International Journal of Social Science and Human Research

ISSN (print): 2644-0679, ISSN (online): 2644-0695

Volume 07 Issue 10 October 2024

DOI: 10.47191/ijsshr/v7-i10-89, Impact factor- 7.876

Page No: 8010-8025

Application of Law Depicted as a Theatre in William Shakespeare's Play "Richard Ii"

Valentyna Serhiivna Rzhevska

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

ABSTRACT: The article investigates how the application of law as it is depicted in Shekespeare's "Richard II" includes the elements of a stage performance. These elements exist for both the participants and spectators on stage and this play's audience. The espisodes of the play analyzed in the article are that of the court of chivalry, where King Richard II functions as a judge, that of the start of judicial combat, after which the exile of competitors follows; that of the meeting between the Duke of York who was left as Governor of the land by Richard and Bolingbroke who has returned from exile, that of Bolingbroke's order to execute Richard's favourites, that of parliament functioning as court; that of the abdication of Richard; that of Henry IV granting pardon to a conspirator against him, that of Richard in prison and that of Henry rewarding his followers of refusing to reward. The conclusion is that the play, among other things, depicts the application of law functioning in times of a heavy political crisis, and that both principal characters of the play, Richard II and Henry Bolingbroke, later Henry IV, being offenders, use the application of law as a means to create their positive images.

KEYWORDS: Shakespearean histories, application of law, law in literature, judicial combat, deposition, pardon

I. INTRODUCTION

Because the political history of England provides themes for Shakespearean histories, several legal issues are depicted in these plays. These issues belong to the history of law, but Shakespearean plays where they appear are often considered to be always modern, attractive for all time, and are staged in connection with the events of present political life as a kind of illustrations and/or political tools. This gives the study of legal issues shown in these plays double significance: it is the research of the history of law and of the depiction of law in art and literature which may be used with reference to modernity.

Among these histories is "Richard II" ("Life and Death of Richard the Second", "The Tragedy of King Richard the Second") (1595) which tells the story of a successful coup d'etat, of deposition and death of a legitimate monarch, who abuses his power, especially by surrounding himself with unworthy favourites. Although Richard II looks worthy of punishment, his deposition and death trigger a sequence of future threats to royal power and political stability in England, because they pose the question of the legitimacy of power that is to come.

The plot of the play dealing with the exercise of royal power and the responsibility for the abuse of power, the play "Richard II" includes a depiction of several legal issues concerning the exercise of power by Richard II, his uncle Edmund Langley, Duke of York, acting as the ruler of the kingdom in his absence, and his cousin Henry, Duke of Hereford, called Bolingbroke, who later deposes Richard (1399) and becomes his successor, Henry IV. This gives a field to an interdisciplinary study of law and literature.

II. LITERATURE

A number of comments on the play "Richard II" deal with the influence that political and law theories had on it. For instance, Forker (2016, p. 17-19.) stated that among these theories was the one of the king's two bodies, that became deeply implicated in the Tudor definition of monarchy: according to it, as Forker notes, "the King's natural body incorporated his humanity and was thus subject to the frailties and mortality of the flesh,, but his body politic embodied the state and so set him apart from all others, being ubiquitous and immortal" (Forker, 216, p.17). Another theory was that "the King was but the head of more comprehensive body consisting also of the three estates – clergy, peers and commons. (…) The coronation oath implied that the King as distinct from a tyrant, derived his power from the consent of the governed and (…) could be removed from office if he failed to redress grievances or abused his powers" (Forker, 2016, p.19). Kantorowicz (1957) writing on the idea of the king's two bodies in "Richard II" comments it this way: "Admittedly, it would make little difference whether or not Shakespeare was familiar with the subtleties of legal speech. The poet's vision of the twin nature of a king is not dependent on constitutional support, since such

vision would arise very naturally from a purely human stratum. It therefore may appear futile even to pose the question whether Shakespeare applied any professional idiom of the jurists of his time, or try to determine the die of Shakespeare's coinage. It seems all very trivial and irrelevant, since the image of the twinned nature of a king, or even of man in general, was most genuinely Shakespeare's own and proper vision. Nevertheless, should the poet have chanced upon the legal definitions of kingship, as probably he could not have failed to do when conversing with his friends at the Inns, it will be easily imagined how apropos the simile of the King's Two Bodies would have seemed to him. It was anyhow the live essence of his art to reveal the numerous planes active in any human being, to play them off against each other, to confuse them, or to preserve their equilibrium, depending all upon the pattern of life he bore in mind and wished to create anew» (Kantorowicz, 1957, p. 74). Holdsworth (1923), p. 466.) noted, that the theory of the king's two bodies belonged to the XVI century, not to the Middle Ages when the action of the play "Richard II" took place, and that in the Middle Ages the attitude towards a king was defined by the character of feudal relations, the king being seen normally as just a human being (Holdsworth, 1923, p. 466.). Hadfield (2004) noted, that though the resurrection against a monarch was seen as impermissible for people in the XVI century, it was believed that the magistrates could dismiss the monarch from power with reasons, though not achieve any improvement by this (Hadfield, 2004, p. 50). Moseley (2008), noticing that "Richard II" marks an important step in the development of Shakespeare's thought about tragedy, explains this thought: "Where Richard II breaks new ground is in the way Shakespeare perceived, in the historical narrative he found in his sources, an ambiguity about the person and actions of Richard which allowed his fall both to be deserved and at the same time terrible and wasteful, an ambiguity which permitted him to develop the person of Richard so that he grows to be 'every inch a king' (like Lear) when he is one no longer. (…)Richard undergoes a process of progressive isolation—from his Court, his followers, his queen, even from his idea of himself as king—and his end, after reduction to the primal human being fighting for mere life, is an anonymous groan." (Moseley, 2008, p. 104-105)

III. THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The parts of Shakespeare's kings are written for strong actors (initially for a strong actor Richard Burbage) and they show, among the rest, how acting serves as a tool of politics. They also show how acting serves when a king or another character in a play is applying law.

So the purpose of this study is to characterize the episodes of William Shakespeare's play "Richard II", where the application of law is depicted, from the point of view of the use of the elements of stage performance there.

