here both crowne and regall poure.

[II. 588-595].

In this pained and guilty frame of mind Johan surrenders to the Church. Despite Johan's recantation and his forgiveness by the pope, the treasonous conspiracy of the English Catholics remains active till the king is poisoned at Swinstead Abbey by the Cistercian monk Simon [also called Dissimulacyon].

In his death Johan is mourned by none but Widow Englande whose champion he has been throughout his troubled reign. It is she whom he requests to arrange for his funeral. And Englande tells us of Johan's constant regard for the poor [II. 1028-1030]. There are no clear similarities between Bale's ideal Protestant king and the medieval John or the Tudor Henry VIII in this characteristic. Bale's King Johan is then both an idealized sovereign as well as the type of the Christian martyr. Johan's dying lines express his sincere Christian faith and piety:

I desyre not els but that they maye sone amende.
I have sore hungred and thirsted ryghteousnesse
For the office sake that God hath me appoynted.
But now I perceyve that synne and wyckednesse
In thys wretched worlde, lyke as Christe
prophecyd,

Have the overhande, in me it is verefyed.

[II. 1048-1053].

In these lines we see Johan more as the protagonist in the tradition of the medieval saints' play than a hero king in a Renaissance history play. His martyrdom is emphasized in his metaphor "I have sore hungred and thirsted ryghteousnesse", because he dies of poisoning. However, his sufferings and death because of his political beliefs and actions link him to other rulers depicted in sixteenth century English history plays, emphasizing the transitional nature of King Johan.

With the death of Johan the play loses much of its energy, and the discussions of Vertye, Civyle Order, and Imperyall Majestye in the revised ending combine the expression of Bale's political ideals with official Tudor political theories. In retrospect, the character of Johan is that of a royal saint, and Imperyall Majestye who comes onstage after Johan's death is manifestly all that Henry VIII was not towards the end of his reign. Bale's consistent development of an ideal king figure in this play, and the depiction of the morality character Imperyall Majestye obliquely hint at dissatisfaction with certain qualities of the reigning monarch. Bale would have the head of the Church of England perfect in every aspect. However, he is simultaneously a loyal subject who emphasizes the need for the clergy to know that politics is not their concern, and that they must submit to princes. Imperyall Majestye is

an expert in logical argument. By a clever use of the Bible he argues: "Consydre that Christe was undre the obedyence/ Of worldly princes so longe as he was here,/.../He sayth that a Kinge is of God immediatlye./ Than shall never pope rule more in thys monarchie" [II. 1255-1268]. Imperyall Majestye believes that as God's Word the king's right is Law. This royal affirmation of the doctrine of non-resistance came with the Reformation, and is incorporated into the historical world of Bale's play.[4] Most English history plays of the sixteenth century refer to this Tudor political doctrine in some way or another, indicating that it was still not a firmly established political paradigm, and needed constant reaffirmation in the public mind.

NOTES

1. John N. King, English Reformation Literature: Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982): 59. King lists the kinds of criticism Bale invited from Renaissance writers because of his profanity and stylistic flaws. Bale's lapses of taste and rough verse appear to have been unacceptable in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

2. Barbara K. Lewalski, Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth Century Religious Lyric (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979): 117. Lewalski writes:

the new Protestant emphasis is clear: it makes for a different sense of the Bible as a unified poetic text, and for a much closer fusion of sign and the thing signified, type and antitype. The characteristic Protestant approach takes the Bible not as a multi-level allegory, but as a complex literary work whose full literal meaning is revealed only by careful attention to its poetic texture and to its pervasive symbolic mode--typology.

3. David Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962): 132. Bevington writes:

The transformation of the generic figures Sedition, Private Wealth, Dissimulation, and Usurpyd Power into the historical figures Stephen Langton, Pandulphus, Symon of Swynsett, and the Pope offers a striking illustration of the secularizing trend at work in sixteenth century art and life.

4. Franklin Le Van Baumer in The Early Tudor theory of kingship (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940): 91 points out that Protestants and Catholics alike subscribed to this idea after 1533.

CHAPTER FIVE

"Borrowed majesty" in King John and the Troublesome Reign

The first lines of Shakespeare's King John [ed. Irving Ribner in Alfred Harbage ed. William Shakespeare: the Complete Works. New York: Viking, 1969] are those of Queen Elinor who repeats the French ambassador Chatillion's epithet "borrowed majesty" which refers to John's usurpation. The present reading of King John and the Troublesome Reign [ed. Geoffrey Bullough in Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare 4] develops the idea of "borrowed majesty" as the keynote of John's speech style, speech acts, and government. As a ruler and as a man, John is essentially unstable. In an era when the concept of just and law-abiding rule was closely associated with the paradigm of the king's divine right, King John and Troublesome Reign depict a central king figure whose contested right, political failures, inflated speeches, and shifting styles of speech and government culminate in his own sufferings and insecurity. John's sufferings are also connected with the ills of the body politic during his reign [King John, IV. ii. 243-248; Troublesome Reign, II. i i. 222-240].

Shakespeare's King John [circa 1594] and the anonymous Troublesome Reign [1591], like Bale's King Johan, are both "Protestant" in their views of the relationship of church and state.[1] These later plays differ from Bale's play in depicting a king who is far from any ideal in his style of

speech and his method of government. Both King John and its much debated "source" the Troublesome Reign [2] depict a monarch whose poor control over his territories and his inability to use language to his own advantage leads to his suffering and his destruction. In this respect, as well as in his beliefs in both his own "right" and the rightness of his actions, John resembles Marlowe's Edward II, even though Edward II is a tragedy and the King John plays are ironic anatomies of kingship. The Tudor metaphor of the body politic recurs in King John, and Shakespeare's John is a believer in the microcosm-macrocosm idea [KJ, IV. ii. 243-248]. By emphasizing that the will of the sovereign ought to concur with that of his subjects, the competing estates of nobles, townspeople, and the church, these plays evoke the multiple paradigms of sixteenth century rulership.[3]

King John and Troublesome Reign are closer to their medieval chronicle sources in depicting a flawed monarch and are historically more realistic than Bale's idealized version. While Bale depicts a saintly Protestant king, plain and strong in speech, an expert in theology and logical argumentation, who is destroyed by an evil "Catholic" conspiracy, King John and Troublesome Reign depict a king whose crown and right are usurped, and whose chief motivation is his need for power. The double coronation of John [TR, I. xiii; KJ, IV. ii.] vividly enacts his borrowed majesty in its clear emphasis on John's insecurity with regard to his crown.

The Troublesome Reign and King John have elicited mixed and somewhat negative critical reactions from scholars.[4] Emrys Jones aptly sums up the current attitudes to King John: "this is the one [of Shakespeare's plays] that has receded the furthest from us, so that a special effort is needed to recover it" (Jones, 235). Recent scholars exhibit a tendency to study the style of King John rather than its structure, and Eamon Grennan ingeniously argues:

For historia, rhetoric is structural principle and projector of local significance. That King John is a critique of historia is best seen in its language. Instead of being an ordering power, it is the agent of dissolution, constantly battering external coherence into verbal obfuscation. This world is a world of words, but whereas in historia, this fact generates reliable meaning, in King John the fact itself is held up to ridicule (40).

Grennan's article tries to show that Shakespeare seems less concerned with historical accuracy than with rendering characters convincingly human in King John. The present reading disagrees with Grennan's view that the play's world of words is without order and meaning by showing that the verbal superfluity of characters indicates correspondences between political actions and speech styles. Language in King John and Troublesome Reign is not an agent of

dissolution, but a "symptom" of character in relation to society.

Both *King John* plays stress the power of language in politics and personal life by using words to shame, infuriate, madden, and poison characters in terms of stage action. Much of the action in these plays is instigated through provocative speech acts. The abuse of rhetoric in the king's speeches signals his political weakness, desperation, and at times even obsession with his situation as in the discussion with Hubert in IV. ii. The king's flawed rhetoric and shifts in style contrast with the more consistent styles of the Bastard and Queen Elinor both of whom are relatively more secure and powerful in their positions in the court. While discussing style in *King John*, Dean R. Baldwin has used Lanham's theoretical framework to suggest that two basic types of style, the rhetorical and the serious, are to be observed in Faulconbridge [homo rhetoricus] and Constance [homo seriusus] (68). But Baldwin ignores the problematic style of the king himself. John shifts from the borrowed majesty of acting out homo rhetoricus in his public utterances and displays of power to homo seriusus in his speeches of unhappiness and suffering in both plays [again resembling Edward II], revealing his instability as man and politician.

As with the two leaders Marius and Sylla in *Wounds*, we have the two aspects of political man's self depicted in the Bastard and Elinor. And King John's shifts in style

illustrate the unreliability and instability of man as a political being, the "shifting and perpetually uneasy combination of homo rhetoricus and homo seriusus" [Lanham, 6]. John's shifty style of government and shifts in style are, however, different from the changes in style of Edward II who deludes only himself with his own misuse of rhetoric and pompous style. King John's borrowed majesty of style is effective at the beginning of his reign. He seems to lose the art of impressive public speaking only when the complex problems created by his rule make him desperate in the second half of both plays.

Both plays focus upon similar issues in the opening scenes: John's contested right, the Bastard's identity, and the French threat, but with subtle differences in the characterization of the king, Elinor, and the Bastard. In King John the speeches of these characters are filled with tropes. The poetry in the Troublesome Reign is more Senecan, and the anonymous playwright relies more on sound [alliteration, assonance] for effect than on tropes.

In the Troublesome Reign John is a realistic depiction of a political failure, even though the opening description in the Prologue proclaims him an anti-Catholic hero after the manner of Bale and Foxe. John is no saint or martyr, but a politician unable to cope with the complex problems of rulership in the real world of treason and power politics. He is redeemed as a hero only because he elicits our sympathy when he is treacherously murdered by the monks at

Swinstead Abbey. The claim of John's nephew Arthur to the English throne is introduced most significantly, making John's position disputed and insecure. John's mother Elinor appears as a commanding figure who has power over the king. Elinor's greater experience with statecraft is revealed as she swiftly guesses that the French embassy has come to state Arthur's claim [TR,I.i. 19-22].

The anonymous playwright of the Troublesome Reign covers dangerous political ground in boldly depicting John's disputed succession, and his tyrannical inclinations. The play brings up the question of accepting an unworthy ruler with total loyalty. The play's vacillation between arousing our sympathy for John, and provoking our condemnation of him was in all probability the dramatist's technique of getting his work past the censor. Despite its overall endorsement of loyalty, the Troublesome Reign still draws our attention to the complicated political issues surrounding the doctrine of complete fealty to the crowned monarch which was widely publicized by the Tudors. The shifts in sympathy and condemnation are similar to those in Edward II. King John starts out impressively by dealing firmly with the French king's embassy which has come to demand territories on behalf of the minor prince Arthur. More restrained in his use of irony against his opponents than Bale's Johan, the king in the Troublesome Reign speaks imitating the manner of an experienced politician. John uses micterismus, a figure of scorn in which disbelief is expressed through

understatement (Puttenham, 201):

A small request: belike he makes account
That England, Ireland, Poitiers, Anjou, Torain,
Main,
Are nothing for a King to give at once:
I wonder what he means to leave for me.

[Troublesome Reign, I.i.35-38]

While the French embassy states Arthur's claim, John is simultaneously asked to judge the disputed claim within the Fauconbridge family between the two sons of the late Sir Robert Fauconbridge. John instantly supports the claim of the older son, seeking to be legally just: "Prove this, the land is thine by Englands law" [TR, I.i. 130]. The disputed possession of lands in the Fauconbridge family indirectly parallels John's own disputed succession. John's avowed reverence for the laws of England is ironic since he refuses to acknowledge Arthur's claim. The juxtaposition of the Fauconbridge dispute and Arthur's claim in the opening action of the play draws our attention to John's insecurity and inconsistency.

Queen Elinor, to whom the chroniclers had assigned considerable notoriety, plays a commanding role in John's court, exerting great influence over her son and over political issues in the court as long as she is alive. In Troublesome Reign, she appears as a domineering woman, somewhat unqueenly in speech and diction. She is an upholder of women's causes when she upbraids the younger

Fauconbridge using rhetorical figures in a flat, unimaginative style:

Ungracious youth, to rip thy mothers shame,
The wombe from whence thou didst thy being take.
All honest eares abhorre thy wickednes,
But gold I see doth beate downe natures law

[TR, I.i. 131-134].

Elinor's observation that greed makes men turn to falsehood, and destroys natural/family bonds applies to the dissension within the royal house as well. To modern ears Elinor sounds more like a country matron than the queen mother when she says:

Thou saist she teemde six weeks before her time.
Why good Sir Squire are you so cunning growen

To make account of womens reckonings:
Spit in your hand and to your other proofes:
Many mischaunces hap in such affaires
To make a woman come before her time.

[TR, I.i. 183-188]

The complaint that the playwright of Troublesome Reign failed to depict true royalty in speech and character (Ornstein, 93) is probably based upon Elinor's speeches as well as the twentieth century assumption that royal speech is more restrained and dignified than that of the common people. But one wonders if medieval queens could be accurately pictured by being compared to Queen Victoria and

her successors to the British throne in their style of public utterance. When we recall the plainness of Shakespeare's Henry V in his speeches in the French court as he wooes the French princess, we must perforce wonder if the earthiness in Elinor's speeches is not closer to the reality of John's time than we now suppose. [5]

The queen's aggressive snubbing, however, does not silence the Fauconbridge brothers. King John intervenes with dignity, and in his speech act upholds the law:

Why (foolish boy) thy proofes are frivolous,

.....

