
King Richard IIThe Actor's Tragedy

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Shakespeare's history plays deal with the tragedy of a state. However, in Richard II, the hero-king is granted unusual prominence and we can see character emerging out of the tight dramatic frame of history and turning the play into a personal tragedy. What Shakespeare has created in Richard II is a man who is characterized by his artifices. This Richard II is totally Shakespeare's own invention and no chronicle writers can rival his eloquent portrait of an actor-king. In this essay, I would like to analyze some aspects of Richard's character in relation to his acting and trace the downfall of an actor-king.

As it has been repeatedly pointed out, Richard II is a highly stylized play and no reader can fail to notice the prevailing mode of formality and ceremoniousness given to the play. From the beginning, the play expresses concern for formal names and titles. The tournament scene, with its high-sounding rhetorics and public assertion of traditional order, soon establishes the atmosphere of ritual that might be termed 'the theatricalism of politics.'¹ With the king and the nobles as performers, the whole pageant has been deliberately calculated to bear a clean neutrality of the stage act of state. The trial-at-arms is a public ceremony and ceremony is necessarily meant to represent its participants in an impersonal dramatic texture by eliminating their human traits and private motives. The real emotions of Richard, Bolingbroke and Mowbray are obscured by the overall artistry of manner; in professing truth and royalty, they are speaking prearranged lines as the scripts demand them and their social behaviour is play-acting. However, their acting brings

little conviction to the show and we sense at once that there is something dangerously histrionic in their response to the mechanical conventions that ceremony has imposed on them. The tension is felt growing and the uneasy balance between the ceremonious form and personal feelings breaks down when the quarrelling nobles start charging each other with treachery and duplicity. Masks have slipped off and the seeming courtliness gives its way to the blunt and direct expressions of private malice and rivalry. Richard, who has acted out his part in the royal drama of contention and reconciliation now returns to the 'tiring room' and as a private man, speaks his mind to Aumerle and his favorites.

Ourself and Bushy

Observ'd his courtship to the common people,
How he did seem to dive into their hearts
With humble and familiar courtesy;

(I. iv. 23-6)

Actors know actors best. Bolingbroke is stealing the show, so, sooner or later, he is to be banished. Richard shows no scruples about demonstrating his own histrionics in disguising envy as justice and whim as mercy. Following his example, Aumerle boasts of his subtle acting when he pretended that he was too oppressed with grief to say farewell to banished Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke is also shown acting and he has been often labelled a crafty Machiavellian. Machiavellian is the name given to a hypocritical actor who deceives and manipulates others to win a political game. If we regard Bolingbroke as actor-dramatist, we can see him as busy play-acting and contriving scenes, and in doing so, paving the way for crown. This aspect of his character has not passed unnoticed and the play gives ample evidence that illuminates Bolingbroke as a man of policy who makes himself ceremonious in appearance while in reality calculating and shaping his behaviour to the changing circumstances. At Berkeley Castle, York discerns his nephew's feigning and sharply upbraids him.

Show me thy humble heart, and not thy knee,
Whose duty is deceivable and false.

(II. iii. 83-4)

Bolingbroke conceals his ambition behind a plausible facade of courtesy and reduces it to an empty show. The ceremonious act of the bending of his 'supple knee' is no longer a sign of reverence and humility but only exposes a dissembling actor who masks his inner reality under an ostensible courtship. With his

eyes firmly fixed on crown, Bolingbroke is always aware to what end his acting is driving him. He seizes every opportunity to exercise his political art, and to earn popularity with 'the craft of smiles' is, as described by Richard rather enviously, no difficult task for a practiced actor. 'What reverence he did throw away on slaves, Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles' (Richard is acknowledging Bolingbroke's talent for such show and feeling jealous of a man who rivals him not only politically but also in a theatrical sense,)

And patient underbearing of his fortune,
 As 'twere to banish their affects with him.
 Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench;
 A brace of draymen bid God speed him well,
 And had the tribute of his supple knee,
 With "Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends"---
 (I. iv. 29-34)

