CHAPTER IV

SHAKESPEARE AND THE STATE - II

ABSTRACT:

The medieval world order had been typified in that construct called the Great Chain of Being, where the degree of hierarchy had been asserted with positive conviction. The same system was applied for the description of the social system in the 16th century with even greater zeal, only that in the Elizabethan period a vision of chaos permeated the description of this stereotype. At the same time the place of Providence, as in Shakespeare's version raises questions as to the nature of its participation in the world of nature and man. The orientation is towards a secular and social existence where man's bestial nature also operates.

The construction of this system served as a bulwark to the society as it existed and the vision of chaos was a reflection and an instrumentation of epochal changes. However the spectre of rebellion was never far away and direct appeal was made by the state and to spokesmen to refrain from rebellion. In the theatre this was also instrumented. Shakespeare's
depiction of rebellion defined the double-edged threat of subversion, from the factious nooility and the distressed peasantry.

Chivalry is seen... as a decadent form whose preponderance has not outlived itself and yet new strategies of warfare and allegiance to the central ruler has become more important. The chivalric code still survived especially in the forging of international relations.

Expending upon the cultural categories of absolutism (tyranny), educational literacy, and a centralised bureaucratic spirit, the Jack Cade encounter highlights their urgency and renders their detractors as outrageous.

In the light of 16th century warfare which is no longer made for feudal rights but for imperial claims, buccaneering in the high seas, and for the spoils of the New World, the spirit of physical hardihood is urged, especially from the peasantry. Jack Cade testifies to this.

The establishment of a secular state, of royal supremacy, and of 'true religion' by the royal government, necessitated bringing enormous changes institutionally and in the form of consciousness. This was arrived by the Protestant conservative
establishment and the indoctrination of its religious creed, but it was questioned by various sectarian challenges to its position. The new religious mission of the princely state was debated in the play 'King Henry V'. The questions veered around the direct intervention of God in the affairs of state and of men (in the Calvinist sense), of the individual's practice of craft and policy, of evangelical mysteries, and the inevitable question of salvation vis-a-vis the Prince. A conservative role by the state is seen to be exigent.

Hierarchy: Order: Anarchy

The legacy of the middle ages to the 16th century, in its theory of the social structure, was in that central concept known as Degree or hierarchy. Buttressing a stratified society, this conception was regularly invoked to legitimise gradation in the social formation and the relative dominion of the ascending orders. The vision of this world view states that stretching from the cosmological spheres with God at the apex, down to earth and the meanest creature, the whole gamut of creation is seen to be embraced by what is termed The Great Chain of Being. Bound into this graduated system, man occupies a very distinct place as the intermediary of the celestial
universe and the mundane world, finding access unto the world of intelligences by virtue of his soul. Both by an inference of analogy, and perceived as organically constituted, the gradations of society and the political system are legitimised primarily in reference to hierarchy.

This concept of hierarchy both in its medieval version and the 16th century one, sometimes termed as Degree, contained variations of interpretation that are of paramount significance both to the world of ideas as well as to the actual constitution of society. To glance even further, we note, that in speculative philosophy, especially in the Greek pagan estimations of Plato and Aristotle, a discrepancy is perceived between the world of ideas which is seen as constant, and the sensible world seen to be in flux and changing. A variety of explanations had been provided. For Plato there was an ultimate reality of pure unchanging forms or Ideas related to the sensible world, and it was the object of knowledge to penetrate to the universal principles which lay beyond the particular objects. Here Plato

1 See A.O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being, Cam. Mass. 1961, Ch. II & III.

presupposes the existence of the soul that could make intelligible the Ideal by transcending its material setting.\(^3\) (G. Leff *Medieval Thought*, London 1959 p. 13)

In the empirical formulations of Aristotle, everything had an end or purpose, and strove to reach the eternal Being, who was the prime mover. This was however not the Christian God who was the Creator of the world. It was the Neo-Platonists who gave to Plato's conception of forms a cohesive structure, allowing a hierarchy of beings or intelligences from the One, to the lowest spiritual being, the human soul. Platonic and Aristotelian cosmology, rendered more systematic by Neo-Platonism was assimilated into Christian thought which fundamental views can be located in the Christian world view:

(i) the hierarchy of spiritual beings with God at the summit
(ii) the return of the soul to the One through contemplation
(iii) the spiritual nature of reality accessible to the human soul and (iv) the goodness and fullness of Being.\(^4\)

Clerical dominance in the middle ages assigns a supremacy to the church which appropriates for itself the role of sole

\(^4\) ibid., p. 15.
guide and mediator for the soul of man in its passage to the celestial sphere and to God. Thus the Augustinian theory was dominated by a belief in the primacy of faith as the supreme guide in all existence. It was the Christian church as an organised institution that made salvation possible, itself representing the City of God. The philosophical basis of this scheme was the essentially Platonic notion of all reality as contained in the forms and essences or Ideas which originated in God. These reveal themselves in the Word of God and found their way into the sensible world. In this scheme of the universe, the Church hierarchy logically occupies a primal position in the social hierarchy, in their relation to the Infinite. The Gelasian tradition of the two swords of Christ, formally distinguishing between the spiritual and the temporal order contained in the united 'church of God', was beginning to take connotations as two distinct societies, and in the 11th century a raging investiture controversy sought, not only to demarcate, but also to establish superiority of each over the other. Thus arguing for the case of Papal sovereignty or 'plenitudo potestatis', Egidius of Colonna states:

"As in the universe itself corporeal substance is ruled by spiritual for the heavens themselves, which are the highest
among corporeal beings and have control over all bodies, are ruled by spiritual substances as moving intelligences — so among Christians all temporal laws and all earthly power ought to be governed and ruled by spiritual and ecclesiastical authority, and especially by the pope, who holds the summit and the highest rank among spiritual powers and in the church. 5

Whatever synthesis Aquines sought to activate in defining reason as the chief interlocutor between the world of senses and the spirit (thereby rendering to the ordinary men a confidence in his abilities, was shortlived. The expression of a limitation of the sphere of clerical dominance can be heard in the 14th century, as 'plenitude potestatis' is denied to the pope and the church (Marsilius Padua, William of Occam). This was an attempt to reduce religion to a private faith, that later day Protestantism was to endorse. 6 Reason and Revelation could not abide in unison, and scholasticism is seen to flounder.

Arnold Hauser analyses how a new bourgeois spirit in the Gothic age tends to impose itself in art and makes a distinctive transfer of interests from the solely eschatological


mysteries to the sensible world. This naturalism is however justified only with theology. Thus the idea of participation of God in all creation, ranked in a hierarchy, gives to the sensible world a new thrust, rather than a total absorption in transcendent metaphysics. However the marked force of Nominalism rendered such a composite picture untenable as a frontal attack upon the Church was made. In art the decorative unity was replaced by a number of partial compositions. This actually partakes of a more liberal idea and in the period of our concern its emphasis becomes sharper.  

The notion of hierarchy systematised not only the religious order and provided the philosophical rationale of this order in the social hierarchy, but also included the whole social system. Aristocratic dominance, and the whole edifice of the feudal hierarchy was rationalised by the application of the hierarchical system. The analogical reference was made with uncomplicated ease in what Tauney calls the 'functional' view of class organisation. The metaphor expanded upon the organic parts of the body acting in unison and harmony  

with the head occupying a central regulating position. This was comparable to the body politic. This organisist view also included the solar system, that is the comparison of the microcosm and the macrocosm.8

The early reference of Aristotle to the social order adopted a functional viewpoint in describing society as consisting of a variety of callings, and the mutual exchange of services as the natural contribution of each of these orders. Thomas Aquinas develops essentially the Aristotelian view. In his 'Summa Theologica' Thomas describes society as a system of ends and purposes in which the lower serves the higher and higher directs and guides the lower. To Thomas of course society was the enacting of God's providence upon this world. The whole edifice of society is described by Wycliffe (14th century) in terms of this theory, the express purpose of which was to induce social solidarity.

The Church is divided in these three parts, preachers, and defenders, and ... labourers ... As she is our mother,

8 Tillyard, op. cit., p. 96-106.
so she is a body, and the health of this body stands in this, that one part of her answer to another, after the same measure that Jesus Christ had ordained it. Kindly man's hand helps his head, and his eye helps his foot, and his foot his body. As divers parts of man served unkindly to man if one took the service of another and left his own proper work, so divers parts of the Church have proper works to serve God, and if one part need his work that God has limited him and take work of another part, sinful wonder is in the Church. Surely the Church shall never behold before proportions of her parts be brought again by this heavenly leech and (by) medicine of men.  