But thou shalt see how I will helpe thy claime,

.....

For thou knowest not, weele aske of them that
know,

His mother and himselfe shall ende this strife:

And as they say, so shall thy living passe.

[TR, I.i. 204-211]

Even though Lady Margaret Fauconbridge firmly asserts her elder son's legitimacy, it is Philip himself who states that he is the illegitimate offspring of King Richard when he is forced [ll. 238-240] to speak out. The Bastard speaks as if he were coming out of a trance, using beautiful natural images:

Philippus atavis oedite Regibus.

.....

Me thinkes I heare a hollow Eccho sound,

That Philip is the Sonne unto a King:
 The whistling leaves upon the trembling trees
 Whistle in consort I am Richards Sonne:
 The bubling murmur of the waters fall,
 Records Philippus Regius filius:

[TR, I.i. 241-268].

We are reminded of Marius's use of natural imagery in his speeches in exile.

The Bastard is sensitive to the effect of words, to sound, and to hearing itself. In the above speech he uses sound images euphonically to suggest that nature itself proclaims him to be a king's son. The Bastard prefers being the illegitimate son of a king to inheriting the revenue of the Fauconbridge lands. He rhetorically "swears" his royal parentage:

Let land and living goe, tis honors fire
 That makes me sweare King Richard was my sire.
 Base to a King addes title of more State,

[TR, I.i. 274-276].

The importance of hearing is stressed in both plays. Even the lowly Hubert reports the impact of hearing the news of Arthur's death on the citizens in King John IV.ii. 190-194: "Whilst he that hears makes fearful action ... With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news".

Troublesome Reign, in contrast to King John, shows Philip and Lady Margaret involved in a harsh psychological tussle to discover the identity of Philip's biological

father. Philip works on his mother's sense of guilt and uses his own dire threats in which he uses the example of Nero as paradigma [ll. 373-388]. The anonymous playwright shows excellent control of stagecraft and understanding of psychology. Intense human emotions are depicted as Philip's true paternity is revealed in a slow build-up of audience expectation in the following dialogue:

Mother Let mothers teares quench out thy angers
fire,
And urge no further what thou doost
require.

Philip Let sonnes entreatie sway the mother now,
Or els she dies: Ile not infringe my vow.

Mother Then Philip heare thy fortune and my
griefe,
My honours losse by purchase of thy selfe.
.....
For fair King Richard was thy noble
Father.

[TR, I.i. 372-411].

Shakespeare's depiction of the Faulconbridge dispute is much shorter and less rhetorical than that in the Troublesome Reign. This dispute is very easily resolved in King John, and there is no step-by-step revelation of the Bastard's identity. Queen Elinor plays an important part in deciding the Faulconbridge succession, but in Shakespeare's play she is more dignified and queenly of speech than in the

Troublesome Reign. She enlists the Bastard in King John's army:

I like thee well. Wilt thou forsake thy fortune,
Bequeath thy land to him, and follow me ?

I am a soldier and now bound for France.

[King John, I.i. 148-150].

Elinor is a serious and strong-minded politician who means what she says. A minor type of Lanham's homo seriusus, her plain style contrasts with the flowery rhetorical circumlocutions of the Bastard whose verbal extravagance clearly makes him a homo rhetoricus.

With the discovery of his illegitimate royal origin, the Bastard displays his ambitions. Shakespeare's Bastard is a crude country gentleman, whose unrefined early speeches contrast with those of Philip in Troublesome Reign. He is a consummate actor always playing different parts, enjoying the effect of his rhetoric as public performance, as in the following soliloquy where he satirically combines country humour and courtly ambition:

Well, now can I make any Joan a lady,

"Good den, Sir Richard !" "God-a-mercy, fellow"--

And if his name be George, I'll call him Peter

For new-made honor doth forget men's names;

.....

But this is worshipful society,

And fits the mounting spirit like myself

For he is but a bastard to the time
 That doth not smack of observation.
 And so I am whether I smack or no,
 And not alone in habit and device,
 Exterior form, outward accoutrement,
 But from the inward motion to deliver
 Sweet, sweet, sweet poison for the age's tooth,
 Which, though I will not practise to deceive,
 Yet, to avoid deceit, I mean to learn;
 For it shall strew the footsteps of my rising.

[KJ, I.i. 184-216].

The Bastard is in love with his own rhetoric. He is a homo rhetoricus who talks for the very love of flaunting his speech skills [KJ, I.i. 244-250, 259-276]. Indeed most of the sense of energy and action that Shakespeare's Bastard conveys comes from the energy of his rhetoric. In contrast to the Troublesome Reign [I.iv. 790-794], King John excludes the romance between the Bastard and Blanch, so that Shakespeare's Faulconbridge can develop from immaturity and irresponsibility into a political strong man on whom the king relies increasingly as he loses his grip on the complex problems in the state that his rule creates.

If the Bastard begins as somewhat of a bully and matures into a strong military leader, the king begins his rule in King John by publicly displaying strength, royal confidence, and superior judgment in his speeches even

though he is later unable to sustain this strong style of speech and government. Unlike the John of Troublesome Reign who is so dominated by his mother, Shakespeare's John starts out by taking control of the situation in his court:

Elinor A strange beginning: "borrowed majesty" !

King John Silence, good mother; hear the
embassy.

[KJ, I.i. 5-6]

As in Troublesome Reign, and like the historical Elinor, the queen mother in King John is opposed to her daughter-in-law Constance, and wishes to keep her grandson Arthur from his right by supporting and counselling John. Despite his borrowed majesty, John sounds unequivocally strong:

King John Our strong possession and our right
for us.

Elinor Your strong possession much more than your
right

Or else it must go wrong with you and me--

So much my conscience whispers in your ear,
Which none but heaven, and you, and I shall
hear.

[KJ, I.i. 39-44].

From the French challenge and the settlement of the Faulconbridge dispute in the English court, the scene of action in both plays moves swiftly to France and the siege

of Angiers. In King John, John addresses Philip of France by asserting his "divine" right impressively:[6]

Peace be to France, if France in peace permit
Our just and lineal entrance to our own.
If not, bleed France, and peace ascend to heaven,
Whiles we, God's wrathful agent, do correct
Their proud contempt that beats His peace to
heaven.

[KJ, II.i. 84-88].

Despite his majestic statement of his right, John's rhetoric does not fool Philip who accuses him of usurping Arthur's inherited right:

And this his son. England was Geoffrey's right
And this is Geoffrey's in the name of God.
How comes it then that thou art called a king,
When living blood doth in these temples beat,
Which owe the crown that thou o'ermasterest

[KJ, II.i. 105-109].

John has no logical answer for Philip, and retaliates with a blustering counter-accusation using sarcasmus:

From whom hast thou this great commission,
France,
To draw my answer from thy articles ?

[KJ, II.i. 110-111].

We are faced with a major political debate on succession as to who is best entitled to reign in England. Inherited right appears to belong to the minor prince Arthur, who is

even younger in King John than in the Troublesome Reign, and hence represents the type of the child-king whom the Tudors feared having on the throne. Because of the memory of Henry VI's troubled reign it was a commonplace Tudor notion that it was better for an adult to reign than to have a child on the throne. King John gives us an extended view of a royal child, and Arthur is also a sincere rhetorician in a political atmosphere where words make "faithless error" in people's ears. As in Edward II and the Henry VI plays, we are made to realize the problematic nature of the law of inherited royal right.

Both plays depict the open hostility between Constance and Elinor over the succession of their sons. In Troublesome Reign, the ambassador Chatillion returning from England brings the unexpected news that Elinor has suggested that John rule as Arthur's protector. Once again, the commonplace human aspect of queens emerges where Elinor is reported as saying that the troublemaker in the royal family [and in English politics] is her daughter-in-law Constance and not the boy Arthur [KJ, I.ii. 477-483]. The tone degenerates in the long second scene of Troublesome Reign when the speech acts of the royal ladies reveal their self-interest and political interference much more, and consequently become more aggressive. Both these women are serious in their styles of speech, and seem to mean what they say even as they fall to quarrelling like fishwives. The depiction of Constance and Elinor in Troublesome Reign

is reminiscent of medieval dramatic characters such as Noah's wife and similar shrewish women, and provides a contrast to the stiff formal dialogue of Guenevora and Fronia in Misfortunes and Scilla's wife and daughter in Wounds. Shakespeare's Elinor, though untrustworthy, is more queenly in speech in the conflict with Constance than her counterpart in Troublesome Reign and comes off as the better politician.

Constance is another of Shakespeare's queens who heaps curses on the opposite political faction [KJ, II.i. 167-172, 185-189] in defeat. Like Margaret in Richard III, she substitutes verbal aggression for political activity when rendered powerless. King Philip links "women and fools" [KJ, II.i. 150] to signify women's lack of power in the court. The desire of queens to satisfy their need for political power with safety by controlling their sons who had recently gained or sought to gain the throne is a recurring theme in sixteenth century history plays, and Elinor, Constance, and Margaret [in the Henry VI plays] are leading instances. Even the weak Isabel in Edward II cares about her son's accession. Of all these queens, Constance has perhaps the greatest justification, and at times a sincere appeal as she blames Elinor for Arthur's dispossession:

His grandam's wrongs, and not his mother's shames,
 Draws those heaven-moving pearls from his poor
eyes,
 Which heaven shall take in nature for a fee.

Ay, with these crystal beads heaven shall be
bribed

To do him justice and revenge on you.

[KJ, II.i. 168-172].

A variation on this theme occurs in the ambition of the Duchess of Gloucester in 2 Henry VI who dreams of being queen, but gets destroyed when she is caught using witchcraft to make her husband the king.

In Troublesome Reign, the long and complicated second scene closes with an open confrontation between John and the French king, and the citizens of Angiers are addressed by the kings of both countries to gain popular support for their respective political causes. The underlying message here seems to be that there can be no true king who does not command the wholehearted support of his subjects in his political actions. Simon Shepherd comments that these "anonymous 'citizens' are caught up in campaigns between enemy monarchs: the citizens appear on the walls [the balcony], raised up above the contesting monarchs on stage, anonymous and peripheral to most of the narrative but temporarily talking out from beyond and above competing rulers, represented as a group not as individuals; this could be taken as a placing of those who would mainly comprise the audience" (Shepherd, xviii). The citizens of Angiers are strangely circumspect and ambiguous in their response as their spokesman states:

We answer as before: till you have proved one

right, we acknowledge none right, he that tries
 himselfe our Soveraigne, to him will we remaine
 firme subjects, and for him, and in his right we
 holde our Towne as desirous to know the truth as
 loath to subscribe before we knowe: More than
 this we cannot say, and more than this we dare
 not doo. [KJ, I.ii. 643-648].

We are reminded that it was judicious for the common man to
 be circumspect in his political utterances in Tudor England.

As a contrast to the Troublesome Reign, in King John
 the gates of Angiers are locked to both kings thereby
 causing a trial by ordeal. The citizens' spokesman is a
 master of verbal circumlocution who states and acts out the
 people's fear:

Citizen A greater power than we denies all this,
 And till it be undoubted, we do lock
 Our former scruple in our strong-barred
 gates,
 Kinged of our fear, until our fears,
 resolved,
 Be by some certain king purged and
 deposed

[KJ, II.i. 368-372].

Maddened by the speech acts of the citizens and by being
 locked out, both kings and the Bastard would willingly
 destroy the whole town [ll. 373-412]. But the Bastard is
 politically immature, and things simply cannot be done the

Bastard's irresponsible way [ll. 401-407] for the people's will has power. The Bastard's incomplete understanding of the king and his court is further evident when his rhetoric indirectly incites the king to plot Arthur's murder. Before John, Arthur, and Hubert, the Bastard tells the king: "But on, my liege, for very little pains/Will bring this labor to a happy end" [KJ, III. ii. 10-11]. The "faithless error" caused by the Bastard's well-intentioned lines points to the unethical interpretation of speech acts by morally corrupt characters. The caution and circumlocution of the citizens emphasize the people's awareness of the power of speech acts.

In both plays the power of the people's united wishes before which kings ought to yield is emphasized in the Angiers episodes. The citizens advise both kings to agree to a matrimonial alliance between England and France by uniting the French Dauphin with John's niece Blanch[e]. This emphasis on the political importance of the will of the people reminds us that the social idealists of the mid-sixteenth century saw good government as the wisdom of the prince counseled by the wisdom of the realm (Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, 339). The wholeness of the king as body natural and body politic in a healthy system of government was a major reason for such counsel. Pocock writes:

the king shares imperfection of intellect with his subjects, he should take counsel of their laws

and customs and of themselves in occasional and regular assemblies; but that because authority is, under God, his alone he can never be obliged to take counsel of law or parliament and does so only because prudence enjoins it. But this is to say merely that his descending authority meets, in imperfection of intellect, with the imperfect intellects of his subjects, to pool experience and take counsel of another; to the extent to which experience is cognate with reason (353).

But in the King John plays the government is unwholesome, so this popular advice is as inept as the decisions of the king himself. Prompted by insecurity like many of John's own speech acts, this advice comes forth in response to an unwise threat of total annihilation, and the matrimonial alliance advised makes further complications in family ties.

If the people are suspicious of royal motives in both plays, they are rightly so, for John is politic and insincere with his nephew as he deals with the French challenge and attempts to solve the succession question in King John:

King John My life as soon ! I do defy thee,
 France.