Critics have often attributed Richard's downfall to his personal weakness and interpreted the play as the model study of deposition or a fierce struggle for power between a strong usurper and a weak, though legitimate, king. However, the play goes much deeper than the conventional story of the death of kings. Although Shakespeare provides us with the traditional picture of a king who is overthrown by a mightier opponent out of his own follies, he hardly makes it a convincing dramatic reality. Underneath the surface action of the play, we witness a fundamental opposition between two different modes of human existence embodied by two sharply contrasted characters. This contrast, to borrow Chamber's words, can be broadly defined as 'that of the practical and artistic temperaments, the men of deeds and the men of dreams and fancies.'² From the first, the realist side of Bolingbroke's character is opposed to the elaborate artifices and baseless verbalisms that form the integral part of Richard's nature. Although both are seen acting, their dramatic temperaments are completely different. Richard acts for pleasure while Bolingbroke acts for necessity, being too much a realist to lavish himself on an imaginative creation. Acting for Bolingbroke is a mere political convenience, just the matter of the putting on and taking off of masks. Behind an actor's look, his sense of self is kept intact whereas Richard is ambushed from within. Richard's problem, observes Tillyard, 'is that he is 'more concerned with how he behaves, with the fitness of his conduct to the occasion, than with what he actually does.'³ He never questions 'what he should do' ; it is 'how it should be done' that chiefly occupies his mind. However, while he apparently indulges in words and

postures, Richard retains an unflinching sense of what would work for him, for what would resonate. As if through a filter, each new event passes through him and comes out as a dramatic scene. His dramatic urge is so great that even when he finds himself in such situations as to call for immediate leadership, he yields to the theatrical temptation of make-believe and dallies with his sentiments. His extravagant greetings to his kingdom at his return from Ireland typically shows this self-dramatizing Richard who, 'weeping, smiling,' almost greedily satisfies his histrionic zeal. Only when he is informed that the Welsh soldiers have disbanded, he momentarily loses his magnificent posture and Aumerle is obliged to chide him, 'Comfort, my liege; remember who you are.' Remembering his role, Richard immediately becomes enlivened and strikes a heroic pose of a royal defender. 'Is not the king's name twenty thousand names? Arm, arm, my name!' However, his defiant posture does not hold long. When he discovers that playing hero is too much for his capacity, Richard unquestioningly enters into a new part that goes better with his dramatic purposes.' Abruptly he discharges his remaining soldiers, gives no chance to Aumerle to utter a word, and almost enthusiastically grasps the role of royal martyr.

Go to Flint Castle, there I'll pine away---
 A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey.
 (III. ii. 209-10)

Kingly said, but theatrically conceived. His words, though charged with emotion, are strangely devoid of real pathos. He says that he will obey woe and pine away but this should be different from showing how kings behave when they suffer. Richard is going to present the formalized image of woe; in a word, he wants to suffer in style.

Saluting the earth, arming his name, telling sad stories of the death of kings, he suits his acting to circumstances and forces those around him to watch until he performs his role to the full. And when he realizes that he cannot king it any longer, he extends his theatricalism even to the conception of kingship.

---for within the hollow crown
 That rounds the mortal temples of a king
 Keeps death his court, and there the antic sits,
 Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
 Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
 To monarchize, be fear'd, and kill with looks;
 (III. ii. 160-65)

Richard philosophizes that king is a divided being, at once the anointed God's minister and a frail human being. Kingship smells of flesh and death--no, more than that--kingship is death itself. In the centre of the hollow crown which is and surrounds the mortal head of the king, death holds his court. Death, a supreme dramatist, sits behind every act a puppet king performs, suffers him a while to satisfy his vanity and then, when death tires of the play, dismisses him at will. Richard, who has so far conceived of himself as a master puppeteer comes to a shocking realization that he is a poor player all his life, his kingship a mocking illusion. However, actor's instincts hinder him from facing such raw, unsavory realities. To Richard, the decay of his own fortune is simply the imaginative springboard for his narcissistic displays of self-pitying. In real life, the powerlessness to resist the disastrous event that undermines our existence may be exceeded by only one worse form of suffering; the inability to explain it. Going mad may offer one possible escape-route from such absurdity but normally, we try to safeguard ourselves against the unspeakable by translating it into something more definite, something easier to understand. Acting is Richard's peculiar way of coping with what seems to him an inexplicable turn of fate. By clinging to whatever role is available to him, he is desperately convincing himself that he knows what it is. The matter with Richard is that he remains ensconced in seeming power of illusion. He just sits and deliberates when some purposeful action is most needed. Sheer material force overwhelms him; he cannot help it nor is he substantial enough to be a real figure in life.

Learning that he is lost, he tampers with his own tragedy. At Flint Castle, he 'plays wanton' with his woes and speaks fondly so as to present before his audience a man whose heart is choked with grief. On seeing Aumerle's tears, he alerts spectators to their sighs and 'weeping eyes' to add to the scene a touch of realism. What characterizes his speech is the exhibition of sorrow rather than sorrow itself. Richard is dramatizing his fall and the whole scene, from his first appearance on the walls to the ignominious descent to the 'base court,' is just another of Richard's setups.