IV. THE METHODS

The main method applied in this study is the analysis of the text of Shakespeare's play "Richard II" and of several legal issues depicted there; other methods are the comparison between some events as they are shown in the play and as they took place historically, and the observation of the development of the episodes and themes of this .play in the next plays of the second tetralogy of Shakespeare's histories. The play is quoted according to the edition William Shakespeare: The Complete Works, Second Edition / edited by John Jowett, William Montgomery, Gary Taylor, and Stanley Wells. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. 1344 p. (Oxford Shakespeare); the stage directions are omitted.

In the Ukrainian Legal Encyclopedia, the application of legal rules is defined by Rabinovych (1998) as "organizational and legal activity, performed by competent organs of state, by public unions, which are authorized to do so, or by their officials, the result of which is establishing subnormative, formally binding individual rules of behaviour of personified subjects" (original in Ukrainian, the translation is mine). In the Dictionary of Ukrainian Language (1979, p. 55), one of the meanings of the word teatral'nist (theatricality) is "elements of a stage performance in something" (original in Ukrainian, the translation is mine). In this study, the respective terms are used in these meanings.

V. RESULTS

In "Richard II" the following episodes where application of law takes place can be found: the scene of the court of chivalry, where king Richard II functions as a judge in the dispute between Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford, and Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk; the scene of the start of a judicial combat, after which the exile of competitors follows; the scene where the Duke of York meets Henry Bolingbroke, who has returned from exile with no permission; the scene, where Henry Bolingbroke orders to execute Richard's favourites; the scene of parliament functioning as court; the abdication of Richard; the scene, where Henry Bolingbroke, now King Henry IV, grants pardon to a conspirator against him; the scene, where king Henry rewards his followers or refuses to reward. The scene, where deposed Richard is imprisoned in the vake of his death, dos not show the former king to apply law (here law is applied to him), but is linked to the sequence of previous scenes, because now Richard thinks of kingship as of the part that he played in life and is now deprived of.

A. The scene of the court of chivalry with King Richard II functioning as judge (Act 1, Scene 1)

The very first scene of the play is at the same time a scene of a court where the king is to hear a dispute between his two vassals and a scene where the main characters of the play are introduced to its spectator. (Although the court is not called the one of

chivalry directly in the play's text, Forker (2016, p. 179) explains in his comment, that it is the court of chivalry that the play starts with). King Richard himself is both a person performing the part of the judge and a spectator, watching the behaviour of the contesting parties, which are his cousin Henry, Duke of Hereford, called Bolingbroke after the place of his birth, and Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. Another person of importance present at the scene is John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, the king's uncle and Henry Bolingbroke's father.

The subject of the dispute is the accusation of treason that Bolingbroke throws at Norfolk, who denies it. This Bolingbroke's accusation consists of several, one of them being of a plot, as the result of which another king's uncle, Thomas Woodstock, the Duke of Gloucester, was murdered. Historically he, as well as Bolingbroke and Norfolk, belonged to a grope of the so-called Lords Appellant, who in 1388 had overthrown a grope of Richard's favourites. Later on, Gloucester was murdered when imprisoned in Calais (1397), where Norfolk was commandant then.

The two parties exchange challenges to combat even before the accusation is explained by Bolingbroke in detail before the king; Norfolk answers to each part of the accusation. John of Gaunt is the one who has brought his son before the king according to his "oath and bond" to proclaim the accusation (appeal) against Norfolk; and later on the king and he, according to the king's wish, try to persuade both parties to refuse their challenges to battle and reconcile. But both parties refuse. The declaration of his devotion to the idea of honour that Norfolk makes creates a conflict between the royal power, calling for peace, and the value of honour, giving the impulse to combat. It is honour that Norfolk gives priority to:

"Mine honour is my life. Both grow in one.
Take honour from me, and my life is done.
Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try.
In that I live, and for that will I die." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 342)).

So the king ends the scene by authorizing the judicial combat, "at Coventry upon Saint Lambert's day" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 342)).

Both parties to the dispute appear in this scene as eager to defend the truth with risk for their lives and as true subjects to their king: they both start the court scene addressing Richard with their best wishes. Richard, from his part, is shown here as unwilling to accept politely the lies addressed to him:

"We thank you both. Yet one but flatters us,
As well appeareth by the cause you come,
Namely, to appeal each other of high treason" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 341))..,

As impartial:

"Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears.
Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir,
As he is but my father's brother's son,
Now by my sceptre's awe I make a vow
Such neighbour-nearness to our sacred blood
Should nothing privilege him, nor partialize
The unstooping firmness of my upright soul" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 342))..,

as devoted to peace:

"Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me.
Let's purge this choler without letting blood.
This we prescribe, though no physician:
Deep malice makes too deep incision;
Forget, forgive, conclude, and be agreed;
Our doctors say this is no time to bleed" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 342))..,

and as insisting on his power:
"We were not born to sue, but to command" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 342)).

However, the appearances do not wholly correspond to the essence. When exchanging their speeches, Bolingbroke and Norfolk both make some omissions that should be noted by the spectators of the play: Bolingbroke mentions some "soon-believing adversaries" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 341).of the late Glocester, and Norfolk, when denying his part in the murder of Glocester, says

"I slew him not, but to my own disgrace
Neglected my sworn duty in that case"

(Shakespeare (2005, p. 342).

And in the next scene of the play, in the dialogue between Gaunt and Gloucester's widow, it is expressly declared for the play's audience that it is King Richard who is guilty of Gloucester's death. King Richard, who proclaimed his impartiality, was in fact the judge in his own case. John of Gaunt, refusing to revenge the death of his brother Gloucester, says:
"God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,
His deputy anointed in his sight,
Hath caused his death; the which if wrongfully,
Let heaven revenge, for I may never lift
An angry arm against his minister." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 343))

So it turns out that the previous court scene, though being an impressive show filled with the expression of passions of the parties to the dispute, was not in all the expression of truth. And the conflict between the king's justice and the demand of honour from the previous scene is now substituted by another one, between the king's justice and God's justice. The king in the first scene of the play is a judge and, as it was said, a spectator of the quarrel between Bolingbroke and Norfolk, who declares his impartiality, but in the second scene of the play it turns out that the first one also introduced the king as a player.