Arthur of Britain, yield thee to my
 hand,

And out of my dear love I'll give thee
 more

Than e'er the coward hand of France can
win.

Submit thee, boy.

[KJ, II.i. 155-159].

John's insincere behaviour is very similar to his mother's [KJ, II.i. 160], and in Troublesome Reign John is quite clearly dominated by his mother as the marriage alliance proposed by the citizens of Angiers is settled. The problem of the Blanch-Bastard romance comes up because the man of extravagant speeches, the Bastard, has won Blanch's heart with his swaggering bravado [TR, I.ii. 584-85]. In a sweeping manner, Queen Elinor has an answer to this problem when she states:

Peace Philip, I will look thee out a wife,
We must with pollicie compound this strife.

[TR, I.iv. 795-796].

There is a clear contrast between the adult John and the boy Arthur in the way they handle maternal advice, and Arthur comes off better when we consider the following exchange between Arthur and Constance in juxtaposition with the manner in which John settles Blanch's dowry:

Constance I, theres the wretch that broacheth all
this ill,

Why flye I not upon the Beldames face.

And with my nayles pull foorth her
hateful eyes

Arthur Sweete Mother cease these hastie madding

fits,

For my sake, let my Grandame have her
will.

.....

But mother let us wisely winke at all:

Least farther harmes ensue our hastie
speech.

[TR, I.iv. 811-819].

In clear contrast to Arthur, John is wholly dependent upon his mother in major decisions. He compromises both his own prestige, and that of his country in his settlement of Blanch's dowry:

Bastard No lesse than five such Provinces at once?

John Mother what shall I doo? My brother got
these landes

With much effusion of our English bloud:

And shall I give it all away at once ?

Q. Elinor John give it him, so thou shalt live in
peace,

And keep the residue sanz jeopardie

John Philip bring forth thy Sonne, here is my
Neece

And here in marriage I doo give with her

.....

Volquesson, Poitiers, Anjou, Torain, Main

[TR, V.iv. 831-840].

If Queen Elinor in Troublesome Reign is a dominating

figure in the scene[s] in France, in King John the Bastard is the chief spokesman for the English. He answers King Philip's challenges with extravagant rhetoric that surpasses the flowery style of the French. This war of words is very correctly described by King John's chronic sarcasmus:

Behold the French amazed vouchsafe a parle;
 And now, instead of bullets wrapped in fire,
 To make a shaking fever in your walls
 They shoot but calm words folded up in smoke;
 To make a faithless error in your ears.
 Which trust, accordingly, kind citizens,
 And let us in, your king, whose labored spirits,
 Forwearied in this action of swift speed,
 Craves harborage within your city walls.

[KJ, II.i. 226-234].

John's mixing of metaphors ["calm words folded up in smoke"] is quietly mocking, whereas the Bastard's verbal aggression is much more crude:

Bastard Saint George, that swinged the dragon,
 and e'er since
 Sits on's horseback at mine hostess'
 door,
 Teach us some fence ! [To Austria]
 Sirrah, were I at home
 At your den, sirrah, with your lioness,
 I would set an ox head to your lion's
 hide,

And make a monster of you.

[KJ, II.i. 288-293].

The Bastard's development of the animal metaphors to threaten Austria with cuckolding is both ingenious and funny. There is a marked contrast then between the king's rhetoric and the Bastard's even though they both seem very conscious of the fact that their speeches are public performances.

King John's verbal threats to France are, surprisingly, both majestic and contemptuous in tone.[7] He uses similes from nature seeking to reaffirm his contested right by overemphasizing its "natural" quality when he says:

France, hast thou yet more blood to cast away ?
 Say, shall the current of our right run on ?
 Whose passage, vexed with thy impediment,
 Shall leave his native channel and o'erswell
 With course disturbed even thy confining shores,
 Unless thou let his silver water keep
 A peaceful progress to the ocean.

[KJ, II.i. 334-340].

Once again, King Philip catches John out in his borrowed majesty as he accuses him of lying outright:

England, thou hast not saved one drop of blood
 In this hot trial more than we of France;
 Rather, lost more.

[KJ, II.i. 341-343].

Unlike the king, the Bastard enjoys using words to play

an undignified but energetic game of war. He feels compelled to outdo all verbal performers. The only point at which he pretends to be at a loss for words [also politically outwitted] is upon hearing the terms of the Angiers treaty proposed by the citizens' spokesman [KJ, II.i. 423-454]. He bursts out with:

Here's a stay

That shakes the rotten carcass of old death
Out of his rags ! Here's a large mouth,
indeed,

That spits forth death and mountains, rocks,
and seas,

.....

He speaks plain cannon fire and smoke and
bounce.

He gives the bastinado with his tongue.

Our ears are cudgelled; not a word of his

But buffets better than a fist of France.

Zounds! I was never so bethumped with words

Since I first called my brother's father dad

[KJ, II.i. 454-467].

In turn, the people seem to be as wildly rhetorical as their leaders in King John. John's similes in ll. 334-340 were parodied in the citizen's ill-timed repetitions [ll. 441-2]: "O, two such silver currents when they join/ Do glorify the banks that pound them in." The Bastard's speech contains crude and countrified mockery of the people's

rhetoric [ll. 464-467] in its harsh sound effects. By developing his metaphor of the cannon's mouth and the citizen's mouth, the Bastard emphasizes the great power of verbal attack and defence in this political conflict. Earlier he had suggested that cannons be turned upon Angiers [KJ, II.i. 401-407], but now the English must submit to verbal negotiation, much to the Bastard's dismay.

While the Bastard's changes in mood and tone in his speeches are intentional and dramatic, King John maintains an even and dignified tone as he accepts the Angiers treaty which does him little credit:

King John Her dowry shall equal with a queen;

For Angiers and fair Touraine,

Maine, Poitiers,

And all that we upon this side the sea,

Except this city now by us besieged,

Find liable to our crown and dignity,

[KJ, II.i. 486-490].

The fake majesty of John's style clearly emphasizes his political weakness. Despite the gracious tone, John humiliates himself in this speech act of conceding five English provinces to the French. He fails to understand the political significance of the Angiers treaty, because he claims that by keeping his hold upon the besieged city he is preserving his dignity. Unlike his counterpart in Troublesome Reign, the king is not prompted by Elinor to make these concessions. But the political impact of the

treaty is the same in both plays in that John compromises his own dignity and English prestige.

The clever Bastard is clearly critical of the king's need for power at any cost, and comments upon John's self-deception as a politician:

Mad world! Mad kings! Mad composition!
 John, to stop Arthur's title in the whole,
 Hath willingly departed with a part.
 And France, whose armor conscience buckled on,
 Whom zeal and charity brought to the field
 As God's own soldier, rounded in the ear
 With that same purpose-changer, that sly devil,
 Commodity, the bias of the world;

 Since kings break faith upon commodity,
 Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee !

[KJ, II.i. 561-598].

The Bastard's cynical observations in King John remind us of Queen Elinor's statement in Troublesome Reign [I.i. 131-134] that material greed perverts human nature. By criticizing the French and English kings, the Bastard stresses the wholly materialistic goals of man as a political being, and points out how frequently promises are broken for personal gain in the political world.

The prestige of the king sinks low with the French marriage alliance in both plays. After the Angiers episode in Troublesome Reign which emphasizes the king's weakness,

the anonymous playwright becomes more cautious. Again, it is important to remember that one could not depict the problems of kings and criticize royal policy at length in the 1590's if the work was to get past the censor. Hence in Troublesome Reign there is a quick shift in sympathy and interest as the Pope's ambassador Pandulph comes onstage. With Pandulph's entry we are almost back in the world of King Johan as Pandulph directly confronts King John:

why dost thou (contrarie to the lawes of our holy mother the Church, and our holy father the Pope) disturbe the quiet of the Church, and disanull the election of Stephen Langton, whom his Holines hath elected Archbishop of Canterburie: this in his Holines name I demand of thee. [TR, I.v. 970-975].

Suddenly John is transformed from a weakling to a strong English Protestant hero as he emphasizes his divine right very strongly in his reply to Pandulph:

Tell thy Maister so from me, and say, John of England said it, that never an Italian Preest of them all, shall either have tythe, tole, or poling penie out of England, but as I am King, so will I raigne next under God, supreame head both over spirituall and temrall: and hee that contradicts me in this, Ile make him hoppe headlesse [TR, I.v. 979-984].

The crudely alliterative "hoppe headlesse" might remind us

of tyrants' speeches in medieval drama. But although blatantly anachronistic in the medieval context, John's strong Protestantism is obviously meant as a compliment to Tudor nationalism.

The king's Protestantism is integrated in his view of monarchy in King John. His "sacred right" combines divine right, inherited right, and the concept of the body politic. The king's challenge to the Pope's authority is similar to its corresponding passage in Troublesome Reign. John is so impressive in his insultatio directed at the Pope [via Pandulph] that we almost forget his contested right. He begins by using antitheton [the quarreller] to appear imperious and commanding on behalf of England, and we recall King Johan [I. 167-169]:

What earthy name to interrogatories
 Can task the free breath of a sacred king ?

 Add thus much more, that no Italian priest
 Shall tithe or toll in our dominions,
 But as we under heaven are supreme head,
 So under Him that great supremacy,
 Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,

 So tell the Pope, all reverence set apart
 To him and his usurped authority.

[KJ, III.i. 146-159].

However, despite his Protestantism, Shakespeare's John

has no real exonerating characteristics, whereas the king in Troublesome Reign is portrayed as a champion of the Protestant faith. In King John he becomes more and more tormented and politically insecure as the action progresses. This is evident when John woos Hubert to blind the captive boy prince Arthur. As he instigates Hubert to arrange for Arthur's death, John cunningly changes from his usual dignified royal style to falsely exaggerated metaphorical expressions of his "affection" for Hubert:

Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so yet,

 And, by my troth, I think thou lov'st me well.

[KJ, III.iii. 30-55].

This swift change from "great supremacy" to lying and dissembling in speech is shocking. The degeneration in style marks a brutal degeneration in character which John appears to understand in terms of the "faithless error" made by his own words in ll. 48-54:

Or if that thou couldst see me without eyes,
 Hear me without thine ears, and make reply
 Without a tongue, using conceit alone,
 Without eyes, ears, and harmful sound of words;
 Then, in despite of brooded watchful day,
 I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts.
 But ah, I will not.

Arthur's true rhetoric is a complete contrast to John's falseness. In Troublesome Reign Arthur negotiates with

Hubert for the saving of his eyesight and wins because of the seriousness and dignity of his rhetoric:

Arthur Delay not Hubert, my orisons are indeed,
 Begin I pray thee, reave me of my sight:
 But to performe a tragedie indeede
 Conclude the period with a mortall stab.
 Constance farewell, tormentor come away,
 Make my dispatch the Tirants feasting day.

Hubert I faint, I feare, my conscience bids
 desist:

Faint did I say, feare was it that I named?
 My King commaunds, that warrant sets me
 free:

But God forbids, and he commaundeth Kings

.....

Goe in with me, for Hubert was not borne
 To blinde those lampes that Nature pollisht
 so,

[TR, I.xii. 1427-1445].

This scene has the most lasting emotional appeal of all the scenes in the play's first part. There are fairly close parallels with the counterpart of this scene in King John [IV.i.] where Arthur is gentle and appealing. His sincere pleas clearly affect Hubert:

Hubert, the utterance of a brace of tongues
 Must needs want pleading for a pair of eyes.
 Let me not hold my tongue, let me not, Hubert;

Or, Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue,
 So I may keep mine eyes, O, spare mine eyes,
 Though to use but still to look on you !

[KJ, IV.i. 98-103].

Although he is still a child, Arthur skilfully uses speech acts to influence human actions.

In King John, the Hubert-Arthur episode associates John with another false uncle and child murderer, Richard III. The deliberate falseness of John's rhetoric is further stressed when John tries to deny his earlier instructions to Hubert. John, the king, accuses Hubert, his subject, of failing to arouse his king's conscience:

Hadst thou but shook thy head or made a pause
 When I spake darkly what I purposed,
 Or turned an eye of doubt upon my face,
 As bid me tell my tale in express words,
 Deep shame had struck me dumb, make me break off,

[KJ, IV.ii. 231-235].

Weak, confused, and admitting his own irresponsibility, John's prestige as a king sinks very low.

Despite the brief resurrection of his prestige in Troublesome Reign I.v. as he opposes Pandulph, John's style of government becomes more and more that of a tyrant. In this respect the second halves of both plays are similar. A major difference in the political complications between Troublesome Reign and King John is in the active alliance of Pandulph with the cause of Arthur, Constance, and the French

king in the latter play, where the French-English conflict is as threatening externally to John as the internal church-state controversy. John's second coronation in both plays emphasizes his growing insecurity and the displeasure of his subjects over his increasingly tyrannical actions. In Troublesome Reign John attempts to recover respect as he uses natural metaphors with dignity in his coronation address to explain to and appease his noblemen:

Lordings and friends supporters of our state,
Admire not at this unaccustomed course,
Nor in your thoughts blame not this deeds of
yours.

Once ere this time was I invested King,

.....

Once since that time ambitious weedes have sprung
To staine the beautie of our garden plot:
But heavens in our conduct rooting thence
The false intruders, breakers of worlds peace.
Have to our joy, made Sunshine chase the storme.

[TR, I. xiii. 1538-1547].