Protesting against papal dominance, the Council of the 15th century invokes a similar comparison. The notion of Respublica or Commonwealth was not yet lost, and the whole body of people were conceived to be the source of authority, while the parts or organs of society were subject thereunto. It was therefore necessary for the organs to act in harmony or "concordantia", in keeping with the organic law of the whole body.  

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body. Such a view was applied to church as well as to the secular state and in England Fortesque had declared that kings ruled in consultation with the three estates, the form of which he called "politicum et regale". To this jurist of the 15th century exposition on the law of nature reverts to the other concept of hierarchy namely the Great Chain of Being:

"In this order hot things are in harmony with cold, dry with moist, heavy with light, great with little, high with low. In this order angel is set over angel, rank upon rank in the kingdom of heaven; man is set over man, beast over beast, bird over bird, and fish over fish, on the earth in the air and in the sea; so that there is no worm that crawls upon the ground, no bird that flies so high, no fish that swims in the depths which the chain of this order does not bind in most harmonious concord. Hell alone, inhabited by none but sinners, asserts its claim to escape the embraces of this order... God created as many different kinds of things as he did preachers, so that there is no creature which does not differ in some respect from all other creatures and by which it is in some respect superior or inferior to all the rest. So that from the highest angel down to the lowest of his kind there is absolutely not found an angel that has not a superior and inferior; nor from man down to the meanest worm is there any creature which is not in some respect superior to one creature and inferior to another. So that there is nothing which
As with other political concepts the notion of degree in the 16th century undergoes certain critical shifts in meaning and alteration of emphasis. The most conspicuous interruption with medieval scholasticism is realized by the enlarging body of religious tenets constitutive of the Protestant faith. The first basic component that finds itself dislocated from the stereotype of the Great Chain is the constituent of Providence. To medieval scholasticism the link in the Chain from God at the summit to man in this world down to the meanest creature was accurately defined. As we saw the Thomist view had even claimed to make available the comprehension of Providence to all men, without thereby indicating any waverings of faith. However a resurgence in religious organisation and religious tenets, saw this pattern in a new light. The growing Protestant creed vigorously maintained that Providence and Faith were the ultimate and sole end of all existence, that no mediatory role could be performed by the ecclesiastical body, and that individual conscience was the supreme test of all moral

\[10\] John Fortesque, quoted from Tillyard, op. cit. p. 34-5.
questions. All encompassing and absolute though the Protestant God was, yet it was not apprenhensible to men by the process of a linked hierarchical order. Thus Protestantism, especially in its Calvinist dictates, embodies three basic tenets (i) Justification by Faith (ii) Predestination and God's elect (iii) Conscience and the Individual. Therefore Providence has an altered significance in this scheme. In a sense it is dissociated on to a lofty but isolated plane, operative through the principles of Revelation (rather than Reason) and God's word, itself unquestionably supreme, but giving liberty to the individual to find his own bearings in the social sphere and in his religious interaction with God. This finds representation in the hierarchical scheme as we shall presently illustrate.

The second question that is of express concern in the vehement harangue on degree is the vision of chaos. Voiced in the pulpit, theatre, and courtier literature of the 16th century, the possibility of utter chaos, or degree overturned, both in the celestial sphere and (by analogy) in the social order, looms large. In fact this literature in the sixteenth century makes

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a direct appeal for men to maintain stability and discipline, and observe obedience to the constituted order. To cite but one example we may refer to Elyot's picture of degree:

Take away order from all things, and what should then remain? Cartes nothing finally, except some man would imagine etsoons chaos. Also where there is any lack of order needs must be perpetual conflict. And in things subject to nature nothing of himself only may be nourished; but, when he hath destroyed that wherewith he doth participate by the order of his creation, he himself of necessity must then perish; whereof ensueth universal dissolution.