It is curious that the capture and murder of Thomas Woodstock, the Duke of Gloucester, is shown in an anonymous English Renaissance play "Thomas Woodstock" (1592-5), where Richard and his favourites steal Woodstock from his house being disguised as players. Though Richard regrets this later, he doesn't have time to save the uncle.

Historically Bolingbroke accused Norfolk of treason before the parliament gathered in Shrewsbury in January 1398. In Rafael Holinshed's Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland, the famous source of Shekespearean histories, the subject of accusation was certain words uttered by Norfolk in talk between him and Bolingbroke, as they rode together lately before between London and Brainford, sounding highly to the king's dishonor (Holinshed, 1807, p. 844). The case was to be heard six weeks later in the court of chivalry at Windsor, and this is the first scene of Shakespeare's play, the court scene (Forker, 2016, p. 179). According to Jones (2013, p. 572) and Mortimer (2008, p. 148), Norfolk's certain words concerned a plot including King Richard, meant to revoke the pardon given both to Bolingbroke and Norfolk for being among the Lords Appellant and to murder both Bolingbroke and his father John of Gaunt. So it is Shakespeare's play that makes the conflict between Bolingbroke and Norfolk connected primarily to the faith of Thomas of Woodstock, the Duke of Glocester. This allows to see Shakespeare's play "Richard II' as a sort of a sequel to the play "Thomas Woodstock", though in Shakespeare's play there are some details of the plot that preclude seeing it as continuing "Thomas Woodstock" directly.

Although in the court scene of the play king Richard showed himself as peace-loving, it is known that historically he liked duels and expressed interest in the activities of the High Court of Chivalry, or the court of Constable and Marshal, because Constable and Lord Marshal presided over it. (At the end of the first scene of the play, Richard orders:

"Lord Marshal, command our officers-at-arms
Be ready to direct these home alarms" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 342)).

Twice in Richard's reign, in 1384 and in 1389, laws defining the jurisdiction of the Court of Chivalry were adopted; in the sphere of criminal law the court could deal with matters of treason committed abroad (Bundle 6, Courts of Chivalry and Admiralty), but, as Neilson (1891) notes, "the court of chivalry, with the king as its head, and constable and marshal as his officers, (…) had become a tribunal not for transmarine treasons only, but for all treasons" (Neilson, 1891, p.190). It is Thomas Woodstock, the Duke of Gloucester, who was the author of the rules of combat for this court (Neilson, 1891, p.177).

B. The judicial combat and exile (Act 1 Scene 3)

The judicial combat of knights is another instance of law application in the play, which is surrounded by high expectations but becomes unexpectedly interrupted by the king. According to Mortimer (2008, p. 156), historically it took place on 16 September 1398, in the play St. Lambert's Day is named, which is 17 September. The place, as announced in the play, was Coventry. The procedure preceding a combat is shown in the play: according to the king's order, the lord marshal poses several questions to each competitor. Each of them has to give his full name with titles, to name the reason why he arrived here in arms, to name, against whom he came and what the object of the dispute is ("what why quarrel" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 343)). Each of them has to be honest ("Speak truly on thy knighthood and thy oath" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 343), "Speak like a true knight" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 343)), and to each of them Lord Marshal wishes the help of Heaven, demonstrating his equal attitude. As Forker (2016) notes,

these rules are not observed in the play correctly, because it is Norfolk, the respondent, who comes first, and Bolingbroke, the claimant, who comes next, and according to the rules, it should have been otherwise. To Forker's mind, "the reversal is subtly disturbing, perhaps intentionally suggesting suppressed disorder beneath the ceremonial facade. But it is also astute to reserve the entry of the more politically important character until last – the man who is to become the principal antagonist of the play" (Forker, 2016, p.126). In Holinshed (1807, p. 847) the order is correct, for Bolingbroke comes to the lists first, and Norfolk next. It may be worth attention, though, that the order in which the competitors appear at the lists in the play corresponds to the order in which they rode to the lists historically being watched by onlookers: "It was Mowbray whom the crowds saw first (...) An hour later Henry appeared (...) The crowd was ecstatic, and the popular support behind Henry immediately became apparent" (Mortimer, 2008, p. 156).

The next remark of Lord Marshal before the start of the combat is

"On pain of death, no person be so bold
Or daring-hardy as to touch the lists
Except the Marshal and such officers
Appointed to direct these fair designs" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 344)).

It is rules and the demand to observe them that make judicial combat different from just a fight and murder. It is rules that create the field of combat as "a stage on the stage"; the action there creates a show for some characters of the play as its spectators, though it is there that other characters act. It is rules that create the atmosphere of combat even before it starts in fact. This atmosphere develops gradually, and so the tension gradually rises. But after the combat does start, Richard suddenly breaks it by throwing down his warder.

This returns the play to the interaction between the idea of honour, the human court and the Divine justice. Richard had presided over the human court of honour and had given the authorization to the combat of honour, according to the play, rather unwillingly. The result of combat should depend on God's will. King Richard intervenes and stops the combat acting as a representative of God, so, in this combat will be no victor who had claimed the truth. (But as already noted, this particular dispute touches Richard's interests. Showing his impartiality, he is in fact involved in the case not as a judge only). Both competitors are exiled from the kingdom: Bolingbroke is exiled for ten years first, the term being changed to six years next, and Norfolk is exiled forever. An oath that the King demands both competitors to give:

"You never shall, so help you truth and God,
Embrace each other's love in banishment,
Nor never look upon each other's face,
Nor never write, regreet, nor reconcile
This low'ring tempest of your home-bred hate,
Nor never by advised purpose meet
To plot, contrive, or complot any ill
'Gainst us, our state, our subjects, or our land" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 345)), -

inclines the audience to think that the King is afraid of an alliance of the former rivals against him.