In King John on the other hand, the second coronation becomes an open discussion of John's insecurity between John and his noblemen. Thus Salisbury comments:

Therefore, to be possessed with double pomp,
To guard a title that was rich before,
.....
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

[KJ, IV. ii. 9-16].

And Pembroke clearly describes John's borrowed majesty which has been betrayed from the beginning by his extravagant political affirmations of his right [i.e. in his styles of speech and government]. Pembroke resorts to sententia ["wise saying"] (Puttenham, 231) when he says:

When workmen strive to do better than well,
They do confound their skill in covetousness,
And oftentimes excusing of a fault
Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse,
As patches set upon a little breach
Discredit more in hiding of the fault
Than did the fault before it was so patched.

[KJ, IV. ii. 28-34].

John openly admits his insecurity, and changes completely from faking a dignified style of public utterance [his version of homo rhetoricus] to plain admissions of his personal problems [his version of homo seriusus] when he says:

Some reasons of this double coronation
I have possessed you with and think them strong;
And more, more strong, when lesser is my fear,
I shall induce you with

[KJ, IV. ii. 40-43].

However, the second coronation does not give John either security or peace of mind. Like Shakespeare's tyrant and usurper Macbeth, John at the end of the Troublesome

Reign is a terribly superstitious man. One wonders if Shakespeare had memories of this play when he composed the scenes with the witches. The prophet Peter interprets the omen of the five moons as portents of John's downfall "ere Asension day" and is condemned to death [TR, I. xiii. 1641-1651]. The news of Arthur's death that Hubert brings in only upsets John further, and once again there is a similarity with Macbeth's tone of world-weariness where he understands his loss of reputation following Duncan's murder. Thus all tyrants, usurpers, and political murderers must ultimately condemn themselves. John's similes and his alliterative lines emphasize the suffering of the king to whom a dignified public image had meant much. We sense the personal anguish in John's words as he even curses his mother Elinor, who was his counsellor and the chief instigator of his usurpation, when he says:

But now they shun me as a Serpents sting,
A tragick Tyrant sterne and pitiles,
But Butcher, bloudsucker, and murtherer.

.....

Curst be the Crowne, chiefe author of my care:
Curst be my birthday, curst ten times the wombe
That yeelded me alive into the world.

[TR, I. xiii.1701-1712].

As in Edward II's speeches in the underground cell, John's repetitions reinforce the hopelessness of his political predicament. But unlike Edward, John appears to understand

that he is responsible for his own sufferings.

Even though the audience knows that Arthur is alive, John's tirade displays an admirable degree of self-knowledge, rare in pre-Shakespearean heroes. This becomes even clearer because of his change in style from rhetorical man [faked dignity] to homo seriosus. Despite the sympathy aroused by John's adverse fortunes toward the end of his reign, the second half of Troublesome Reign is considerably less interesting both in comparison to the first part, as well as to the second half of King John.

John's decline as a man and a ruler is hastened when Arthur dies accidentally trying to escape. But the alienated peers in his court believe Arthur has been murdered by Hubert following John's instructions. John no longer has the capacity to enact the part of a dignified ruler in speech. In vain he pleads with the prophet Peter to ask if the prophecy has changed:

Peter, unsay thy foolish doting dreame,
And by the Crowne of England heere I sweare,
To make thee great, and greatest of thy kin.

[TR, II.iii. 130-132].

When the news of Arthur's death causes the noblemen to revolt, and declare allegiance to the French king, John's only ally is the Bastard in whom he confides his pain:

A mad man Philip, I am mad indeed,

.....

And John of England now is quite undone.

Was ever King as I opprest with cares ?
 Dame Elinor my noble Mother Queene,
 My onely hope and comfort in distresse,
 Is dead, and England excommunicate,

[TR, II.ii. 222-228].

The Tudor metaphor of the body politic appears in John's sad realization as he says:

O England, wert thou ever miserable,
 King John of England sees thee miserable:
 John, tis thy sinnes that makes it miserable:
Quicquid delirunt Reges, plectuntur Archivi.

[11. 238-241].

John is serious in his suffering, plain in style, and sounds desperate. His quoting of Horace ["The people suffer for the mad acts of their kings"] shows classical precedent for the Tudor view of the body politic.

In Troublesome Reign John's selling out to the Pope is pathetic, and he feels his own humiliation when he states: "or I must loose my realme,/Or give my Crowne for pennance unto Rome?" [TR, II.ii. 321-322]. Even as John loses his power and prestige both in and out of England, the Bastard's intercession with the noblemen becomes occasion for a speech that clearly endorses the Tudor doctrine of obedience:

My Lord of Salisbury, I cannot couch
 My speeches with the needfull words of arte,
 As doth beseeme in such a waightie worke,

If not, I to my King, and you where traytors
please.

[TR, II. iii. 446-488].

By pretending to be plain in speech and at a loss for words, the Bastard enacts the part of a humble and loyal subject. We observe that the Bastard has acquired greater understanding of his political responsibilities, and exercises control over his own rhetoric. Even as John's control over his kingdom and his capacity to use words to create a favourable public image fails, the Bastard matures into a fine and loyal English nobleman.

In both plays John becomes more and more dependent on the Bastard, with whom he almost pleads in King John, when he needs the Bastard's rhetorical power to make peace with his discontented English subjects. John is bereft of kingly dignity in speech when he says:

Gentle kinsman, go.

And thrust thyself into their companies.

I have a way to win their loves again.

Bring them before me.

[KJ, IV.ii. 166-169].

When John wins against the rebels with the Bastard's aid in Troublesome Reign he is physically ill and world-weary, and devoid of all semblance of majesty in action and speech. We learn that the battle was won by the Bastard after John had left the battlefield. At the end of his reign John is a pathetic figure in comparison to the

beginning when he had repeatedly sought to reaffirm his majesty and right through speech and action. Since John ends as a weak ruler with poorly developed political instincts, the Bastard's affirmation of John's kingly honour is memorable, because it is so difficult to respect John either as a king or as a man. The Bastard is the type of the loyal subject and he endorses the orthodox Tudor view of monarchy:

My Lord, I am loth to allude so much to the proverb, honors change manners: a King is a King, though fortune do her worst, and we as dutifull in despite of her frowne, as if your highnesse were now in the highest type of dignitie.

[TR, II. viii. 994-997].

The quiet reassurance of the Bastard's speech, and the toning down of his earlier flowery rhetoric emphasize the maturing of the Bastard as a politician.

In contrast to the Bastard's control over words as he continues to play his political part well, John's anguish is evident in his loss of whatever control over words and figures he had shown in the beginning. John's final self-realization is similar to Richard III's self-realization before his end. John is sincerely contrite for his disordered and chaotic rule in Troublesome Reign when he says:

Me thinks I see a cattalogue of sinne,
Wrote by a friend in Marble characters,

The least enough to loose my part in heaven.
 Me thinks the Devill whispers in mine eares
 And tels me tis in vayne to hope for grace,
 I must be damned for Arthur's sodaine death.
 I see I see a thousand thousand men
 Come to accuse me for my wrong on earth,
 And there is none so mercifull a God
 That will forgive the number of my sinnes.

[TR, II.viii. 1046-1055].

The repetitions in John's speech convey his desperation and confusion. However, according to the rules of Renaissance rhetoric, such wordiness itself constitutes the vice of surplusage (Puttenham, 264], and illustrates the speaker's poor control over words. John's lack of control over his kingdom at the close of his reign is paralleled by his lack of control over language in his final public utterances. And this is the "wasteful and ridiculous excess" -- to use the criticism of Salisbury -- in King John which has characterized the king's speeches and government in both plays. Simon Shepherd points out very suitably that there are parallels between the final speeches of Mordred, Richard III, and John: "The chaos of the inner person is commented upon by the character, the passions are 'signs'," (77). In terms of the microcosm-macrocosm concept associated with the sixteenth century monarchical paradigm, the king's inner chaos parallels the anarchy in the land as in Misfortunes IV.i. 13-17.

While the Bastard tries to blame the death of John on the Catholics ["This is the fruite of Poperie"], the political questions raised in Troublesome Raigne have larger implications than the obvious Protestant-Catholic controversy that scholars have stressed. John's personal sufferings and problems of government arise from his own unstable character which is clearly revealed through his shifts in style. As in Edward II, what are subjects to make of the doctrine of obedience when incompetent rulers wear the crown? Unlike Edward's, John's crown is always disputed, so that he cannot even use the doctrine of inherited right to his political advantage. Yet, there is no real support in either of the John plays for the idea of the boy Arthur as king, reflecting the Tudor fear of child kings. These questions are implicit in the anonymous playwright's manipulation of our sympathy for and against John throughout Troublesome Reign. Because of his disputed throne, John needs the people's support constantly, and lives in fear of rebellion: "The vulgar sort work Princes overthrow" [TR, II. ii. 50]. Taken literally, John's comment does not apply to his own reign so much as to the Cade uprising in 2 Henry VI, where the king understands the world of Renaissance realpolitik too late. Unlike Henry VI who starts out as a boy king with inherited right on his side, John starts as an adult and a usurper. Therefore he repeatedly seeks to placate his subjects. And even his dying lines constitute a public explanation in which he reaffirms

his beliefs in his divine right and inherited right as well as the Protestant cause:

My tongue doth falter: Philip, I tell thee man,
Since John did yeeld unto the Priest of Rome,
Nor he nor his have prospered on the earth:

.....

But if my dying heart deceave me not,
From out of these loynes shall spring a Kingly
braunch

Whose armes shall reach unto the gates of Rome.

[TR, II. viii. 1074-1086].

We are reminded of Misfortunes where Arthur is weary, but accepts the prevailing political condition that the king's duty is ever to please his subjects. As stressed in the Angiers episodes in both King John and the Troublesome Reign, this condition is part of the monarchical paradigm according to which the will of the people and that of the king had to be one for a just and legal government that ensured the health of the body politic.

In King John when trouble comes upon the king from all sides, he uses the metaphor of the king's body as a microcosm of the body politic to describe his decline as a ruler and his failing physical health:

My nobles leave me, and my state is braved,
Even at my gates, with ranks of foreign powers.
Nay, in the body of this fleshly land,
This kingdom, this confine of blood and breath,

Hostility and civil tumult reigns

Between my conscience and my cousin's death.

[KJ, IV. ii. 243-248].

Although he has been unable to achieve good government, John understands what adequate government means in terms of the metaphor of the body politic in his serious later speeches in King John. He repeatedly equates his own physical illness with the problems of government in another development of the metaphor of the body politic as he seeks aid from Pandulph:

'fore we are enflamed.

Our discontented counties do revolt.

Our people quarrel with obedience

Swearing allegiance and the love of soul

To stranger blood, to foreign royalty.

This inundation of mistempered humour

Rests by you only to be qualified.

Then pause not, for the present time's so sick,

That present med'cine must be ministered,

Or overthrow incurable ensues.

[KJ, V.i. 7-16].

Despite his partial understanding of political theories, John is unable to solve the real problems of his reign. His instability of character and political incompetence stem from his psychological insecurity which is even more pronounced than his political insecurity. The illness of the body politic becomes instantly associated in

his mind and his speech with fear of rebellion and fear of loss of power in "overthrow incurable ensues".

Shakespeare's dying King John repeatedly refers to the microcosm-macrocosm concept as his terrible physical pain fuses in his anguished mind with the pain of his political failures, the final product of his "borrowed majesty". John appears quite aware of the public impact of his dialogue with the prince when he begins with a pun on the prince's "fare":

Prince Henry How fares your majesty ?

King John Poisoned--ill fare ! Dead, forsook,
cast off,

And none of you will bid the winter
come

To thrust his icy fingers in my maw,
Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their
course

Through my burned bosom.....

.....

Prince Henry O, that there were ... might relieve
you.

King John.....

Within me is a hell, and there the
poison

Is as a fiend to tyrannize

On unreprievable condemned blood.

[KJ, V.vii. 59-64].

In his dying speeches, John, too, dualizes the doctrine of the two bodies, confusing his political failures with his physical sufferings, thereby providing another instance of the contradictions potential in this theory. The physical agony of being fatally poisoned is equated by John with providential punishment for his evil deeds as a king, the body natural being punished for misdeeds of the body politic. John believes himself guilty of his cousin Arthur's murder, and consequently punished for his unnatural deed as a man and a ruler. This is John's moment of final awareness in Shakespeare's King John, where unlike Troublesome Reign, there is no final speech of contrition. Shakespeare's John dies as a pitiful example of failed majesty, in his own words "a clod/ And module of confounded royalty" [KJ, V. vii. 57-58].

Political importance at the end of King John belongs to the Bastard rather than to the king. The Bastard's rhetoric has matured to a more controlled use of tropes for directness of expression. This is seen where he reports to the dying king:

The Dauphin is preparing hitherward,
Where heaven he knows how we shall answer him,
For in a night the best part of my power,
As I upon advantage did remove,
Were in the Washes unwarily
Devoured by the unexpected flood.

[KJ, V. vii. 59-64].

With his maturity of style the Bastard's political instincts have also matured. Unlike the king who shifts from fake dignity to lying, dissembling, pleading, to limited self-awareness in his speeches, displaying his disintegration as a man and a politician, the Bastard maturity of rhetoric accompanies his maturing as a politician.

Despite his early love of role-playing, the Bastard is a stable man, and a loyal subject.[8] He seems to be clearly aware of the usefulness of the homo rhetoricus stance in public life as his speech act of becoming a faithful feudal subject before Prince Henry reveals: "with all submission, on my knee,/I do bequeath my faithful services/ And true subjection everlastingly" [KJ, V.viii. 101-105].