If we say Richard greatly enjoys theatrical activities, he is no less concerned for his own reputation as actor-dramatist. When he last meets his queen, his theatricality spoils the sincerity of her sorrow. He entreats,

Tell thou the lamentable tale of me,
And send the hearers weeping to their beds;
(V. i. 44-5)

This picture of a hero-dramatist caring about his self-image anticipates Hamlet and Othello who are to show concern that their stories should be reported aright. However, in Richard's case, an actor's shallow egoism inevitably cheapens his lines. It is not out of profound necessity but out of pride and vanity that he insists to make the world groan at the sad story of a deposed king. He pleasingly looks at himself and exclaims, 'Look! How touching!' It is a sort of indirect revenge upon those who did him wrong and above all, the idea excites him because once he becomes a legendary figure, he can be an eternal object of people's attention, forever remembered and pitied. That kings are mortal is his recently acquired knowledge. They must all die and so, must be forgotten. But he will outlive time's transformations and attain immortality in one crystallized image of a tragic king.

To make an actor of a king is a dramatic formula. However, to make a king of an actor is totally Shakespeare's own creation. As Peter Ure says in his introduction to the Arden Shakespeare, the dramatist deviates from his primary source, Holinshed, in writing 'much of the character and behaviour of Richard, especially in the last two acts.'⁴ We can see Shakespeare's imagination working vigorously over the image of an actor-king who conducts a ritual of his own deposition. In the addication scene, to the plain chronicle description of Richard's fall he adds the king's half-spontaneous resignation of the crown and in processing his source materials, his imagination casts Richard in a self-appointed martyr's role.

From the first moment he appears at Westminster Hall, Richard is decisively an actor, complaining that he wants time to rehearse for his new part as parasite on a king. He visualizes himself in the posture of a betrayed king ousted most unjustly from the throne. He has got a final script for the show and what he is going to produce is a great tragedy starring himself as a chief tragedian who is sure to hold his audience in awe and pity by his grand suffering. Following his keen sense of order and decorum, Richard stages a magnificent show of his own deposition and the whole scene is punctuated with a chain of stage directions, 'Here, cousin, seize the crown...Now mark me...Give me that glass...Say it again.' It is Richard who takes charge of the ceremony and not Bolingbroke who cannot but underplay in Richard's script, nor Northumberland who ineffectually directs a king to read the list of his crimes. Abdication or usurpation, Richard simply refuses to be in someone else's scenario; he towers over the scene, reducing the role of his co-actors to that of a

foil and makes his audience cry, 'A woeful pageant have we here beheld.'

Majestically costumed, Richard is dramatist and director as well as actor for what he realizes is to be the last and perhaps the finest performance on the stage. Before the golden crown, the dazzling symbol of majesty he is now going to lose, Richard's inspiration flares up.

Here, cousin, seize the crown.

Here, cousin,

On this side my hand, and on that side thine.

Now is this golden crown like a deep well

That owes two buckets, filling one another,

The emptier ever dancing in the air,

The other down, unseen, and full of water.

(IV. i. 181-87)

The transfer of power is symbolically imaged and made into a tableau with two men facing each other, each laying his hand on the crown. It is the most eloquent image of a going and a newly coming king of which implication is acutely felt and never missed by the Elizabethan minds. Then rings out Richard's elaborate speech in which he compares the crown to a well and his opponent and himself to two buckets, filling each other so that one gains weight when the other becomes empty and dances in the air. His simile is sadly apt for the occasion, for politically, Richard's downfall is counterpoised by ascending Bolingbroke and personally, the shallowness of a king that has emptied his substance is seen to give way to the heaviness and concreteness of a new political leader.

His prologue is over and Richard proceeds to relinquish his crown. Since only a true king can dispose himself, he will show a newcomer the proper way of undoing a king. His flourishing rhetoric makes a striking contrast to Bolingbroke's verbal bluntness when he asks Richard, 'Are you contented to resign the crown?' Taking his cue, Richard begins his well-worded speech by characteristically alerting audience to his performance.

Now, mark me how I will undo myself.