Condemning the competitors to exile, Richard acts not alone, but accompanied by the council, and this should prevent him from bearing sole responsibility for this decision. When John of Gaunt grieves that he'll probably die in his son's absence, even after the king has by his unilateral decision shortened Bolingbroke's exile, Richard replies:

"Thy son is banished upon good advice
Whereto thy tongue a party verdict gave.
Why at our justice seem'st thou then to lour?" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 345))

Richard preserves his part of a king acting as the protector of peace. But Norfolk, addressing Bolingbroke, rejects his offer "Confess thy treasons ere thou fly the realm", accepts possible natural death and being sent to hell after it as punishment for lies ("No, Bolingbroke, if ever I were traitor, My name be blotted from the book of life, And I from heaven banished as from hence" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 345)) and proclaims a warning, that sounds quite unexpectedly, but will come true afterwards:

"But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know,
And all too soon I fear the King shall rue". (Shakespeare (2005, p. 345))

Because Bolingbroke has acted as a proponent of justice, a noble warrior, until this time, this Norfolk's warning may remind the audience of the play that there might be no correspondence between the outward appearance and the essence. It is already so with King Richard, but unexpectedly it will be so with Bolingbroke.

C. The meeting of Duke of York and Henry Bolingbroke who has returned from exile (Act 2 Scene 3)

It is not reflected in the play that historically an arrangement existed as to the fate of the estates of John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, if he died when his son, Henry Bolingbroke, was in exile. On October 3 1388, when meeting King Richard in Windsor together with John of Gaunt, Henry of Bolingbroke received from the king a direct promise that when his father died, his representatives would be able to take possession of his inheritance on his behalf (Mortimer (2008), p.159). When John of Gaunt died on 3 Febtuary 1399, the behaviour of the king was quite opposite to the previous arrangement: instead of allowing an attorney, appointed by Henry, to take possession of Gaunt's estates, and hold them for Henry until he should return, the king confiscated them, and seized them himself, also revoking the powers which he had granted to the attorney (Abbott (2011), p.193). Besides, it was announced that Henry was now to be considered a traitor and banished from England for the rest of his life (Mortimer (2008), p.164).

In the play, Richard, who has decided to go for a war in Ireland, is announced, when being in the company of his favourites, that John of Gaunt is grievously ill. The king decides:

"The lining of his coffers shall make coats
To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars"
(Act 1, Scene 4) (Shakespeare (2005, p. 346)).

Richard visits John of Gaunt who dies of sickness after trying to address the king's conscience. After his death, Richard announces his decision to take his property with the view to finance the Irish campaign:

"Now for our Irish wars.
We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns,
Which live like venom where no venom else
But only they have privilege to live.
And for these great affairs do ask some charge,
Towards our assistance we do seize to us
The plate, coin, revenues, and movables
Whereof our uncle Gaunt did stand possessed"
(Act II Scene 1) (Shakespeare (2005, p. 348)).

Another Richard's uncle, Edmund Langley, the Duke of York, present at this scene, tries to persuade his nephew, the king, to refuse such an intention. His argument is a parallel between Richard's succession and Bolingbroke's succession;

"Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time
His charters and his customary rights:
Let not tomorrow then ensue today;
Be not thyself, for how art thou a king
But by fair sequence and succession?
Now afore God—God forbid I say true!—
If you do wrongfully seize Hereford's rights,
Call in the letters patents that he hath
By his attorneys general to sue
His livery, and deny his offered homage,
You pluck a thousand dangers on your head,
You lose a thousand well-disposed hearts,
And prick my tender patience to those thoughts
Which honour and allegiance cannot think"
(Act II Scene 1) (Shakespeare (2005, p. 348)).

That is the prediction of Richard's fate, his deposition that will occur partly as his responsibility for having deprived Bolingbroke of his inheritance: what Richard did to Bolingbroke will be done to Richard. But Richard is persistent in his desire to acquire the Lancastrian possessions that he now spreads not only to movables, but to lands:

"Think what you will, we seize into our hands
His plate, his goods, his money, and his lands." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 348))

After the disappointed York leaves, Richard decides to make the uncle ruler of the kingdom in his absence:

"Tomorrow next
We will for Ireland, and 'tis time, I trow.
And we create, in absence of ourself,
Our uncle York Lord Governor of England;
For he is just and always loved us well"
(Act II Scene 1) (Shakespeare (2005, p. 348)).

In this scene of the king's appropriation of the Lancastrian possessions, the elements of stage performance are present not so much in the application of law, as in York's address to his nephew the king, while York tries to influence Henry, quoting and protecting the law of inheritance, but with no result.

More presence of theatre in the application of law is in the scene of the meeting between the Duke of York, acting as the Lord Governor of England, and Bolingbroke who has returned to England on his will. The exchange between York and Bolingbroke includes the statement of offence by York and Bolingbroke's defence.

"BOLINGBROKE
My gracious uncle, let me know my fault.
On what condition stands it and wherein?

YORK
Even in condition of the worst degree:
In gross rebellion and detested treason.
Thou art a banished man, and here art come
Before the expiration of thy time
In braving arms against thy sovereign.

BOLINGBROKE
As I was banished, I was banished Hereford;
But as I come, I come for Lancaster.
And, noble uncle, I beseech your grace,
Look on my wrongs with an indifferent eye.
You are my father, for methinks in you
I see old Gaunt alive. O then, my father,
Will you permit that I shall stand condemned
A wandering vagabond, my rights and royalties
Plucked from my arms perforce and given away
To upstart unthrifts? Wherefore was I born?
If that my cousin King be King in England,
It must be granted I am Duke of Lancaster.
You have a son, Aumerle my noble kinsman.
Had you first died and he been thus trod down,
He should have found his uncle Gaunt a father
To rouse his wrongs and chase them to the bay.
I am denied to sue my livery here,
And yet my letters patents give me leave.
My father's goods are all distrained and sold,
And these and all are all amiss employed.
What would you have me do? I am a subject,
And I challenge law; attorneys are denied me;
And therefore personally I lay my claim
To my inheritance of free descent" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 352)).

So the audience of the play finds itself in the presence of a legal dispute being discussed. York states Bolingbroke's offence; Bolingbroke claims that he has come to seek the defence of his rights to his inheritance and that his offence is provoked and absorbed by that of the king who has denied Bolingbroke this right of his. An element of theatre in Bolingbroke's speech is in his address to York as to his deceased father, and in imagining John of Gaunt instead of York and Aumerle, York's son, as Bolingbroke. That is meant to move York and make him compassionate. The latter then addresses Bolingbroke's supporters:

"My lords of England, let me tell you this.
I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs,
And laboured all I could to do him right.
But in this kind to come, in braving arms,
Be his own carver, and cut out his way
To find out right with wrong—it may not be.
And you that do abet him in this kind
Cherish rebellion, and are rebels all." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 352))

So York admits the wrong done by the king to Bolingbroke, but still acknowledges the military rising against the king as an offence. Especially his line "to find out right with wrong—it may not be" is worthy of attention: York almost quotes a general principle of law "ex injuria non jus oritur" ("no right is created by wrong").