Thus, in both plays, the stylistic maturity and the later political stability of the Bastard contrast with John's shifting style and his disintegration as a politician. The Bastard's success suggests that in public life the essence of playing homo rhetoricus is the constant awareness that all political moves contain an element of show or display. The mature Bastard reminds us of Sylla in Wounds. His conscience and principled political actions provide a wholesome moral contrast to another homo rhetoricus and military strongman Richard III. By vowing allegiance to the crown, the powerful Bastard is an example of political idealism like the good Duke Humphrey in 1 and 2 Henry VI. Because the king and people are metaphorically

one and share their imperfection of intellect, the actions of the Bastard show that subjects must have consciences even when their kings do not.

NOTES

1. In Shakespeare: the 'lost' years (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985) E.A.J. Honigmann contends that Shakespeare was probably born Catholic but later converted to Protestantism. To support this view he emphasizes the Protestantism of King John when he states that "In King John, however, Shakespeare's anti-papal rhetoric fires on all cylinders, with astonishing ferocity"(119). And David Bevington in Tudor Drama and Politics: a critical approach to topical meaning (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952) finds the Troublesome Reign typical of the fanatic Protestant zeal of the early Reformation (198).

2. The traditional view that Troublesome Reign is the source for King John is steadily losing favour among scholars. In his Arden edition of King John (London: Methuen, 1954), E.A.J. Honigmann stated that Shakespeare's was the earlier play (xix). This view is restated and emphasized in Honigmann's Shakespeare: the 'lost' years (119). Eugene M. Waith and J.C. Maxwell have detected borrowings from Titus Andronicus in Troublesome Reign [Waith ed. Titus Andronicus (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984): 5-6]. Honigmann sums up the current situation in this scholarly debate: "The debate about the King John plays will continue because it interconnects with so many other unsolved problems: the chronology of Shakespeare's early plays; the relationship of these plays and of other plays of the same date;" ['King John, The Troublesome Reign and "documentary links": A Rejoinder' in Shakespeare Quarterly 38 (1) Spring 1987: 126]. Because this study focusses upon the stylistic similarities between the two plays, the debate over which one is really the source play has no direct influence over the conclusions reached in this chapter.

3. The idea of the mixed constitution had the highest legal standing from the middle ages onwards in English law. According to J.H. Hexter, "Property, Monopoly, and Shakespeare's Richard II" in Perez Zagorin ed. Culture and Politics from Puritanism to the Enlightenment (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980): 23 "Men had a property in them, indeed, but they also had a property in their liberties and held the law itself as a due inheritance."

Also, from our twentieth century perspective, we observe the increasing strain on the paradigm(s) of monarchy as we recall the constitutional controversies of the seventeenth century concerning the king's power and the rise

of Cromwell in less than a century after these plays were written and performed. We are reminded of J.G.A. Pocock's comment in The Machiavellian Moment (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975). With regard to a later age Pocock writes: "when the monarchical paradigm collapsed ... the king was forced to admit that, whether of force or right, he shared his authority with others,..." (355).

4. In his Origins of Shakespeare (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), Emrys Jones finds fault with the plotting and stylistic unity of King John (235, footnote 2). Robert Ornstein in A Kingdom for a Stage: The Achievement of Shakespeare's History Plays (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972) makes the disappointing observation that Shakespeare was "bored" with his assignment when he wrote King John (101). Most scholars have either dismissed Troublesome Reign as a flawed 'source' play and/or Tudor anti-Catholic propaganda. Bevington only studies the topical meaning of Troublesome Reign (Tudor Drama and Politics, 198), and thereby misses some of the play's complexity. Despite his overall interpretation of Troublesome Reign as a Shakespearean 'source' play, only Michael Manheim, The Weak King Dilemma in the Shakespearean History Play (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1973) seems to think that the play is politically interesting. Manheim's conclusions on Troublesome Reign are similar to the view of history plays taken in this dissertation: "but it is the total effect of the play that goes home with its viewer for reflection -- some of that reflection no doubt as seditious as that heard from the rebellious figures in the play" (119).

5. We recall the vulgar speeches of Marlowe's Edward II and Peele's Edward I. We are also reminded of the diction in medieval ballads.

6. John's claim clearly undermines god-like stature. He is also evoking the paradigm of non-resistance in an opportunistic manner. In sixteenth century English plays, royal heroes such as Marlowe's Tamburlaine frequently assert their god-like status:

Tamburlaine Then in my coach, like Saturn's royal
son

Mounted, his shining chariot gilt with
fire,

And drawn with princely eagles through
the path

Paved with bright crystal and enchased
with stars,

When all the gods stand gazing at his
pomp,

So will I ride through Samarcanda
streets,

[Tamburlaine the Great, Part II,

IV. III. 125-131].

7. The combination of majesty and mockery reminds us of the dominant characteristics of Tamburlaine's style.

8. A.R. Braunmuller in "King John and Historiography", ELH, 55(2), Summer 1988: 313 states that Shakespeare invented the Bastard. He further suggests:

John's reign, like Henry IV's, was a politically sensitive subject in late Elizabethan England, and Shakespeare conceals his play's potential "application" and deflects the censor's gaze by creating a character whose ahistoricity guarantees him safe (314).

CHAPTER SIX

Realpolitik and the saintly King Henry VI

A major political concern of the three parts of Henry VI is with the question of power in a feudal monarchy. The shortcomings of the saint-like Henry VI raise the fundamental questions of who controls such a state, who should control it, and how such control should be exercised. As a king, Henry VI fails to assess the importance of realpolitik both in its original Greek sense of political realism, as well as our modern meaning of an expansionist national policy sometimes associated with the head of state's quest for political power. The homo seriosus style of King Henry VI creates sympathy for the king, whom we also respect for his private virtue, sincerity in speech, and humane qualities. But Henry VI is a failure as a ruler. His genuine lament in regard to his overwhelming political responsibilities: "Was never subject longed to be king/ As I do long and wish to be a subject" [2 Henry VI, IV.ix. 5-6] is in conflict with the feudal requirement that the hereditary sovereign rule with power.

The political problems depicted in these plays were inherent in the feudal system of government where aberrant forces could only be kept in check by a strong and just king. In a sixteenth century context, the depiction of Henry's political failures emphasizes the need for

legitimate monarchs to rule with absolute power. J.P.

Brockbank stated:

it would be possible to present Henry as the centre of a moral parable whose lineaments are traced in Thomas Elyot's The Governour. The King, says Elyot, must be merciful, but too much Clementia is a sickness of mind; as soon as any offend him the King should "immediately strike him with his most terrible dart of vengeance" (97).

Yet these above statements are in contrast to Brockbank's overall interpretation of Henry as a sacrificial victim in which the implicit political lesson of Henry's weak rule in the context of Tudor paradigms remains unexplored. By focussing upon the absence of power and majesty in Henry's speeches and upon the tense psychological and emotional situations created by his inept rule, the present reading interprets the turmoil of human errors and sufferings in the Henry VI plays as resulting from this almost saintly king's incapacity to govern with strength. Henry himself learns the necessity of toughening up when he changes his style and tries to appear more aggressive in 3 Henry VI. But by then the Yorkists are much stronger than Henry and his Lancastrians. Henry's political career conforms to a tragic pattern because his realization comes too late.[1] Because the serious Henry VI is sympathetically portrayed, his genuine suffering indirectly becomes a negative comment upon the political structure of a state where so much political

responsibility rested upon a single person, the legitimate sovereign.

The three parts of Henry VI contain several parallels in theme, character and situation with King Johan, The Troublesome Reign, King John, Edward II, and Wounds. Henry VI is similar in his pious and moral character to King Johan. However, in King Johan, the Babylon-like state of England is blamed for the king's end, whereas in the Henry VI plays the problems created by Henry's misgovernment indicate that saintliness in the king is politically incompatible with the grim reality of treason and unscrupulous ambition among his courtiers in the political worlds both of the middle ages and the sixteenth century. The corruption of Henry's court is similar to the corruption of Edward II's court. The Machiavellian ambitions of the Duke of York and his son Richard parallel the Machiavellian ambition of Mortimer. Henry's queen, Margaret, has great influence in matters of statecraft and reminds us of the influential queen mother, Eleanor in the King John plays. However, by virtue of her mature years Eleanor has much more political wisdom than Margaret. The problems of inherited right where the inheritor is by his own confessions unfit for public office remind us of similar questions raised in Edward II and the King John plays.

The theme of the great power of the subjects mentioned in the King John plays is emphasized in the Henry VI plays with the Cade rebellion in 2 Henry VI. Henry's inability to

please his subjects, but his understanding that he is required to do so, reminds us of Misfortunes and the King John plays when Henry VI says guiltily:

Come, wife, let's in, and learn to govern better;

For yet may England curse my wretched reign.

[2 Henry VI. IV. ix. 48-49].

In terms of political styles, the ultimate overthrow of Henry VI [homo seriusus] by Richard III [homo rhetoricus] recalls the conflict of Marius and Sylla in Wounds, emphasizing the need for rhetorical skill and political obliquity in speeches and speech acts in the face of the new and complex Machiavellian paradigm. Above all, the overthrow of Henry VI by Richard stresses the real fear of a Machiavellian system of government in Shakespeare's time.

Henry VI is not the only character aware of his inability to cope with the realpolitik of his own time. Several characters and episodes within the plays such as the dying Clifford in 3 Henry VI who laments "And, Henry hadst thou swayed as kings should do,... thou this day hadst kept thy chair in peace" [3 Henry VI, II. vi. 14-20] actually pinpoint the responsibility for misgovernment to the king's lack of a sense of power. Shakespeare makes no attempt to use the historical fact of Henry's chronic mental illness to account for his weak rule. Such alteration of historical fact combined with Henry's unimpressive yet serious public speeches suggests that these plays, traditionally regarded as reiterations of Tudor orthodoxy by scholars [2], actually

stimulate questioning of the central political issues of power and statecraft in troubled times. Moody E. Prior observes:

What is distinctive about these three plays is their originality and power in presenting in dramatic form the conduct of men in the world of statecraft and politics, struggling selfishly for power and the gratification of their private interests, under circumstances in which the established means of controlling such aberrant forces are feeble and in time break down utterly. The political emphasis of the plays alters the impression of Henry VI from the chronicles as the long suffering victim of divine judgments for errors of his own (like his imprudent marriage) and for the past wrongs which he did not commit, to that of a king who came to the throne under circumstances which only a political genius could have overcome, and who by his own ineptness and indecision became a cause of the very evils he deplores (41-42).

The present reading focusses on this indecision in Henry's speeches and speech acts in difficult political situations. Scrutiny of his style shows that, to a great extent, Henry must be held responsible for the anarchy of his reign. No doubt he inherited a difficult task, but the plays also stress the strength and morality of the protector

Duke Humphrey during Henry's minority, suggesting that Henry had many years to acquire political education from his uncle. Kings could not afford to draw a line between their private and public lives as we saw in Misfortunes, Edward II, and the King John plays. Henry's private virtue does not save him from the Tower where he is murdered by Richard who is correctly recognized by the dying Henry VI as the product of his poor government, "an indigested and deformed lump." [3]

Political weakness affects all characters in 1 Henry VI. But technical weaknesses in the play's language hamper character development. Discussing the language and characterization of 1 Henry VI, John W. Blanpied observes:

if we listen to the ceremonial style in 1 Henry VI as dramatic speech, what we hear are inchoate characters, unemerged, halfborn, and somehow willingly submissive to that "web of significance" that, rather than transcending the speakers, is all the while being woven out of their very passivity. This "web" is precisely a web of language, of public or conventionalized language, in which the speakers are bound "all unawares". It is a language creatively weak and impersonal, even inhuman, because the strength, the reality, the validity of its assumed public references are taken for granted. Like the dumbly significant roses, this language presumes to point "outward",

offstage, toward some stable, absolute, and indisputable "meaning" (39-40).

Blanpied misses the possibility that this formal emptiness of language may suggest that the "assumed public references" or paradigms are not taken for granted. This impersonal language may not point to any "stable, absolute, and indisputable" meaning but to the realization that words are inadequate to meet the political situations that arise in this play. Gloucester's "I will not answer thee with words but blows" [1 Henry VI, I. iii. 69] illustrates the breakdown of verbal negotiation in the political world of 1 Henry VI. With this important reservation, the present reading agrees with Blanpied on the characterization of the first part. Characters in 1 Henry VI lack three-dimensionality not only because it is an early Shakespearean play, but also partly because none of the principal characters are impressive in Shakespeare's chronicle sources.

However, even in the "inchoate" characters of 1 Henry VI Shakespeare emphasizes the theme of power. The exploits of Talbot in France stress England's need for military power [expansionist realpolitik]. Talbot is the English military hero whose prowess and valour had become a legend during his lifetime. David Riggs comments that, "Talbot is at once the last of the great medieval chevaliers and a faithful mirror of the Elizabethan aristocracy as it liked to imagine itself in an age that has been aptly described as the Indian Summer

of English Chivalry... his very style of making war serves as a metaphor for an aristocratic mode of life that was finally vanishing while Henry VI was being produced" (22-23). It is hard to agree with Riggs in entirety because Talbot has distinct flaws. Talbot does not look like a warrior, being puny and ugly in appearance. In an era when outward physical appearance was often thought to be synonymous with inner nature, Talbot is a "weak and writhled shrimp", who has to summon his troops for protection when the Countess of Auvergne plots to imprison him. Above all, Talbot's style of making war is called into question. He and his son both die when he encourages his immature and inexperienced son into a very tough battle. Even as he is dying, old Talbot shows no self-realization [1 Henry VI, IV. vii. 18-32] with regard to the fact that both he and his son have met untimely ends because of their obsession with military power and glory. Talbot's destruction, because of his inability to evaluate realistically his strength in relation to that of his opponents, gives us an early indication of the lack of political and military realism among the Lancastrian noblemen which ultimately destroys the king and his major supporters.