I give this heavy weight from off my head,

And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,

The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;

With mine own tears I wash away my balm,

With mine own hands I give away my crown,

With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,

With mine own breath release all duteous oaths;
 All pomp and majesty I do forswear; (IV. i. 203-11)

In absolute formality, Richard deprives himself of all signs of kingship—his sceptre, his crown, his pomp and majesty, his own breath that made his title omnipotent. He loves royal symbols, and the traditional glorifications of a king, the sceptre, the crown and the throne are repeatedly referred to in his speech. Though he is not a king in substance, he appears more kingly than any other Shakespearean king, knowing more about 'the sacredness, the grace, and the splendour of kingship.'⁵ He may lack true kingly power, but his reign never lacks pomp and ceremonious brilliance that dazzle the beholders' eyes. And I quite agree with Tillyard and Yeats who both regard Richard's propensity for ceremony as a mirror that reflects a medieval and aristocratic view of life with which Bolingbroke's modern and practical spirit is naturally incompatible. The old world order thrives on rites and ceremony. So when Richard invites Bolingbroke to 'throw away respect, tradition, form and ceremonious duty,' he not only destroys the concept of kingship he has been attempting to realize throughout the play, but announces a new era when ceremony dies and a king can be nobody but a plain man. 'What more remains?' asks Richard wonderingly and by the end of his speech, we are made to aware how perfectly he has destroyed himself.

The solidity of his existence has dwindled into nothing as he, in an overtly theatrical manner, strips himself of symbols that constitute the royal office. Richard says, 'Mark me how I will undo myself,' getting under way with what sounds like a prepared speech and ends up with a declaration that that he has become nothing. It is like watching an actor removing his make-up and costume on the stage. What appears last is still an actor's self girdled with an actor's consciousness of being securely in a role. Abdication is a thing bad enough to happen to a king but he can avoid experiencing it as real when he sees it as a great dramatic event. Anyway, we have 'marked' that Richard bore his misfortune well and played out his disgraced part rather majestically. He is surely an expert in extracting drama from every situation and for such a born actor-dramatist, life can be no more than a dream, a succession of insubstantial shows and shadows that has nothing to do with blunt realism.

To complete his own abdication drama, he asks for a mirror to study if he looks properly like a bankrupt majesty.

Give me that glass, and therein will I read.
 No deeper wrinkles yet? Hath sorrow struck

So many blows upon this face of mine
 And made no deeper wounds? O flatt'ring glass,
 Like to my followers in prosperity,
 Thou dost beguile me. Was this face the face
 That every day under his household roof
 Did keep ten thousand men? Was this the face
 That like the sun did make beholders wink?
 Is this the face which fac'd so many follies,
 That was at last out-fac'd by Bolingbroke?
 A brittle glory shineth in this face;
 As brittle as the glory is the face,

(Dashes the glass against the ground.)
 (IV. i. 276-88)

The play, he thinks, is still his, yet most unexpectedly, the mirror reveals a strange moment of recognition. Instead of a tragic face, what he finds in the mirror is a face of an ordinary man as smooth as ever. Inward sorrow has wrought no desired effect upon his outward appearance. His part is motivated by a real cause, real enough to give him a look of royal martyr. What has gone wrong? Isn't his suffering enough? Exasperated and feeling betrayed by appearances, Richard dashes the mirror to the ground, thus destroying whatever threatens his private fantasy. There shatters the gorgeous, brittle reflection of a king, and that, after all, is the only kind of king histrionic Richard could ever was.

Bolingbroke, who has been waiting somewhat patiently for Richard's theatrical passion to consume itself, seizes the moment and comments drily.

The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd
 The shadow of your face. (IV. i. 293-4)

Your grief, Bolingbroke tells Richard, is as insubstantial as your brittle self-image reflected in the glass, implying further that Richard's stripping is far too complete to allow even a human remainder of grief that lies in inner men; to which Richard replies, 'The shadow of my sorrow? 'Tis very true my grief lies all within.' He claims that he is not deliberately pathetic; his sorrow is all too real and no outward show can denote him truly. In Hamlet, we can hear a distant echo, 'But I have that which passeth show, these but the trappings and the suits of woe.' Here, the similarity is striking and in many respects, it may be said that Richard is a predecessor of Hamlet. Both are actor-personalities and express themselves in acting rather than in

action. However, their attitudes toward acting are widely different. Richard acts uncritically but Hamlet is obliged to be subtler and more ambivalent, for, from the first, he knows that appearance is dangerously separated from reality. Acting current in the realm of Denmark is held cheap and debased; it weaves deception instead of creating ceremonious grandeur necessary to a healthy society. So he rejects all appearances to be truly himself while playing a shameless dissembler to catch a glimpse of reality behind the curtains of phenomena. Like Hamlet, Richard goes on to image himself as an actor, but unlike Hamlet, he never finds his true identity by being a roleplayer. Role exhausts a private man. He merely indulges in acting and loses both his role and his real self in a make-believe world.