The answer given to York by Northumberland as an explanation is the statement of an oath given to support Bolingbroke in restoring his rights:

"The noble Duke hath sworn his coming is
But for his own, and for the right of that
We all have strongly sworn to give him aid;
And let him never see joy that breaks that oath." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 352))
And the oath as the ground for the alliance means that the alliance won't dissolve.

So York, who should have protected the power of Richard, succumbs, admitting the weakness of his power. Bolingbroke should have become an outlaw, that is, a person deprived of legal protection (Sokol B.J.&Mary, 2004, p. 248). York proclaims that he will be "neuter", but invites Bolingbroke to enter the castle and repose. When invited by Bolingbroke to join him in capturing Richard's favourites, York shows the desire to preserve the appearance of impartiality and obedience to the law, but in fact, he obeys the circumstances:

"It may be I will go with you—but yet I'll pause,
For I am loath to break our country's laws.
Nor friends nor foes, to me welcome you are.
Things past redress are now with me past care." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 352))

B.J. and Mary Sokol (2004) note, that York now acts as a receiver, that is, a person who provides outlaws with passive help such as food or shelter (Sokol B.J.&Mary, 2004, p. 246, 248).

In the scene of this meeting between York and Bolingbroke it is obvious that the outcome is defined by the advantage of force. The element of theatre in the application of the law is present in both parties' making references to the law for the sake of appearances as well as with the view to influence the opponent.

D. The execution of Richard's favorites on Bolingbroke's decision (Act 3 Scene 1)

The returned Bolingbroke orders the execution of two of Richard's favourites, Bushy and Green. He announces the list of reasons for this in a short monologue before the execution, the sum of these reasons being the bad influence of favourites upon the king. The monologue should sound as a death verdict and create the image of this Bolingbroke's doing as that of an execution, not of a murder:

"Bushy and Green, I will not vex your souls,
Since presently your souls must part your bodies,
With too much urging your pernicious lives,
For 'twere no charity. Yet to wash your blood
From off my hands, here in the view of men
I will unfold some causes of your deaths.
You have misled a prince, a royal king,
A happy gentleman in blood and lineaments,
By you unhappied and disfigured clean.
You have, in manner, with your sinful hours
Made a divorce betwixt his queen and him,

Broke the possession of a royal bed,
And stained the beauty of a fair queen's cheeks
With tears drawn from her eyes by your foul wrongs.
Myself—a prince by fortune of my birth,
Near to the King in blood, and near in love
Till you did make him misinterpret me—
Have stooped my neck under your injuries,
And sighed my English breath in foreign clouds,
Eating the bitter bread of banishment,
Whilst you have fed upon my signories,
Disparked my parks and felled my forest woods,
From my own windows torn my household coat,
Razed out my imprese, leaving me no sign,
Save men's opinions and my living blood,
To show the world I am a gentleman.
This and much more, much more than twice all this,
Condemns you to the death.—See them delivered over
To execution and the hand of death". (Shakespeare (2005, p. 353))

In fact, Bolingbroke's act here is the one of illegitimate violence, not the one of justice, for he is not yet authorized to judge and condemn to death. But the audience of this act on stage is mostly mindless of the illegitimacy of this execution, for Bolingbroke performs what they desire; York, present at the scene, is probably the one for whom this show of death verdict is created, trying to persuade him that Bolingbroke does not break the law, punishing those who are guilty. The last words of both condemned favorites prove that they do not accept this sentence as legitimate and see Bolingbroke as a usurper:

"BUSHY
More welcome is the stroke of death to me
Than Bolingbroke to England.

GREEN
My comfort is that heaven will take our souls,
And plague injustice with the pains of hell". (Shakespeare (2005, p. 353))

But later on, in the scene with the gardener (act III scene 4), it is shown that in the gardener's opinion, Bolingbroke has done what Richard himself should have done to his ill favourites, and cruelty to them could have saved Richard's power:

"We at time of year
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit trees,
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,
With too much riches it confound itself.
Had he done so to great and growing men,
They might have lived to bear, and he to taste,
Their fruits of duty. Superfluous branches
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live.
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down"

(Act III Scene 4) (Shakespeare (2005, p. 358)).

So Bolingbroke, not being king yet, plays the king in this scene of execution.
Bolingbroke's claim that favourites "made a divorce" between Richard and his queen may mean Richard's homosexuality, but the audience of the play has seen the queen accompanying Richard when he was in England and grieving his absence when he is in Ireland. In the scene where the queen is grieving (Act II, scene 2), Richard's favourites are shown beside her and not insulting her, but trying to console her, so the audience of the play, when hearing Bolingbroke's accusations, might wonder whether he is wholly sincere, and it may be the direction of a particular performance that would each time give a hint of the answer. Historically

it is known that Richard loved his first wife, Anne of Bohemia (1366 –1394), and queen Isabella of France (1389 –1409), who appears in this play as Richard's loving wife, was but a small girl at the time of Richard's deposition. Immediately after Bushy and Green are dispatched, Bolingbroke tells York to express attention to the queen on his behalf:

"Uncle, you say the Queen is at your house.
For God's sake, fairly let her be intreated.
Tell her I send to her my kind commends.
Take special care my greetings be delivered" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 353)).

This might mean, in continuation of the verdict announced, that Bolingbroke expresses himself as not only restoring his rights, but as protecting the queen, who also was a victim of her husband's policies and his favourites' abuses. In the next scenes, however, the queen shows herself all true to Richard and indignant at his deposition.

The theme of unworthy favourites is continued in the following plays of the second tetralogy of Shakesperean histories, telling the story and the legend of Bolingbroke's son, Henry V. Prince Henry (Prince Hal), relying on Richard's experience, will deliberately surround himself with unworthy favourites to dismiss them at his enthronement, and in the plays that dismissal will serve his popularity as king. But because the main favourite, Sir John Falstaff, is extremely popular with the audience of the plays, his fate may serve to diminish, at least in part, King Henry V's popularity with it, though the reasons for such a dismissal may be quite understood.