Hath not God set degrees and estates in all his glorious works? First in his heavenly ministers whom he hath constituted in diverse degrees called hierarchies. Behold the four elements, whereof the body of man is compact, how they be set in their places called spheres, higher or lower according to the sovereignty of their natures. Behold also the order that God hath put generally in all his creatures beginning at the most inferior or base and ascending upward. He made not only herb to garnish the earth but also trees of a more eminent stature than herbs. Semnably in birds bees and fishes some be good for the sustenance of man, some bear things profitable to sundry
uses, other be apt to occupation and labour. Every kind of
trees, herbs, birds, beasts and fishes have a peculiar
disposition appropos of them by God the creator; so
that in everything is order, and without order may be nothing
stable or permanent. And it may not be called order except
it do contain in it degrees, high and base, according to the
merit or estimation of the thing that is order. 12

The common places of the medieval picture are drawn with
precision by Elyot. As shown by Tillyard, the possible upsetting
of this order so meticulously programmed by God, was a pre-
occupation with the 'educated nucleus' of Elizabeth's time,
and indeed this was so as so many works would illustrate. And
in fact this was the implicit expression of an instability that
the social order was rocked with. The complaisance of the medieval
world view when it pictured this stereotype is now definitely
missing. Enlarging upon Shakespeare's version of degree ('Troilus
and Cressida'), Tillyard maintains that 'Shakespeare's chaos is
without meaning apart from the proper background of cosmic order
by which to judge it', and that his desire for order is expressed

p. 20.
by putting it in opposition to chaos. To find meaning in 
chaos only in parenthesis, or to view disorderliness as a 
convention and a repetition not a 'novelty', and therefore
'highly stylised', so that the picture of chaos emerging 
from the drama may have its 'own, if queer regulation' \(^\text{13}\) is 
a critical view that blinks at the deeper issues.

In cultural materialist theory, the Elizabethan world-
picture is seen to be the ideological legitimation of the 
existing order. From the materialist perspective the error 
was "falsely to unify history and social process in the name 
of 'the collective mind of the people' ". The stress on order 
was seen to be in part an anxious reaction 'to emergent and 
(in) subordinate social forces which were perceived to be 
threatening'. \(^\text{14}\) Here the distinction between what Raymond 
Williams has termed the residual, dominant, and emergent 
aspects of culture has been applied to analysis. The Elizabethan 
world-picture is seen to illustrate all these aspects of culture.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^\text{13}\) Tillyard, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 17.
\(^\text{15}\) ibid., p. 6.
This analysis is maintained by us, but the world-picture and the perception of its possible dissolution was not the reaction to a threatening "other", that is "the emergent and (in) - subordinate social forces "alone, but also to a threat from the traditional and militant hierarchy. To the bourgeois consciousness the vision of anarchy was a double-edged threat.

Shakespeare's version of this illuminating category of thought requires a reappraisal, for it includes/excludes subtle variations that call for definition. We may once more turn to his classic representation of Degree in 'Troilus and Cressida':

"The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office, and custom, in all line of order.
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol
In noble eminence enthron'd and spher'd
Amidst the other, whose medicinal eye
Corrects the ills aspects of planets evil
And posts, like the commandment of a king
Sens check, to good and bad but when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander
What plagues, and what portents, what mutiny
What raging of the sea, shaking of earth
Commotions in the winds, frights, changes horrors
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and married calm of states
Quite from their fixture! O! when degree is shak'd
Which is the ladder to all high designs,
The enterprise is sick. How could communities
Degree in schools, and brotherhood in cities,
Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,
The primogenitive and due of birth,
Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,
But by degree, stand in authentic place?
Take that degree away, untune that string,
And hark! what discord follows; each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy; the bounded waters
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores,
And make a sop of all this solid globe:
Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead.
Force should be right; or rather, right and wrong—
Between whose endless jar justice resides—
Should lose their names, and so should justice too
Then everything includes itself in power
Power into will, will into appetite
And appetite, a universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power
Must make perforce a universal prey,
And last eat up himself.

Agreeably this assertion of degree is a legitimation of the constituted order. That this order was under threat of discord and was in fact highly volatile was a fact of history. Therefore the notion of Degree finds itself reassorted with a vehemence, to essentially provide a bulwark against disorder.