The political play has been played out. And the two rivaling actors show themselves together before the audience, one to receive shouts of applause and the other, to be scoffed at. In their processional entries into London, York, who formerly called the ruined majesty of Richard a 'show' now elaborates the image and heightens the theatricalism of the scene two kings have enacted. York describes this event as something happening in a play in which the 'desiring' eyes of the Londoners, having feasted themselves upon their favorite actor Bolingbroke until he 'leaves the stage' now

Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on Richard.

(V. ii. 25-8)

The theatrical analogy provides the contrasted pictures of the two kings in which Bolingbroke is portryed as 'a well grac'd actor' and Richard, by implication, as a poor second-rater scorned by his audience. Richard, a pageant king who spends his life acting rather than living cannot even excel his rival in the field of play-acting.

Richard's career as actor-king reaches its final stage when he is imprisoned at Pomfret Castle and given enough time to contemplate the wreckage of his life. Now being a nameless man, he has become what he formerly prophesied.

And by and by
Think that I am unking'd by Bolingbroke
And straight am nothing. (V. v. 36-8)

The substance of a man resides in his name. Without his name, a man is in constant danger of being reduced to nonentity. This sense of nothingness is all the more stronger because of Richard's inability to assign himself any other mode of existence once he has ceased to be king. Kingship means everything to him and he cannot be anything else. For a man who regards the nominal (name) and the actual (self) as inseparable, the loss of name is more than losing his social identity. So lavishly has he poured himself into the name of king that the deprivation of its name costs him even his personal existence and meaning. Richard, indeed, has become nothing both inside and outside and we can hear no more defiant cries of invocation, 'Arm, arm, my name' but a helpless recognition of a deposed king who knows too well that his magic staff has long since been broken.

I have no name, no title;

.....

And know not now what name to call myself!

(IV. i. 255, 259)

Here we see a man in desperate need for some kind of role with which he can fill up his own emptiness and retain his sense of being. Life must go on even if he proves to be a failed actor and probably, Richard has never been so purely creative as when he is alone, walled up in prison, breeding roles and scenes of which he is a sole spectator. In comparing his prison 'unto the world,' he finds himself again an invincible king who enjoys the unlimited power over his vari-tempered subjects in his imagined kingdom. Now that he is shut up in the most final of all prisons, private life comes to be exalted as a sanctuary; he is absolutely safe and rash, external reality can hurt him no more. Being a prisoner, his confinement promises him a strange consolation. It keeps him from an unwanted contact with actual world over which he has no power to control. Unable to face situations which demand responsibility and will to action in the real world, he takes refuge in role-playing, for acting creates the semblance of action and as long as he is acting, he can get an illusion of doing something even if it is working to no purpose.

As he is allowed no public performances, in his mind he re-enacts parts he played through his life, journeying from a king eighty to a beggar and back again as his fretful mind directs him.

Thus play I in one person many people,
And none contented. Sometimes am I king,
Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar,

And so I am. Then crushing pemyry
 Persuades me I was better when a king;
 Then am I king'd again, and by and by
 Think that I am unking'd by Bolingbroke,
 And straight am nothing. But what'er I be,
 Nor I, nor any man that but manis,
 With nothing shall be pleas'd, till he be eas'd
 With being nothing.

(V. v. 31-41)

The notion that kings are not divine but poor players in a secular drama surfaces again in his words. Here Richard seems to be acknowledging that he is irrevocably condemned to seemings. Roleplaying can lead him nowhere. But then, what can he do else? Can an actor be saved at all? Yes. As Richard discerns, even if he is 'none contented' with any of his role, he can at least be 'eas'd' and satisfied with being nothing (by death.) Richard is saying that 'being nothing' is itself a kind of role which can paradoxically deliver poor actor's self from a hell of superficiality and ultimate deceit. Richard is ready to embrace his final role and he will.