E. The parliament functioning as court (Act 4 Scene 1)

After Bolingbroke has got power, but before he is crowned king, the theme of responsibility for Thomas Woodstock, Duke of Glocester's, death, is back to the play. It is in the so-called "parliament scene" (Act 4, Scene 1), where the English parliament is shown functioning as court. This scene looks like a rhyme to the very first scene of the play, because Bolingbroke is now in Richard's place, though not officially yet, and he is presiding over the hearing of the same case. His former opponent Norfolk is now in exile, and later his death is announced. The new accused is the Duke of Aumerle, son to the Duke of York, who had been close to Richard, and the accusation is pronounced by Bagot, another surviving Richard's favourite.

It is now for Henry Bolingbroke to play the part of the impartial judge wishing to preserve peace in the case concerning his own interests as Richard did earlier in the very first scene of the play. He is not proclaimed king but presides over the proceedings. Aumerle is his and Richard'd cousin, so his position is repeating that of Richard, who was to solve the dispute between him, his cousin, and Norfolk. Aumerle answers Bagot with a challenge, though admits, that this will be against the rules of a duel because Bagot is not his equal:

"Princes and noble lords,
What answer shall I make to this base man?
Shall I so much dishonour my fair stars
On equal terms to give him chastisement?
Either I must, or have mine honour soiled
With the attainder of his slanderous lips" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 358)).

Bolingbroke forbids Bagot to take up Aumerle's gage, like previously Richard has ordered Norfolk to throw down the gage of Bolingbroke. But Aumerle receives as the answer several challenges from other lords, who accuse him of lying. Bolingbroke tries to postpone the trial by combat until Norfolk returns from exile. Again, not being king yet, he uses the royal prerogative and pardons his former opponent. This lets him express both the desire for truth discovered and for mercy given (two concepts often opposed are reconciled here:

"These differences shall all rest under gage
Till Norfolk be repealed. Repealed he shall be,
And, though mine enemy, restored again
To all his lands and signories. When he is returned,
Against Aumerle we will enforce his trial" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 359)).

But in return, the death of Norfolk is announced, and what remains to Bolingbroke is to express respect for Norfolk's soul (showing that he is not revengeful):
"Sweet peace conduct his sweet soul to the bosom
Of good old Abraham! "(Shakespeare (2005, p. 359))

and to postpone the judicial combats until the dates that he chooses:

"Lords appellants,
Your differences shall all rest under gage
Till we assign you to your days of trial" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 359)).

(The use of the term "lords appellants" brings to the play the reminder of the group of lords which included Thomas of Woodstock, the Duke of Gloucester, Bolingbroke and Norfolk and which was in conflict with Richard. This group is not mentioned directly in the play, but to the audience that is aware of its existence it might be a reminder of this conflict and a prediction of the future Bolingbroke's clash as the new king with his nobility).

The parliament scene shows how Henry Bolingbroke, the future Henry IV, creates the image of himself as a just and merciful king, who enhances his power and stands for domestic peace in the realm, but a number of challenges proclaimed in his presence definitely sounds messy and may be seen as a threat of the events, depicted in the next two plays of the tetralogy, "King Henry IV" part 1 and part 2, that is, the new king coming to the conflict with his former supporters, and the efforts of the new king to oppose this threat of disorder (Rzhevska, 2021, p.123).

F. The abdication of King Richard II (Act 4 Scene 1)

The most impressive and pathetic scene of the play, King Richard's abdication in parliament, depicts the events with noticeable differences from history, made for dramatic purposes. Historically, Richard, imprisoned in Tower, was made to resign first, on 29 September 1399 in the presence of Bolingbroke (Forker, 2016, p.372, Mortimer, 2008, p. 186), by this the summons of parliament which took place in Richard's name being made null and void. He did not resign on his free will and tried to put forward some conditions of his own which were not accepted (Mortimer, 2008, p. 187). Then the parliament, not being called so officially, but acting as an assembly of representatives of the estates, ratified Richard's deposition, doing this in its own name, on 30 September 1399 (Forker, 2016, p.372, Mortimer, 2008, p.186), being notified by the witnesses of the act. Richard's resignation, which he did not compose, but was forced to sign, was read out with the mention that Richard would like Henry Bolingbroke to be his heir, and the representatives of estates approved it. Then the list of 33 Richard's wrongdoings was read out, and then the throne of England was declared vacant. Then Henry Bolingbroke claimed it as a descendant from Henry III. His claim being approved on, the first parliament of Henry IV sat on 6 October and he was crowned on 13 October (Mortimer, 2008, p. 188-192). It was after that, not before, like in the play, that Aumerle was accused. Also after, and not before Henry's coronation, like in the play, on 22 October 1399, the Bishop of Carlisle spoke against the proposition of the commons to judge Richard (Forker, 2016, p.372). The bishop later took part in the conspiracy against Henry IV mentioned in the play, but was pardoned. Both documents, Richard's resignation, composed in his name, and the list of 33 wrongdoings, the murder of Gloucester and the exile of Bolingbroke among them, are included in Holinshed's "Chronicles".