An examination of this picture of degree that Shakespeare has elaborated shows that Shakespeare too has harped on all the details of degree, stretching from the heavens to man. As Tillyard remarks, Shakespeare has omitted the two ends of this chain, God at the pinnacle and the mundane world of nature at the other end. This omission is not as uncritical as it has been assumed and is in fact a discrimination that should not be overlooked coming as it does from a serious thinker. We have already pointed out the place of Providence in this scheme of the new Protestant Reformation. Its participation in the world of senses was not as intelligible as was earlier believed to be, yet its arbitrary prominence was clear cut. Thus Providence plays a perspicuous part in creation though its manifestation could not be rationally or institutionally verified. To an enlarging body of literate opinion therefore, the altered perspective on Providence was a vital question. It would be inappropriate to assume that Shakespeare would be unconscious of these acute debates.
We have already noted the new empiricism applied by Bacon, and his avowed mission of destabilising older methods of enquiry. In attempting to establish a secular morality Bacon had conducted a method of enumerative induction using negative instances. (See Chapter I) As demonstrated by Bacon, the interpretation of nature and the sensible world involved faculties of the human mind but not in conjunction with Providence. The new spirit of scientific enquiry could scarce allow the central notion of Degree to be left uninterrupted. Shakespeare's silence on these two extremes of degree, as pointed out by Tillyard, is not to be interpreted as conducive of the medieval world-picture. Indeed to attribute to Shakespeare as taking for granted these aspects would be to seriously undermine his creative resources as well as to disregard the cultural content of the Elizabethan age.

Even in Hooker we find that the references are similar. The bond of order that medieval literature defined is no longer seen as operative. Nature however has its constituted laws and its determinate course. If this is thrown into disconcert, man would be the foremost victim of disaster, for nature was subservient to man. As shown earlier (Chapter I) Hooker like Bacon presents a secular intellectual content and a new orientation
to the content of nature, with man occupying a central position. Indeed Shakespeare operates within the same intellectual milieu. We therefore see this bond of order from a very changed perspective to Tillyard's medieval world-picture that he assumes is lurking in the background, to the more overt definition of chaos. We may quote Hooker's version of the law of nature here:

Now if nature should intermit her course and leave altogether, though it were but for a while, the observation of her own laws; if those principals and mother elements of the world whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which now they have; if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loosen and dissolve itself; if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions and by irregular volatility turn themselves anyway as it might happen; if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run his weary course, should as it were through a languishing faintness begin to stand and to rest himself; if the moon should wander from the beaten way, the times and seasons of the year bend themselves by disordered and confused mixture, the winds without their last gasp, the clouds yield no rain, the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, the fruits of the earth pine away as children at the withered breasts of their mother no longer able to yield them relief; what would become of man himself, whom these things now do all serve? See we not plainly that audience of creatures unto the
law of nature is the stay of the whole world? #17

Both in Hooker and in Shakespeare yet another analogical reference is insisted upon, that is the comparison of the sun in the celestial sphere with the king in the political domain. The centrality of both these categories in their respective realms seek to distinguish the newly established absolutism of the State converging upon the Prince. In Shakespeare's history plays the sun - image is repeated often enough. We have seen how at a later period this absolutism, depicted mainly as veneration of the Prince was beginning to be questioned. The foundations of Natural Law and the notion of the sovereign ruler began to be doubted (see Chapter I). The process of de-mystification of this absolutism, already underway, finds the most radical intolerance of sovereignty, again through the image of the sun. John Donne's 'The Sunne Rising' apostrophizes the sun, no longer as 'the glorious planet Sol' but 'busy old fool, unruly Sun'. The complete isolation of the individual, provided with his very personal relations, and his defiance of authority, are expressed thus:

17Hooker, The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, 3 K VIII.
She is all states, all Princes. Nothing else is.

What has been noted is that the conception of Degree focuses attention upon civil society with the Prince as the mainspring of an organic mechanism. The idea of Providence as a manifestation in all creation, is replaced by a concentration on a primarily economic society, and Shakespeare's silence on this aspect of hierarchy is not to be taken for granted as Tillyard does. On the other hand, man is seen to be the centre of the natural world, whose shortcomings would detract nature from its intended course. Shakespeare also makes note of a wicked human nature that would burst the confines of society and state, given a chance.