While he is busy 'hammering out' his thoughts and populating his lonely cell with illusory characters, there suddenly comes a faint sound of music and leads him to a bitter recognition, 'I wasted time, and now doth time waste me.' The deposed king hears his true time breaking down and realizes that his failure to keep time in due proportion and harmony has thus reduced him to a human timepiece, 'Jack o'th'clock' numbering his adversary's time. Bolingbroke's clock is imposed on Richard and his days are numbered. During his reign, Richard simply believed that he was beyond time and no earthly hand could touch him because he was king and therefore, immortal. Now that his illusions are shattered irrecoverably, Richard finds himself furnished with a sort of lifeless, automatous part to play for the last time. Doomed to live on the stage of politics, actor-kings must know how to act promptly within their time in order to survive. This is why Bolingbroke, a consummate opportunist who always acts on cue succeeds where Richard fails. Richard has abused time, so no wonder that time wastes this wasteful king, transforming him from heavenly anointed king to a time's fool.

Kingship in Richard II is a role, making an actor of a king as well as a king of an actor. The same fate awaits histrionic Richard and politic Bolingbroke, for, as Dean observes, no ruler is 'allowed to exist outside of the theatre of the state.'⁶ A king is doubly bound by his role; politically, he must care

for his public image and satisfy the on-lookers and morally, in the-world-is-stage context, only death can free him from rôle-playing. He must 'look like a king' and yet he is king in reality, which means he must become not only a competent political leader but a royal performer. It is only through play-acting and in constant search for 'a true expressive fiction'⁷ that he can realize his own self and can make his existence meaningful to the state he reigns.

So far have I discussed Richard's acting and traced the rise and the fall of the two rivalling actor-kings in the play that depicts a life-and-death struggle for power. Like an artist, Richard reflects upon the material of circumstances, shapes it and with strong creative impulse, extracts pure art forms out of a formless reality. Bolingbroke needs no such artistic refinements; hard matter-of-factness well serves his end. When theatrical Richard obviously takes delight in satisfying his imaginative appetites, Bolingbroke, in Campbell's words, 'never clogs his impulse to action with play-acting or sentimentalizing.'⁸ Instead of contemplating his state, he leaps into action and works his forcible will upon realities. Bolingbroke could have become what lord he liked. The action of the play revolves round him and under the relentless mechanism of politics, the fatal impotence of the king is balanced by the purposeful advancement of his rival whose eyes are fixed on his object.

Life is to Richard a show, a warehouse of possible symbols and images, and to meet the aesthetic requirements of his situation is his primary necessity. Though he tragically mistakes outward show for reality, much of his attractiveness lies in the energy and skill he spends on his dramatic exercise. As an experienced actor and writer-director, he is never one to miss a chance of producing dramatic scenes by seizing upon what Clemen calls 'the inherent symbolism of a situation.'⁹ Richard neither acts nor decides, but he interprets. As Craig has precisely noted, his mind works 'not on fact but on his conception of the facts.'¹⁰ However, as the whole play shows us, there is a fatal flaw in Richard's what may be termed 'conceptual thinking.'¹¹ For he can never face reality as long as he sees himself and actual events in terms of the symbols. Symbols, after all, are not the thing itself. Unless propped up from within, bodiless symbols are inevitably defeated by the fact itself. And in a way, Shakespeare's imagination finds in Richard and Bolingbroke the ultimate expression of the shadow and substance of kingship.

Notes

All quotations from the play are from the New Arden Shakespeare. Ed. Peter Ure, (Methuen, 1969)

- 1) Wilbur Sanders, The dramatist and the Received Idea, (Cambridge University Press, 1968), p.177.
- 2) Sir Edmund Chambers, Shakespeare : A Survey, (Macmillan, 1916), p.90.
- 3) E.M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, (Chatto & Windus, 1974), p.252.
- 4) Ure, op. cit., p.xxxiii.
- 5) Wolfgang Clemen, The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery, (Methuen, 1977). p.55.
- 6) Leonard Dean, "Richard II : The State and the Image of the Theater," PMLA, March 1952, Vol. LXVII, No. 2, p.216.
- 7) Loc. cit. In the above mentioned essay, Dean deals with the limitations and possibilities of political playacting shown in Richard II and Henry V. He draws a clear line between a hypocritical disguise and a truly expressive fiction and argues that society will be sick unless it is guided by the latter which functions as an instrument of renewed civic vitality and order.
- 8) Oscar J. Campbell (ed.), The Living Shakespeare, (Macmillan Co., 1949), p.181.
- 9) Clemen, op. cit., p.57.
- 10) Hardin Craig (ed.), The Complete Works of Shakespeare, (Scott, Foresman, 1951), p.645.
- 11) Samuel Weingarten, "The Name of King in Richard II," College English, 1966, Vol. 22, p.537.