In the play the voluntary resignation of Richard who adopts Henry Bolingbroke as his heir is announced by York, who is now accompanying Henry. This announcement does not mention Bolingbroke's descendency from Henry III, but is based on Richards's decision and includes wordplay with naming the opposite directions in the same phrase: ascending the throne and formally descending from the previous king. Descending becomes the reason for ascending. In the previous episode concerning the accusation of Aumerle, the king's throne remained unoccupied, and Bolingbroke, though already acting as a king who performed the functions of a judge, didn't sit there and remained standing. Now his uncle York, who was trusted by Richard and left him, declares:

"Great Duke of Lancaster, I come to thee
From plume-plucked Richard, who with willing soul
Adopts thee heir, and his high sceptre yields
To the possession of thy royal hand.
Ascend his throne, descending now from him,
And long live Henry, of that name the fourth!" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 359))

The bishop of Carlisle speaks against Bolingbroke's accession. His arguments are:

1) subjects have no authority to judge Richard:

"What subject can give sentence on his king?
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject?
Thieves are not judged but they are by to hear,
Although apparent guilt be seen in them;
And shall the figure of God's majesty,
His captain, steward, deputy elect,

Anointed, crowned, planted many years,
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,
And he himself not present? "(Shakespeare (2005, p. 359)) -

and 2) his deposition will lead to a sequence of troubles for the realm:

"My lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king;
And, if you crown him, let me prophesy
The blood of English shall manure the ground,
And future ages groan for this foul act." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 359))

Bolingbroke's supporter, the Earl of Nortumberland, immediately accuses the bishop of treason. It is worth attention how parts here are distributed: Northumberland, functioning as the one who believes himself to be the foundation of the new power, governs Richard's deposition, not refraining from cruelty, and Bolingbroke preserves the form of legality, halting Nortumberland's actions when the latter is too zealous (Rzhevska, 2021, p. 133). The bishop of Carlisle's predictions will come true, for in the next plays of the cycle Northumberland will rebel against Henry IV.

Afterwards, Richard is called to the Parliament on Bolingbroke's initiative to resign publicly, giving recognition to the fact that has already happened, that is, Bolingbroke's enthronement. Here again, wordplay is included, now in a dialogue:

"NORTHUMBERLAND
May it please you, lords, to grant the Commons' suit?

BOLINGBROKE
Fetch hither Richard, that in common view
He may surrender. So we shall proceed
Without suspicion" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 360)).

If in York's invitation, the wordplay probably stresses the solemnity of the moment, here it probably emphasizes the importance of the procedure for the doubts in the legitimacy of Henry's power to be excluded.

From the point of view of application of law what happens to Richard in the abdication scene is the usurpation of his power receiving the form of his legal responsibility for his previous deeds. From the point of view of a theatre within the play, it is the last possibility for the king to show what kind of player he is. His speech is filled with tragic mockery of himself and his situation. He is the player who is now to reject the part which was the sense of his life, which defined his personality: for Richard was crowned king as a child. Richard's speech of resignation is made out of the instrument whereby he resigned the crown to the Duke of Lancaster, included in Holinshed's Chronicles (Holinshed, 1807, p. 862–863). As a document, it is also a monologue, though in prose, giving in the official style the list of possessions and privileges that Richard is now deprived of, and the historical Richard disagreement to accept it denied that this monologue was his. But when pronounced by Richard in the play as his speech in parliament, it becomes a proclamation of gradual and steady self-destruction, because the list of what is being renounced is joined here with the image of suffering:

"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" (Shakespeare (2005, p. 360)).

As to the list of 33 Richard's wrongdoings (Holinshed, 1807, p. 859–861). it is not given in the play. Northumberland wants Richard to read it after the resignation, but Richard refuses, saying "Mine eyes are full of tears; I cannot see".

One of the purposes of Richard's performance in parliament is to raise shame in those who used to serve him but now have betrayed him. The image of Christ is invoked by him at the very start of the scene:

"Did they not sometime cry 'All haill' to me?
So Judas did to Christ. But He in twelve
Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 360))

At the start of the play, when he was king functioning as a judge, Richard could be called "a player" in the sense that he could be accused of hypocrisy. Now in parliament, in the abdication scene, he uses the means of a player, that is, his speech and gesture, to express his true feelings, to adjust himself to his new position and to afflict the conscience of his spectators on stage, who should feel guilty before him.

G. The royal pardon to a conspirator (Act 5 Scene 3)

The former Bolingbroke, now King Henry IV, proclaimed king, though not crowned yet, has and uses a chance to show mercy when he grants royal pardon to Aumerle (now made the earl of Rutland), who took part in a conspiracy against him. The scene is strikingly cruel, because it is none but Aumerle's father, Duke of York, who has discovered the conspiracy, denounced his son before the new king and now demands punishment for him. It is the father who wants the king to be merciless towards his son, but Aumerle's mother, the Dutchess of York, at the same time prays the new king for mercy to her son who does repent his offence. Historically at this time, Aumerle had a stepmother.

The application of law as a theatre in this scene of "Richard II" is found in the necessity for the new king Henry IV to express his power according to the law in choosing between cruelty, though legal and well-grounded, and mercy. His choice is to influence the attitude of other participants of this scene, York, the Duchess of York and Aumerle, and of his other subjects who will know his decision, towards him in the future.

King Henry chooses mercy first, not knowing what Aumerle's offence is, but distinguishing between the intense and committed wrongdoing, and shows that his choice is made out of political reason. The new king wishes to enhance his new power by showing mercy:

"Intended or committed was this fault?
If on the first, how heinous e'er it be,
To win thy after-love I pardon thee". (Shakespeare (2005, p.364))

When York denounces his son before the king, Henry still wishes to fulfil his previous promise of mercy, motivating this by York's merits which should serve as an excuse for Aumerle's offence:

"Thy overflow of good converts to bad,
And thy abundant goodness shall excuse
This deadly blot in thy digressing son". (Shakespeare (2005, p.364))

But the final pardon is given to Aumerle by the new king only in response to the begging of the Duchess of York. The chief motive that Henry expresses here is religion. It is neither political advantage nor personal merits but religious values that he chooses to rely on:

"I pardon him as God shall pardon me". (Shakespeare (2005, p. 365))

And the audience of the play understands that Henry really feels that he'll need God's mercy. Though his actions on taking power have the appearance of legality, he has offended against the royal person who is believed to be protected by God, and Richard's sufferings expressed in the deposition scene should have had their impact upon him. Besides, Henry might mean the desire for other human sins, not mentioned in the play, to be pardoned.