Rebellion:

If an insistence on the system of Degree and the concomitant vision of chaos sought to bring into fusion a hierarchial and stratified society, the persistent discouragement of rebellion addressed to the public was an offshoot of that same vision. The fear of chaos had so permeated the psyche of the literate class that official strategies of State, conducted directly
through the pulput and addressed not so directly through the theatre, was conducive towards the proliferation of ideology, through the positive forbiddance of rebellion. In a possibly explosive situation, to the bourgeois consciousness, rebellion could be a double-edged incursion. Both a refractory nobility, and an aggressive peasantry, as also an effervescent vagrant population were possible sources of turmoil.

The Elizabethan era was especially marked by the government's efforts to officially exhort against rebellion. We have seen that at this period, in the very seminal nature of the Henrician revolution, the wider social distress in town and country, land mobility, and new forms of productivity with social wretchedness in their wake, have destabilised society.

18 From the cultural materialist perspective, the unregulated are the ungoverned and politically subversive of government. At the same time this perspective confirms that the plays (eg. Measure for Measure) depict that in so far as the socially deprived were a threat to government, this was only when they were mobilised by powerful elements much higher up the social scale. At the same time the expression of this anxiety has been 'ideologically displaced' on to the 'other' and is therefore a mis-recognition (Political Shakespeare, eds. Dollymore & Sinfield, 1985 p. 80)
The victims of these upheavals were perhaps more in a position to recognise and mobilise this discontent. Aristocratic mortality, both clerical and secular, was positioned to be propelled into revolt under the initiative of the Roman Church or without it. Uprisings from a peasantry and a rabblement were a possibility that threatened no less. Therefore the spectre of chaos and the fear of rebellion are marked in the literature of this period. The government took direct initiatives to propogate the doctrine of non-rebellion. The Homilies to be compulsorily read in churches included those on 'Rebellion' and 'Obedience'. Thus the Homily on Rebellion announced:

"What shall subjects do then? Shall they obey valiant stout, wise and good princes and contemn, disobey and rebel against children being their princes or against indiscreet and evil governors? God forbid. For first what a perilous thing it were to commit into the subjects the judgement which prince is wise and godly and his government good, and which is otherwise as though the foot must judge of the head, an enterprise very heinous and must needs breed rebellion. For who else be they that are most inclined to rebellion, but such haughty spirits from whom springeth such foul ruin of realms? Is not rebellion the greatest of all mischiefs? And who are most ready to the greatest mischiefs but the worst men? Rebels therefore the worst of all subjects are most ready to rebellion, as being the worst of all vices, and furthest from the duty of a good subject, as
on the contrary part, the best subjects are most firm and constant in obedience, as in the special and peculiar virtue of good subjects.... But whereas indeed a rebel is worse than the worst prince, and rebellions worst than the worst government of the worst prince that hitherto hath been; both are rebels unmeet ministers, and rebellion an unfit and unwholesome medicine to reform any small lacks in a prince, or to cure any little griefs in government, such leud remedies being far worse than any other maladies and disorders that can be in the body of a common wealth......

So remaineth it now that I partly do declare unto you what an abominable sin against God and man rebellion is, and how dreadfully the wrath of God is kindled and inflamed against all rebels, and what horrible plagues, punishments, and deaths and finally eternal damnation doth hang over their heads; as how on the contrary part good and obedient subjects are in God's favour, and be partakers of peace, quietness, and security with other God's manifold blessings in this world, and by His mercies through our saviour Christ, of life everlasting also in this world to come. How horrible a sin against God and man rebellion is, can not possibly be expressed according unto the greatness thereof. For he that nameth rebellion, nameth not a singular, or one only sin, as is theft, robbery, murder, and such like; but he nameth the whole puddle and sink of all sins against God and man, against his prince, his country, his countrymen, his parents, his children, his kinfolks, his friends, and against all men universally, all sins I say against God and all men heaped together nameth he, that nameth rebellion. 19