In the young Henry VI's court the power struggle is of two kinds-- one, the overt Gloucester-Winchester conflict, and the other, the underground claim of the Yorkists, dispossessed of power since the time of Richard II. 1 Henry VI opens with a lament for a strong and powerful ruler in

troubled times, and looks back upon the heroic age of Henry V. Winchester eulogizes the power of the late Henry V at Henry V's funeral:

He was a king blessed of the King of Kings.
Unto the French the dreadful judgment day
So dreadful will not be as was his sight.
The battles of the Lord of Hosts he fought:
The church's prayers made him so prosperous.

[1 Henry VI, I.i. 28-32].

Winchester puts in a word for the church's relation to the king [1. 32] even as he praises the dead king, only to be cut short by Gloucester's insultatio:

The church? Where is it? Had not churchmen
prayed,
His thread of life had not so soon decayed.
None do you like but an effeminate prince
Whom like a schoolboy you may overawe.

[1 Henry VI, I.i. 33-36].

Winchester counters Gloucester's argument ad hominem, using no logic, but making insulting accusations. He ridicules Gloucester as a hen-pecked husband:

Gloucester, whate'er we like, thou art Protector
And lookest to command the prince and the realm.
Thy wife is proud. She holdeth thee in awe
More than God or religious churchmen may.

[1 Henry VI, I. i. 37-40].

This early verbal conflict between Winchester and Gloucester

is typical of the uncontrolled power struggles between factions of the nobility which plague Henry VI throughout his reign.

The Gloucester-Winchester conflict is dramatized in a style reminiscent of the moralities. Winchester is a politically ambitious bishop who reminds us of the politically-minded clergymen in the three King John plays. Both Winchester and Gloucester are relatives of the young king. Gloucester symbolizes principled statecraft and Winchester religious life. Throughout his troubled reign, Henry VI is torn between his inclination toward the religious life, and the necessary involvement with statecraft that public life and his inherited throne requires of him. In contrast to Henry VI, who inherits a throne but craves a religious retreat from public life, Winchester is very much a politician given to luxurious living ["Gloucester. Name not religion, for thou lov'st the flesh", 1 Henry VI, I.i. 40]. When Winchester and Gloucester call each other names we recall the crude quarrels in King Johan. Belittling of the pope and his prelates was common in the English drama of the 1590's. Therefore, Gloucester's anti-Catholic sentiments would have had popular appeal, even though they were anachronistic from the medieval point of view:

Gloucester. Priest, beware your beard.

I mean to tug it and to cuff you
soundly.

Under my feet I stamp thy cardinal's hat
In spite of pope or dignities of church.

[1 Henry VI, I. iii. 47-51].

The Gloucester-Winchester conflict develops in a simplistic manner reminiscent of medieval interludes when actual blows are exchanged on stage. Winchester openly accuses Gloucester of attempting to seize the crown:

Here's Gloucester, a foe to the citizens;

.....

That seeks to overthrow religion

Because he is Protector of the realm,

And would have the armor here out of the Tower,

To crown himself king and suppress the prince

[1 Henry VI, I. iii. 62-65].

The physical fight depicted on stage illustrates the incapacity of these two politicians to negotiate linguistically, perhaps symbolizing the universal political fact that wars begin when talk fails.

When the new king Henry VI intercedes, his speech act of intervention is clearly ineffectual. Henry's early gentle style of public utterance denotes his typical manner of dealing with political problems throughout his troubled reign. His very gentleness of tone renders him politically ineffective, and the rhetorical strategies he employs are those of persuasion and complaint in the following speech:

O, how this discord doth afflict my soul!

My sighs and tears will not once relent ?

Who would be pitiful if you be not ?
 Or who should study to prefer a peace
 If holy churchmen take delight in broils ?

[1 Henry VI, III. i. 107-111].

However unimpressive the sighs and tears may sound in a monarch, the king's admonition as regards the proper behaviour of clergymen is sound. Yet no one pays much attention to Henry VI in his court.

The Protector, Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, emerges favourably from his arguments with Winchester as honest, sincere, and dedicated to the service of England and Henry VI. Gloucester, in his loyalty and principled political counsel, reminds us of the Bastard in the later stages of King John. Gloucester is a contrast to all the other power-hungry, self-seeking noblemen in the first tetralogy. Henry VI and Gloucester have a friendly understanding that makes for stability within the state as long as Gloucester remains Protector. Gloucester's speech style is also typical of the wise counsellor in late sixteenth century drama. We are reminded of Conan in Misfortunes when Gloucester advises the inexperienced king about the need to rule with the subjects' goodwill:

Gloucester. Now will it best avail your majesty
 To cross the seas and to be crowned in
 France.

The presence of a king engenders love
 Among his subjects and his loyal

friends,

As it disanimates his enemies.

King. When Gloucester says the word, King Henry
goes,

For friendly counsel cuts off many foes.

[1 Henry VI, III.i. 178-184].

Henry's reply is as unkingly and unimpressive as that of an immature schoolboy who acquiesces in his teacher's advice.

Gloucester's wise and principled statesmanship during his protectorate contrasts with the selfish motives of Henry's other important courtiers such as Suffolk who arranges the imprudent marriage of Henry VI with Margaret of Anjou. The moral Gloucester is quite the opposite of evil royal uncles such as King John and Richard III who arrange for the murder and dispossession of their minor nephews. Even though Gloucester controls the state, he never uses his powerful position to destroy his foes, or further personal ambition as does Mortimer, the protector, in Edward II.

The Lancastrian king and his principled uncle are clearly dissimilar in their political methods to the power-hungry Yorkist uncle and nephew. In the counsel given by another uncle to his nephew, namely the words of the dying Mortimer to Richard Plantagenet in 1 Henry VI, II. v., we observe the poorly suppressed discontent among Henry's feudal lords:

Mortimer Thou art my heir. The rest I wish thee
gather;

But yet be wary in thy studious care.

Richard Thy grave admonishments prevail with me.

But yet me thinks my father's execution
Was nothing less than bloody tyranny.

Mortimer With silence, nephew, be thou politic.

Strong fixed is the house of Lancaster
And like a mountain, not to be removed.
But now thy uncle is removing hence.

As princes do their courts when they are
cloyed

With long continuance in a settled
place.

[1 Henry VI, II.v. 96-106].

Mortimer's simile of the mountain emphasizes the strength of the protector's rule. Even in the opposite faction's view Gloucester's government is described favourably. But Henry VI himself weakens the Lancastrian position by two incorrect political decisions early in his reign: his imprudent marriage to Margaret of Anjou, and the bestowing of the duchy of York upon Richard Plantagenet.

The speech act of bestowing the duchy of York upon Richard Plantagenet marks Henry's sensitive conscience: "And in requerdon of that duty done,... rise created princely Duke of York" [1 Henry VI, III. i. 168-171]. Through the sententiousness of Henry's words "And those occasions ... restored to his blood" [1 Henry VI, III.i. 156-158] we observe his belief in the necessity of

performing morally correct actions at all times even when they weaken him politically. In making this decision, he has also been encouraged by Gloucester's "You have every reason to do Richard right." [1 Henry VI, III. i. 153].

Despite the pious and studious image Henry conveys in public, he is immature, romantic, and extremely vulnerable in worldly matters. This becomes clear when Suffolk's description of the charms of Margaret turn Henry into an eager and infatuated Petrarchan lover:

Whether it be through force of your report,
My noble Lord of Suffolk, or for that
My tender youth was never yet attaint
With any passion of inflaming love,
I cannot tell; but this I am assured,
I feel such sharp dissension in my breast,
Such fierce alarms both of hope and fear,
As I am sick with working of my thoughts,

[1 Henry VI, V.v. 79-86].

Henry's vulnerability is dangerous only because he is a king. In a private individual it would merit little notice because it would be a part of growing up. Yet, because Henry is a sovereign and a public figure, his sudden infatuation with a princess whose dowry is beneath his status results in the first of his series of disastrous political choices that ultimately cost him his crown and his life.

The sense of power and sovereignty continues to be

absent from Henry VI's speeches and speech acts even as he starts taking decisions for himself in 2 Henry VI. The opening of 2 Henry VI is characteristic of Henry's pious but weak style:

O Lord that lends me life,
Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness.
For thou hast given me in this beauteous face
A world of earthly blessings to my soul,
If sympathy of love unite our thoughts

[I.i. 19-23].

His lack of practical wisdom in politics is seen in ll. 61-63 when he bestows power on Suffolk: "They please us well...girt thee with the sword."

Henry's political errors in marrying Margaret, giving away English territories, and in elevating Suffolk to a powerful position in the court precipitate the power struggles among the feudal lords. Even the two arch enemies Gloucester and Winchester seem to agree on Henry's mistakes when they react sharply to Henry's easy giving away of the English territories in France [2 Henry VI, I.i. 73-104].

The peer who makes capital out of Henry's mistakes is his secret enemy, the Duke of York, whose mockery of the king is clear when he uses charientismus or "the privy nippe" [Puttenham, 201]:

For Suffolk's duke, may he suffocate,
That dims the honor of this warlike isle.
France would have torn and rent my very heart

Before I would have yielded to this league
 I never read but England's kings have had
 Large sums of gold and dowries with their wives,
 And our King Henry gives away his own
 To match with her that brings no vantages.

[2 Henry VI, I.i. 122-129].

From the peers' discontent with Henry's policies we observe that the lords interpret feudal laws to advance their own causes, Gloucester being the only exception. There is a clear contrast between the attitudes of the older and younger lords in Henry's court. Of the older peers, Duke Humphrey represents the good qualities of the feudal system. David Riggs says: "Gloucester is a type of the Renaissance governor whom humanists like Ascham and Elyot saw as supplanting such medieval chevaliers as Talbot"(119). But just as Talbot's outmoded style of warfare costs him his life, the principled government of Gloucester crumbles amidst the plots and counterplots in Henry's court. Edna B. Zwick finds that the "most developed theme is the younger generation's abandoning their elders' concern with hereditary legitimacy in order to satisfy personal ambitions" (70).

While Gloucester represents the authority assumed by the hereditary aristocracy during the king's minority, York and Suffolk represent unscrupulous personal ambition. Even as early as 2 Henry VI the younger lords and Henry's queen realize that the king lacks power, and vie with one another

to gain control of the realm.

The division of loyalties in the realm is seen microcosmically in the division within the royal family where Gloucester and Margaret oppose each other politically. Gloucester begins the feud when he says of Margaret: "She should have stayed in France, and starved in France," [2 Henry VI, I.i. 133]. Of course, Duke Humphrey's old enemy the Cardinal [Winchester] immediately points out his mistake:

My lord of Gloucester, now ye grow too hot.

It was the pleasure of my lord the king.

[2 Henry VI, I.i. 134-135].

Henry appears to have no control over the in-fighting among his courtiers. Except for Henry VI, every major figure in his court is preoccupied with acquiring as much political power as possible for himself. The intrigues which result from the continuous power struggle can be read as a sad comment upon the king's powerlessness. During the reign of such an inexperienced king, even a loyal nobleman such as Gloucester is not free of the suspicion of harbouring secret ambitions of achieving total political control in the land. The Cardinal seeks to challenge the popular image of Gloucester as a loyal peer when he describes him as:

And no great friend, I fear me to the king.

Consider, lords, he is the next of blood

And heir apparent to the English crown.

What though the common people favour him,
 Calling him, "Humphrey, the good Duke of
 Gloucester,"

He will be found a dangerous Protector.

[2 Henry VI, I.i. 148-162].

The Cardinal's oxymoron ("dangerous Protector") hints at Gloucester's "ambition".

Among the self-seeking feudal lords in Henry's court, there is hardly anyone without political ambition. The Cardinal's warning against Gloucester is enough to kindle Buckingham and Somerset:

Buckingham Or thou or I, Somerset, will be
 Protector

Despite Duke Humphrey or the Cardinal.

[2 Henry VI, I.i. 176-177].

The politician who intends to make capital of the increasing rivalry and suspicion among Henry's peers is the Machiavellian Duke of York who soliloquizes:

Then, York be still awhile, till time do serve.
 Watch thou and wake when others be asleep,
 To pry into the secrets of the state,
 Till Henry, surfeiting in joys of love,
 With his new bride and England's dear-bought
 queen,

And Humphrey with the peers be fallen at jars.
 Then will I raise aloft the milk-white rose,
 And force perforce I'll make him yield the crown

Whose bookish rule hath pulled fair England down.

[2 Henry VI, I.i. 246-257].

York is not so much a patriot or a champion of the dispossessed house of York, as a blood-thirsty foe to the inexperienced and mild king when he declares:

But I am not your king

Till I be crown'd and that my sword be stain'd

With the heart-blood of the house of Lancaster:

And that's not suddenly to be perform'd

But with advice and silent secrecy.

[2 Henry VI, II.iii. 62-67].

And York is ultimately successful in achieving his intentions, for Henry remains in the dark as to York's murderous ambitions until it is too late for him to contend with the Yorkists' power in the kingdom.