Henry chooses a compromise approach: he pardons Aumerle but will percue his accomplices. At the very end of the play, the Bishop of Carlisle receives a moderate punishment from the king: he is to go to retirement, and Henry shows his ability to value the personal merits of his opponents:

"For though mine enemy thou hast ever been,
High sparks of honour in thee have I seen"
(Act V, scene 6). (Shakespeare (2005, p. 367))

The audience of the play also can observe how the character of York has expressed itself. He was praised by both Richard (act 5, scene 1) and Henry (act 5, scene 3), he has condemned both Richard (act 2, scene 1) and Henry (act 2, scene 3; act 3, scene 3)

for breaking laws. Nevertheless, though trusted by Richard, he joins Henry; though pitying Richard in conversation with the Duchess (act 5, scene 2), he immediately expresses allegiance to Henry:

"To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,
Whose state and honour I for aye allow". (Shakespeare (2005, p. 363))

He even eagerly denounces his son for treason before the new king and rejects Henry's initiative to pardon the son for father's merits. The audience of the play may make conclusions about the atmosphere of insecurity surrounding the new king after the power was changed against the order. York, when denouncing his son Aumerle as a traitor and protecting King Henry as he hasn't protected King Richard, shows his awareness of dangers existing for the new king and those who surround him, if the king chooses to protect himself with terror, but Henry, choosing mercy, shows that he would like to appear as strong.
The episode with first the son coming to the king seeking pardon, and then the father York coming to the king with the indenture of the conspirators taken from his son appears in Holinshed (1808, p.11), but here it only serves to the conspiracy being discovered. York doesn't insist on his son being punished and the Duchess of York does not appear. So it is Shakespeare's play that depicts the most dramatic conflict of cruelty and mercy between which the new king has to choose.

H. The dethroned Richard in prison (Act 5 Scene 5)

Richard, imprisoned in the Pomfret castle, does not apply the law, but the law is applied to him: he is punished for his 33 wrongdoings, acknowledged by the estates of the realm. But the second part of his big monologue, his reflections in prison, sounds like the logical outcome of the theme of a king as an actor, which was started in the very first scene of the play. A king is just one of many parts that a man might take. Richard is now deprived of this part, he's found himself but a man. He is now changing parts in his imagination:

"Thus play I in one person many people,
And none contented. Sometimes am I king;
Then treason makes me wish myself a beggar,
And so I am. Then crushing penury
Persuades me I was better when a king.
Then am I kinged again, and by and by
Think that I am unkinged by Bolingbroke,
And straight am nothing. But whate'er I be,
Nor I, nor any man that but man is,
With nothing shall be pleased till he be eased
With being nothing". (Shakespeare (2005, p. 365))

In the third part of the monologue, when listening to music, Richard overviews the mistakes that he's made when playing the part of king:

"And here have I the daintiness of ear
To check time broke in a disordered string;
But for the concord of my state and time
Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.
I wasted time, and now doth time waste me,
For now hath time made me his numb'ring clock." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 366))

According to the chronicle and the play, Richard was killed by Sir Piers Exton, but Mortimer (2008, p.212) observes that there was no such a knight. In some performances of the play, like, for example, in "The Hollow Crown" TV series (BBC, 2012), Richard is murdered by Aumerle, his former follower.

I. King Henry rewarding his followers or refusing to reward (Act 5 Scene 6)

In the very last scene of the play, the new king Henry IV is shown to quickly express his favour or deny it to those who have served him or disobeyed him. He promises rewards to Northumberland and his son Harry Percy for suppression of the uprising, but later on, in the next plays of the tetralogy, he will come to conflict with them. He punishes the bishop of Carlisle only lightly. He denies reward to Piers Exton for the murder of Richard, though Exton reminds him that he has fulfilled Henry's expressed desire, and punishes Exton by forbidding him to come into his presence.

"Though I did wish him dead,
I hate the murderer, love him murdered.
The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour,
But neither my good word nor princely favour.
With Cain go wander through the shades of night,
And never show thy head by day nor light." (Shakespeare (2005, p. 367))

The scene again shows Henry IV trying to create the image of a just king, refraining from cruelty, but caught by the circumstances of his coming to power, which he now needs to preserve. He cannot always be as good as he probably wishes to be, but he shows the ability to refuse the ill that was done for his benefit. If Richard enters the play guilty in the murder of Gloucester, not admitting this, Henry leaves the play guilty in the murder of Richard which he lays wholly on Exton's shoulders and publicly morns. Historically, it is acknowledged that Richard was killed on Henry's instructions because of political necessity (Mortimer, 2008, p.217-218).

CONCLUSIONS

When it is a public procedure, the application of law includes the element of a theatre because its spectators receive some impression. When shown in a play, it also helps create with the audience the impression of the play's characters as its participants. These characters may be just or not, and if not, the audience is likely to learn for what reasons. If the play is about a political episode, this performance shows what part the application of law plays in politics in the opinion of the play's author, how this part depends on the people applying the law, how these people express themselves in applying the law and probably how they are formed by the necessity to do this.

Shakespeare's "Richard II" is a play about a political crisis, and many functions of law are depicted there: it is a means of solving a dispute, of enhancing royal power, of protecting the order of a state, and of bringing a person to responsibility. The play shows how the performance of these functions vividly stumbles for several political reasons, and so the heavy political crisis is reflected in the many episodes of law application. The main paradox is that though King Richard obviously deserves to be called to responsibility, his deposition launches a chain of threats that his nemesis and successor, King Henry, will have to deal with. From the point of view of political and law history, it is a story of how law is a part of change of supreme power when it happens not in the normal way, prescribed by law, though it is understood why. From a broader, all-human point of view, it is a story of how a villain becomes a victim and why he deserves compassion.

Both protagonists of the play, Richard II and Henry Bolingbroke, later Henry IV, apply law or law is applied to them. They both show that "king" is twice a part for a person to be watched by others: in the state and on stage. They both use the application of law as a means to create their positive images, being at the same time offenders (because Richard is involved in Gloucester's murder and illegitimately seizes the Lancastrian estates, and Henry, though coming to defend his rights, launches the illegitimate change of power). They both wish to play the parts of heroes, not villains, and want the application of law to serve this purpose, but in both cases, it is not this interpretation of their parts which dominates. Richard is easily caught in hypocrisy when playing the one who acts in good faith, and Henry, though desiring to reconcile justice and mercy for the sake of his newly achieved power, finds that cruelty is the means that he will resort to, though condemning it publicly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study may be used in the history of law courses as an illustration of how the hard examples of transition of power find their reflection in world literature and in the courses of law and literature with the same purpose.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This article is dedicated to the memory of A.N. Gorbunov, the researcher of American and English literatures, who did me good, not knowing me, and so I'm grateful.

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