19. An Homilie Against Disobedience and Wylful Rebellion (1570).
We have seen that hereditary succession to the Crown was, in this period, the primary requisite for acquisition of the Crown. But succession was not a foolproof security measure in maintaining the stability of the Crown, for there were royal claimants, besides the crowned king, whose pretensions could be insisted upon with equal genealogical veracity. We have seen that Parliamentary ratification had become an imperative to succession by birth. Instability of the state directed from that centrifugal nobility, was therefore envisioned by those concerned, with marked vividness. 'The Act of Succession' was a testament of the painstaking efforts to hold in abeyance such a threat through the mechanics of government. Thus the question of heredity takes on a double edge: its lodgement urged with unflagging tenacity, as well as its persistence inducing instability in the form of claimants. In Shakespeare's 'Henry VI Part II', Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, was the contender to the throne as far as hereditary rights were concerned for he was lineally descended from the erstwhile dethroned Plantagenet faction;

York: Edward the Third, my Lords, had seven sons:
   The first, Edward the Black Prince, Prince of Wales;
   The second, William of Hatfield; and the third
   Lionel Duke of Clarence; next to whom
   was John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster
The fifth was Edmund Langley, Duke of York. The sixth was Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester; William of Windsor was the seventh and last. Edward the Black Prince died before his father, and left behind him Richard, his only son, who, after Edward the Third's death reign'd as King; Till Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster, The eldest son and heir of John of Gaunt, Crown'd by the name of Henry the Fourth, Seiz'd on the realm, depos'd the rightful King, Sent his poor Queen to France, from whence she came, And him to Pomfret, where, as all you know, Harmless Richard was murdered traitorously.

York of course bides his time before making an open challenge. He does creditable service to the Crown as Regent in France and in bringing civil discipline in Ireland. But he discloses his secret intents in a soliloquy:

York: Anjou and Maine are given to the French; Paris is lost; the state of Normandy Stands on a tickle point now they are gone Suffolk concluded on the articles The peers agreed, and Henry was well pleas'd

To change two dukedoms for a duke's fair daughter
I cannot blame them all; what is't to them?
'Tis thine they give away, and not their own.
Pirates may make cheap pennyworths of their pillage,
And purchase friends, and give to courtezans
Still revelling like lords till all be gone;
While as the silly owner of the goods
Weeps over them, and wrings his hapless hands,
And shakes his head, and trembling stands aloof,
While all is shar'd and all is borne away,
Ready to starve, and dare not touch his own.
So York must sit and fret and oite his tongue
While his own lands are bargain'd for and sold.
Methinks the realm of England, France and Ireland
Seem that proportion to my flesh and blood
As did the fatal brand Althaea burnt
Unto the prince's heart of Calydon.
Anjou and Maine ooth given unto the French.
Cold news for me, for I had hope of France,
Even as I have of fertile England's soil.
A day will come when York shall claim his own;
And therefore I will take the Nevil's parts
And make a show of love to proud Duke Humphrey
And when I spy advantage, claim the crown
For that's the golden mark I seek to hit.
Nor shall proud Lancaster usurp my right,
Nor hold the sceptre in his childish fist,
Nor wear the diadem upon his head,
whose church-like humour fits not for a crown.
Then, York, be still a while, till time do serve: watch thou, and wake when others be asleep, To pry into the secrets of the state; Till Henry surfeit in the joys of love, with his new bride and England's dear - bought queen, And Humphrey with the peers be fall'n at jars; Then will I raise aloft the milk-white rose, with whose sweet smell the air shall be perfum'd, And in my standard bear the arms of York, To grapple with the house of Lancaster; And force perforce I'll make him yield the crown, Whose bookish rule hath pull'd fair England down.  

An ambiitious nobility is divided in itself as eyes are set upon the reins of power, with factious support. The noble Duke of Gloucester's days as Protector are numbered as this nobility gather around a weak and juvenile king to de-stabilise the State. And in fact the King makes a tragic mistake in placing himself outside the political events and posing a stance of political and moral innocence;

King. For my part, noble lords, I care not which; Or Somerset or York, all's one to me.

York. If York have ill demean'd himself in France, Then let him be denay'd the regentship.