York's seditious intentions are paralleled in the plans of an avowed foe of Queen Margaret, the Duchess of Gloucester. York arrests the duchess in 2 Henry VI, I.iv. The exchange of insults between the duchess and the queen openly enacts the chaos and indiscipline within the court, the royal family, and the state in a combination of physical and speech action:

[The Queen drops her fan]

Give me my fan. What, minion, can ye not?

[She gives the Duchess a box on the ear]

Eleanor Was't I ? Yea, I it was, proud
Frenchwoman.

Could I come near your beauty with my nails,
I would set my ten commandments in your face.

[2 Henry VI, I.iii. 135-140].

While the queen chooses to provoke the duchess with physical aggression, the duchess replies with verbal aggression using conceited language that oddly suggests the queen's violation of the ten commandments because she is backed by her lover Suffolk. But the duchess never really has a chance to seize power since she has two powerful enemies in York, and in Suffolk who states:

Madam, myself have limed a bush for her,
..... And, madam, list to me
Although we fancy not the cardinal,
Yet must we join with him and with the lords
Till we have brought Duke Humphrey in disgrace.

[2 Henry VI, I.iii. 135-140].

While it is a general observation that factions flourish when heads of state are weak, the plots and counterplots in the court of Henry VI are of such a magnitude, that the very existence of Henry VI as a crowned king seems increasingly irrelevant. This is evident when the duchess, like Lady Macbeth, prompts her husband to seize the crown for himself:

Put forth thy hand, reach at the glorious gold.
What, is't too short ? I'll lengthen it with
mine;

[2 Henry VI, I.ii. 11-12].

Amidst all this treachery Gloucester remains steadfastly loyal to the king:

Gloucester O Nell, sweet Nell, if thou dost love
thy lord,

Banish the canker of ambitious thoughts.

My troublous dreams of this night doth
make me sad.

[2 Henry VI, I.ii. 17-22].

Gloucester's troubled dream in which his Protector's staff is broken in two by the Cardinal, and the pieces appropriated by the dukes of Somerset and Suffolk is an ominous sign of the terrible times to come. Gloucester seeks in vain to remain above reproach politically, and rebukes his ambitious wife:

And wilt thou still be hammering treachery
To tumble down thy husband and thyself
From top of honour to disgrace's feet ?

[2 Henry VI, I.ii. 47-50].

Gloucester's metaphor in the above lines is as ominous as his dream, because it gets translated literally into action after Eleanor's plot is discovered by York. In vain Gloucester tries to stand for law and honour amidst the anarchy of Henry's rule. His reaction to the news of his wife's treason is unequivocally patriotic:

if she have forgot
Honour and virtue, and convers'd with such
As, like to pitch, defile nobility.

I banish her my bed and company,
 And give her as prey to law and shame,
 That hath dishonour'd Gloucester's honest name.

[2 Henry VI, II.i. 186-190].

Gloucester's principled view of politics becomes outmoded in the face of the naked ambition of the younger lords. Like Talbot and the king himself, Gloucester falls from power because he gets out of touch with reality. His lack of realism in facing the corruption of the court is clearly revealed by his refusal to heed his duchess's warning:

Duchess For Suffolk, he that can do all in all
 With her that hateth thee, and hates us all,
 And York, and impious Beaufort, that false
 priest,
 Have all lim'd bushes to betray thy wings:
 And, fly thou how thou canst, they'll tangle
 thee;
 But fear not thou, until thy fool be snar'd,
 Nor seek prevention of thy foes.

Gloucester Ah! Nell, forbear: thou aimest all
 awry:

I must offend before I be attainted:
 And had I twenty times so many foes,
 And each of them had twenty times their
 power,
 All these could not procure my any scathe,

So long as I am loyal, true, and crimeless.

[2 Henry VI, II.iv. 50-63].

That the duke remains out of touch with the times he lives in receives greater emphasis when he comes to attend a Parliament he did not know about (II.iv. 70-73). Upon Gloucester's entry his enemies York and Suffolk heap accusations of financial fraud and military dishonour upon him. Suffolk begins:

Nay, Gloucester, know that thou art come too soon
Unless thou wert more loyal than thou art.
I do arrest thee of high treason here.

[2 Henry VI, III.i. 95-97].

York adds:

'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.

[2 Henry VI, III.i. 104-106].

The king's powerlessness is particularly painful in this difficult political situation, because even though Henry knows that Gloucester is innocent he is unable to save him. The king feebly shifts the responsibility to Gloucester himself:

My Lord of Gloucester, 'tis my special hope
That you will clear yourself from all suspense.
My conscience tells me you are innocent.

[2 Henry VI, III.i. 141-143].

Gloucester's reply is prophetic as he foresees a period of national turmoil, making an accurate forecast of the events to come:

Ah, gracious lord, these days are dangerous.
 Virtue is choked with foul ambition
 And charity chased hence by rancor's hand;
 Foul subornation is predominant
 I know their complot is to have my life,

 But mine is made the prologue to their play.
 For thousands more, that yet suspect no peril,
 Will not conclude their plotted tragedy.

[2 Henry VI, III.i. 144-153].

King Henry does not seem to understand the veiled warning in Gloucester's "thousands more, that yet suspect no peril", nor the criticism of his own rule implied in "Ah gracious lord... with foul ambition". Henry draws further attention to his own powerlessness in his long speech of lamentation: "Ay Margaret. My heart is drowned with grief...Gloucester he is none" [2 Henry VI, III.i. 198-222]. Henry's failure to impress his court [the stage audience] is evident when the queen openly ridicules Henry's speech as his being "Too full of foolish pity".

The chaos which swiftly follows Gloucester's fall from power emphasizes Henry's total ineptitude for government. He remains passive, as trouble ensues after Suffolk has Gloucester secretly murdered. The commons want vengeance

for the late protector's murder, so the king banishes Suffolk upon the people's demand.

King Henry's reaction to all these terrible events caused by his inept government is to speak in sententiae or moral platitudes, quite ill-suited to the pressing political needs:

Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just,
And he but naked, though locked up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

[2 Henry VI, III.ii. 233-235].

The king's moral lesson fails to take into account the downfall of Gloucester who was not corrupt. This bookish wisdom of the king is itself dangerous because it impairs his political judgment with regard to choosing counsellors.

After the death of Suffolk and the death of the Cardinal in madness, the Lancastrian side is left without any experienced political counsellors, moral or immoral. The king's inability to control his peers destroys the power of the Lancastrians and renders Henry VI vulnerable to the Machiavellian plots of the Yorkists. This weakening of Lancaster allows the Duke of York to take advantage of the subjects' unhappiness by instigating the Cade rebellion. The rebellion of the commoners led by Jack Cade changes the focus of the power struggle in Henry's court from infighting among the Lancastrians to the conflict between Lancaster and York.

The Cade rebellion is the climax of the power struggle

in 2 Henry VI where a common citizen actually causes the Lord's anointed to retire from the nation's capital. Cade's capture of power, his preposterous rhetoric, and his ridiculous swaggering display of power provide an effective mockery of King Henry's weak style and his inability to deal harshly with disruptive forces in the realm. Cade is a caricature of the strong ruler that England needs at this time: "Well, he shall be beheaded for it ten times. ... I am the besom that must sweep the court clean of such filth as thou art." [2 Henry VI, IV. vii. 21-28]. Cade is also an enemy to all learning [perhaps a hint at the king's bookishness]: "Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school;" [2 Henry VI, IV. vii. 28-30]. When Alexander Iden fights Cade, he says that he is ashamed to fight a "poor famished man" [2 Henry VI, IV. x. 42]. Both Cade's starved body and his temporary capture of power symbolize the pitiful condition of the kingdom caused by Henry's poor government.

Following the quelling of the Cade rebellion and the exposure of York, Henry VI's style changes, beginning to sound like the voice of experience. The king appears to toughen up much too late in 3 Henry VI, as he realizes he must be a powerful ruler to cope with troubled times. His change in style is evident in his denunciation of the rebel lords where he changes from his mild sententiae to the more aggressive sarcasmus:

My lord, look where the sturdy rebel sits.

Even in the chair of state! Belike he means,
 Backed by the power of Warwick, that false peer,
 To aspire unto the crown and reign as the king.
 Earl of Northumberland, he slew thy father,
 And thine, Lord Clifford, and you both have vowed
 revenge

On him, his sons, his favourites, and his friends.

[3 Henry VI, I.i. 50-55].

Henry's own lines stress the contrast between York and himself, for "sturdy" is not an adjective that can be applied to the king. Henry also points out the disloyalty of the rebel peers who owe allegiance to the king according to the feudal laws. Henry draws attention to his own situation because he is extremely dependent on the military and political support of the aristocracy. Whenever the dependency of the sovereign upon the peers is discussed in Edward II, the King John plays, and the Henry VI plays, the dramatists emphasize that the peers are the king's subjects much the same as are the commoners. That strictures against rebellion apply to all the king's subjects is, of course, more of a Renaissance than a feudal view.

Henry VI's changed style and heightened awareness of political reality merely intensifies the Lancaster-York conflict as the speech action in the first scene of 3 Henry VI degenerates into an ugly quarrel over the throne. The usually courteous Henry again rebukes York using sarcasmus:

Thou factious Duke of York, descend my throne.

And kneel for grace and mercy at my feet.

I am thy sovereign

York. I am thine.

[3 Henry VI, I.i. 74-77].

The defiant "I am thine" of York publicly humiliates Henry VI during one of Henry's few attempts to assert his sovereignty in the Henry VI plays more effectively than York's armed rebellion, Queen Margaret's insubordination, or even having to flee in the face of the ridiculous Cade uprising. Incensed by York's speech act, Henry's peers rush into the argument to save the king's dignity. But Henry's shame and ignominy are inevitable, and clearly evident in his exchange with York:

King Henry. And shall I stand, and thou sit in my
throne ?

York. It must and shall be so. Content thyself.

Warwick. Be Duke of Lancaster; let him be king.

[3 Henry VI, I.i. 84-86].

As in the cases of Arthur in Misfortunes and Marlowe's Edward II, Henry's use of eroteina stresses his ineffectuality in verbal negotiation. Shakespeare uses the judicial mode of oration [debate of accusation and defense] to good effect as the wrangling continues among the peers.[4] Henry declares his intention of regaining his throne by force; he will not abdicate in peace:

Think'st thou that I will leave my kingly throne,
Wherein my grandsire and my father sat ?

No ! First shall war unpeople this my realm;
 Ay, and their colors, often borne in France,
 And now in England to our heart's great sorrow,
 Shall be my winding sheet. Why, faint you, lords?
 My title's good, and better far than his.

[3 Henry VI, I.i. 124-130].

Henry's use of etiologia ("reason rend") to justify war in the above speech refers back to England's history of military glory, and to Henry's memories of Lancastrian supremacy. Henry uses history and memory as justifications for future political and military actions. But on the model of the tragedies, Henry has learned his lessons too late.

To save his public image, even Henry VI chooses to threaten civil war when cornered. He will not surrender his crown in shame. However, his display of royal anger is short-lived and uncharacteristic. He soon returns to peaceful arguments to emphasize the legitimacy of his succession:

King Henry [aside] I know not what to say;
 my title's weak--

Tell me, may not a king adopt an heir?

[3 Henry VI, I.i. 134-135].

His confession of his own unimpressive public statements ["I know not what to say"], and his recognition of his political weakness are combined expressions of insecurity as he once again resorts to the rhetorical question [eroteina].

While Henry vainly seeks to demonstrate the Lancastrian

legitimacy, Warwick and his faction threaten the king with deposition unless the king decides to adopt York as heir by disinheriting his own son. The peers' bullying makes the king plead desperately, and his speech acts further undermine Lancastrian dignity:

King Henry. My Lord of Warwick, hear but one
word.

Let me for this my lifetime reign as
king,

York. Confirm the crown to me and to mine heirs
And thou shall reign in quiet while thou
liv'st.

King Henry. I am content. Richard Plantagenet,
Enjoy the kingdom after my decease.

[3 Henry VI, I.i. 170-175].

Henry's "I am content" is shortsighted and foolish, for this adoption becomes the worst political decision Henry VI has ever taken. It plunges England into a bloody civil war that ultimately costs both York and Henry their lives. The reactions of the peers almost immediately suggest the long term evils of this political move:

Clifford. What wrong is this unto the prince your
son?

Warwick. What good is this to England and
himself!

Westmoreland. Base, fearful and despairing Henry.

[3 Henry VI, I.i. 176-178].

Before his angry queen, Henry has no suitable answer. He sounds quite pathetic when he says: "Pardon me, Margaret. Pardon me sweet son./ The Earl of Warwick and the duke enforced me." [3 Henry VI, I.i. 238-239]. But the queen is not to be pacified, and she responds with angry repetition of Henry's words: "Enforced thee? Art thou king, and wilt be forced? [3 Henry VI, I.i. 240].

Henry's actions make the Lancastrians very unhappy, and the emerging Lancastrian military leader Clifford criticizes Henry to his face using icon:

My gracious liege, this too much lenity
And harmful pity must be laid aside,
To whom do lions cast their gentle looks?
Not to the beast that would usurp their den.

[3 Henry VI, II.iii. 9-12].

Clifford's use of animal similes reinforces the idea of the kingdom as a wilderness without law and order, even though the king-lion analogy is traditional. Clifford's use of icon draws attention to the unnaturalness of a king without political judgment and power, and points out how ill-suited Henry is to cope with the force of the Yorkist brothers who confront Queen Margaret and Clifford.

As the civil war continues, Henry soliloquizes on his desire to be free of his royal responsibilities. He wishes to be a simple shepherd tending his flock: "Here on this molehill ...care, mistrust, and treason waits on him." [3

Henry VI, II.v. 14-54]. Scholars have frequently discussed this speech with its details of the shepherd's life and its inherent escapism. But the king is not merely using the pastoral style to divert his mind from his troubles. He is afraid of his future, "When care, mistrust, and treason waits on him" [3 Henry VI, II.v. 54]. At the centre of this speech is a death wish: "Would I were dead, if God's good will were so./ For what is in this world but grief and woe?" [3 Henry VI, II.v. 19-20]. Henry's recognition of his own political failure is tragic.

The horrors of the civil war brought about by Henry's poor political judgment are further emphasized by the two minor episodes of a son who has killed his father, and a father who has killed his son [3 Henry VI, II.v. 73-78]. These two episodes are not only meant as a lesson to the audience, but they are sad lessons for the king who clearly understands that he has failed to be a suitable protector of his subjects' peace and safety:

King Henry. Sad-hearted men, much overgone with
care,

Here sits a king more woeful than you
are.

[3 Henry VI, II.v. 123-124].

As with the leaders who are involved in wars in Misfortunes, Wounds, Edward II, the Troublesome Reign, and King John, Henry VI displays signs of psychological and emotional suffering when he is caught up in a bloody war of his own

causing.

The son-father, father-son episodes are immediately followed by the Prince's warning:

Fly, father, fly! For all your friends are fled
And Warwick rages like a chafed bull.

Away! for death doth hold us in pursuit.

[3 Henry VI, II. v. 125-127].

The use of icon in the animal analogy again emphasizes the idea of England as a wilderness.[5] The juxtaposition of the son-father, father-son episodes with the Prince's entry and warning emphasizes the failure of Henry VI both as a father and as a king. He has disinherited his minor son, who has nevertheless taken up arms to defend his father's crown and his own claim. King Henry's son fights on his father's behalf, also providing a clear contrast to the Yorkists where the father fights to the very end, with his sons taking up his cause only after his death. When the Lancastrians are finally defeated, only the young prince is left fighting the Yorkists. He is no match for the three brothers Edward, Richard, and Clarence who stab him one by one to revenge the deaths of their father and youngest brother. The killing of the prince is almost sacrificial. He is a lamb destroyed by a pack of wolves in the wilderness that England becomes during his father's weak rule.

When Richard of York stabs Henry VI to death in the Tower, the physical body of the king is attacked and destroyed by the ruthless, deformed, but competent leader who

has risen to power because of Henry's sins of government. The pattern of Henry's end conforms to the theory of the body politic, but Henry does not mention it, although he states that the terrible times have caused Richard's rise. Henry's political understanding remains incomplete even to his death. In his dying speech Henry prophesies further evils to come in England with Richard as the centre of all this evil: "Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou was born,/ To signify thou cam'st to bite the world;" [3 Henry VI, V.vi. 53-54].

Henry's description of Richard conforms to the rhetorical structure of the insultatio on a powerful and extended scale. His final change of style, and his understanding of the evil embodied in his enemy has come much too late. Despite Henry's incomplete political understanding even now, despite his lack of political power and correct judgment throughout his reign, his sufferings arouse the emotions of pity and fear in us as the complex problems of royal inheritance and legitimacy are dramatized in the three plays.

NOTES

1. J.P. Brockbank, "The Frame of Disorder -- Henry VI" in Early Shakespeare ed. J.R. Brown and Bernard Harris (New York: Schocken Books, 1966): 90 discusses the tragic pattern in the depiction of Henry VI and relates it to Henry's political weakness:

Henry pre-figures the sacrificial victim, suspended between action and inaction -- he will, "nor fight nor fly" (V.ii. 74). And Richard of York is the agent of that political realism that is born in Part 2 to flourish in the later plays; ... and he states the harsh moral assumption that makes for anarchy in Part 3:

Sword, hold thy temper; heart, be wrathful still:

Priests pray for enemies, but princes kill.
[V.ii.71].

2. That the first tetralogy voices the official Tudor view of the necessity for total obedience to the crown, even to an inadequate sovereign, depicts the horrors of civil war vividly, and in terms of overall design depicts God's providential design in the workings of human history are subjects that have been excessively overworked. However, the fear of civil war was real to the people of sixteenth century England. There were genuine threats of foreign invasion, and the chronicles' accounts of the wars of the roses do depict the wicked being punished and order being restored. Yet the chronicles also show the immense suffering of the good as well, and it must be pointed out that Shakespeare certainly depicts this fact in his depiction of Henry VI's reign, giving the plays greater complexity of subject than the simple moral interpretation of history found in his sources Hall and Holinshed.

Scholars differ in regards to their moral readings. Thematic studies such as Robert B. Pierce's Shakespeare's History Plays: The Family and the State (Athens: Ohio State University Press, 1971) conform to the view that the history plays depict the Tudor myth. Edward I. Berry's Patterns of Decay: Shakespeare's Early Histories (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975) studies a special pattern:

2 Henry VI depicts the second stage in a process of social and political decay that begins with the death of Henry V. In Part I the forms of chivalry and ceremony become gradually emptied of all meaning; in Part II the values of justice and law erode until they collapse in the confusion of civil war. That the conceptual frameworks which

sustain these two plays have for Shakespeare a special imaginative power is evident from their recurrence in later works (51).

David Riggs in Shakespeare's Heroical Histories: Henry VI and its Literary Tradition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) recognizes that the moral judgments of the first tetralogy are of a complex nature:

Henry VI is designed to disclose a set of exemplary truths drawn from the playwright's reading of fifteenth century English history. There is little basis, however, for supposing that these truths will always conform to orthodox Tudor doctrine, and still less to indicate that they point to a stable, didactic allegory of "moral history" underwritten by a providential guidance. One may begin simply by postulating that the trilogy encompasses Shakespeare's presentation of the "agents" that gave the reign of Henry VI its distinctive contours. Like any good humanist historian, he is concerned to produce moral judgments, but these will involve a wide spectrum of ethical standards (97).

3. Henry's words suggest Ovid's rudis indigestaque moles which in translation reads:

Chaos, so-called, all rude and lumpy matter,
Nothing but bulk, inert, in whose confusion
Discordant atoms warred:

(Metamorphoses, Book I, 3-5, trans. Rolfe
Humphries)

Richard's bodily deformity is equated to chaos itself.

4. Robert Y. Turner in Shakespeare's Apprenticeship (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974): 33 classifies different modes of oration in Shakespeare's early plays. His classifications are useful for assessing the rhetorical strategies in the Henry VI plays.

5. David Riggs in Shakespeare's Heroical Histories: 133-134 takes a different view. He interprets many of the animal metaphors and images in 3 Henry VI as reinforcing the pattern of "an historical revenge play". He writes that such "descriptive figures amplify this reversal of the civilized into the barbarous through stock epithets" (133).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Elizabethan rhetoric taught that man learns from history 'what is the best course to be taken in all his actions and advices in this world.' Such a statement could mean almost anything.

F. Smith Fussner: The Historical Revolution

The preceding chapters have discussed how rhetoric in sixteenth century English historical drama is inextricably intertwined with character development in relation to contemporary political paradigms. The examination of rhetoric in the historical plays analysed in this study concludes that in these plays the rhetoric of tropes and the rhetoric of persuasion combine to form a rhetoric of political character that clearly fits Lanham's categories of homo rhetoricus and homo seriusus. Such a view tends to confirm Patricia Parker's theory that "rhetoric in Shakespeare's day still involved not just a scheme of tropes and figures but the whole armory of manipulation and response, in contexts which were traditionally not just literary or judicial but political" (xii). The sufferings of the major political figures discussed in this study with relation to their shifting styles of speech suggest that homo seriusus and homo rhetoricus represent the two opposing aspects of political man's divided self confronting the harsh world of sixteenth century realpolitik. These plays contain appeals to universal moral and humane values rather

than to homiletic Tudor political orthodoxies. For instance, together with the fear of civil rebellion there is also realistic depiction of the circumstances under which anarchic forces can disrupt stable government within a monarchy. Recurring major political themes are those of strong rulership, stable government, the political responsibilities of the king, the peers, and the commons. The playwrights confront the question of evil in politics with realism, frequently avoiding simplistic moral solutions. Secondary themes are those of the need for monarchs to please their subjects, and the need for both princes and peers to be wise in the world of sixteenth century realpolitik.

The English history plays of the 1590's suggest that there can be no common or easy solutions to the problems of just but inept government in a monarchy. Through the interplay of character with contemporary political paradigms in the major speech acts of historical figures, these plays call our attention to the right and wrong of politics. Ultimately, the proper or improper use of political doctrines rests with the individual leaders. For example, the career of Richard III, the product of anarchic times in Shakespeare's first tetralogy, explains the circumstances for the rise of a Machiavellian prince. But the evil Richard turns Machiavellism into tyranny instead of strong government. The fall of Richard conforms to a moral pattern in that Richard's version of Machiavellism is shown to be an

immoral political philosophy. The destruction of Richard III by Richmond, Henry Tudor, formally upholds the Tudors' stable rule, but does not dispel entirely the fear of Machiavellism. Richard III illustrates the contemporary anxiety and confusion over Machiavellian doctrines. This play also brings up the question of finding lasting and principled solutions to major problems of government.

Richard is a military strongman and Machiavellian orator who plays homo rhetoricus with evil intentions: "I can add colours to the chameleon,/Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,/And set the murderous Machiavel to school" [3 Henry VI, III.ii. 191-193]. Richard's speech acts fit the pattern of "cunning plausible pretences" discussed by English commentators on Machiavellism.[1]

Richard's bravura performance of a homo rhetoricus is brilliant but unconvincing. The people are not deceived by Richard's rhetoric. They are afraid of him as they anticipate force: "O, full of danger is the Duke of Gloucester" [Richard III, II. iii. 27]. The dying Hastings prophesies the horrors of Richard's rule:

O bloody Richard ! Miserable England!
I prophesy the fearfull'st time to thee
That ever wretched age hath looked upon

[Richard III, III.iv. 103-105].

Richard's misgovernment illustrates that amidst political anarchy the rhetorical "speech acts" of a morally corrupt leader are futile because language cannot generate trust and

good government unless ethos is shared.

Political action in sixteenth century English historical drama is, to a great extent, public speaking. The rhetorical skills of political leaders [use of tropes and modes of persuasion] are inseparable from their political capabilities. The present study has shown that close parallels, and frequently, close historical connections, exist between the political actions and capabilities of princes and noblemen and their styles of political utterance. The similarity in the use of certain tropes, such as the eroteina, in significant political speeches by leaders whose styles are basically dissimilar suggests that the dramatists viewed political rhetoric as a complex art. In Lodge's The Wounds of Civil War, Antony's rhetoric is outmoded before the emergent Machiavellian paradigm. Lodge's Sylla is a successful politician who combines rhetorical skill with military strength and popular support. A similar successful combination of qualities exists in Shakespeare's Bastard in King John. In Marlowe's Edward II, the king's perversion of rhetoric matches his poor government and perverted style of living. Richard III displays a wicked mastery over both language and politics as games. In the case of weak and insecure politicians such as Mordred in The Misfortunes of Arthur, and the Shakespearean kings John and Henry VI, stylistic shifts in their speeches closely parallel political shifts in their courses of action.

The present study, therefore, concludes that the significant political speeches and speech acts in sixteenth century English history plays are essentially meant to be viewed as self-conscious public performances by major historical characters. The study of Renaissance history plays in the preceding chapters suggests that the dramatists were making the most of the politics of misunderstanding by exploiting the ambiguity inherent in rhetorical language, and to a great extent, in all political language. We cannot, at any time, wholly dismiss Tudor "orthodoxy" or the moral content of Renaissance historical drama, especially in works such as Shakespeare's first tetralogy. But the discussion of the first tetralogy demonstrates that even these more "orthodox" plays engage with contemporary political theories in a larger sense than the doctrine of obedience propagated in the Homilies.

The approach to Renaissance historical drama through paradigms suggests that, when faced with the political uncertainties of England in the 1590's, dramatists seriously questioned contemporary political doctrines. Subject to censorship and reading widely in the writings on Machiavellism, the Tudor playwrights used their training in rhetoric to write political commentary in an oblique and 'politic' style. Such commentary frequently stressed larger human and moral concerns that extended beyond contemporary political paradigms. The English historical drama of the 1590's therefore incorporated an amazingly open-minded

treatment of history, politics, and human behaviour expressed in rhetorical language. In other words, whenever and wherever the Tudor historical dramatist steps beyond the paradigm -- and however small that step may be -- he sheds light upon the past in terms of the present in a fundamentally different way. In conclusion, the Tudor historical dramatist may be viewed as a historian in his own right who commented upon inconsistencies in contemporary political paradigms with ingenuity and caution.

NOTES

1. Felix Raab in The English Face of Machiavelli (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964) states that Englishmen commenting upon tyranny and Machiavellism in Cromwell's time wrote:

Tyrants accomplish their ends much more by fraud than force. Neither vertue nor force (says Machiavelli) are so necessary as una Astutia fortunata, a Luckie craft: ... and in another place he tells us their way is Aggirare Li cervelli de gle huomini con Astutia etc. With cunning plausible pretences they impose upon mens understanding -- and in the end they master those that had so little wit as to rely upon their faith and integritie (138).

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