21 ibid., Act I, Sc I, 1 215-60.
Som. If Somerset be unworthy of the place
   Let York be regent; I will yield to him,
War. Whether your Grace be worthy, yes or no,
   Dispute not that: York is the worthier.
Car. Ambitious Warwick, let thy betters speak.
War. The Cardinal's not my better in the field.
Buck. All in this presence are thy betters, Warwick
War. Warwick may live to be the best of all.
Sal. Peace, son! and show some reason, Buckingham
   Why Somerset should be prefer'rd in this.
Queen. Because the king, forsooth, will have it so.
Glou. Madam, the king is old enough himself
   To give his censure. These are no women's matters.
Queen. If he be old enough, what needs your Grace
   To be Protector of his Excellence? 22

However, York's claims and deprived inheritance are
made known to him by the dying Mortimer in the Tower of London:

Mor. I will, that my fading breath permit,
   And death approach not ere my tale be done.
   Henry the Fourth, grandfather to this king,
   Deposed his nephew Richard, Edward's son,
   The first-begotten and the lawful heir

---

Of Edward King, the third of that descent;
During whose reign the Percies of the north,
Finding his usurpation most unjust,
Endeavour'd my advancement to the throne.
The reason moved these war-like lords to this
war, for that, young king Richard thus removed
Leaving no heir begotten of his body
I was the next by birth and parentage
For by my mother I derived am
From Lionel, Duke of Clarence, third son
To King Edward the Third, whereas he
From John of Gaunt doth bring his pedigree
Being but fourth of that heroic line
But mark; as in this haughty great attempt
They laboured to plant the rightful hair
I lost my liberty and they their lives
Long after this, when Henry the Fifth
Succeeding his father Bolingbroke, did reign,
Thy father, Earl of Cambridge, then derived
From famous Edward Langley, Duke of York,
Marrying my sister that thy mother was,
Again in pity of my hard distress
Levied an army, wooing to redeem,
And have install'd me in the diadem
But, as the rest, so fell that noble earl
And was beheaded. Thus the Mortimers,
In whom the title rested, were suppress'd.

Plan. Of which, my lord, your honour is the last
Mor. True, and thou seest that I no issue have
And that my fainting words to warrant death.
Thou art my heir, the rest I wish thee gather
But yet be wary in thy studious care

Plan. Thy grave admonishments prevail with me;
but yet methinks my father's execution
was nothing less than bloody tyranny.

Mor. with silence, nephew be thou politic,
Strong-fixed is the house of Lancaster,
And like a mountain, not be removed.23

One may note that the prison acquires a prominence in
the history plays that is revealing for the assessment of the
State. As an adjunct of the State, its vigilance is given a
thrust, and it fortifies the State's repressive actions. Thus
it serves as a receptacle of those that are victims of State
coercion. Besides a Falstaff and a Justice Shallow, common
revels and transgressors of law, it is the aristocratic inmates
of the Tower whose fate is of greater concern. As we have
mentioned earlier, though the State presumes to conduct legal
trials, those aristocratic contenders to the monarchy find
their end in murder. (Richard II in Pomfret Castle, Henry VI
in the hands of Richard III in prison, Clarence, Richard's

23Shakespeare, King Henry VI, Part I, Act II, Sc. V.
brother, young Arthur commanded to be blinded in prison by
King John are some of the outstanding examples.) As the
above quoted passage indicates, Shakespeare depicts, with equal
heedfulness, how the prison becomes the location for further
intrigue when factious nobles and royal aspirants are allowed
to languish in the Tower rather than be exterminated, even
when such measures are perceived to be questionable and outside
the bounds of instituted power. This is not to indicate that
Shakespeare endorses those measures, but the anxiety of possible
rebellion and subversion are the concerns of Shakespeare as of
other writers, literary or political. Thus Mortimer gives York
the assurance of birth and instills in York the desire which
he makes explicit in the subsequent play. The forfeit of Anjou
and Maine was received with a sense of personal loss, now the
depivation of France was felt to be a severer dispossession;

King. Welcome, Lord Somerset, What news from France ?

Som. That all your interest in those territories
Is utterly bereft you ; all is lost

King. Cold news, Lord Somerset ; but God's will be done !

York (aside) Cold news for me ; for I had hope of France
As firmly as I hope for fertile England,
Thus are my blossoms blasted in the oud,
And caterpillars eat my leaves away;
But I will remedy this gear ere long,
Or sell my title for a glorious grave.\(^24\)

York's arch rivalry with Somerset induced the bantering of each against the other, and the loss of France had given York the opportunity of reminding the lords of his rival's ineptitude. Therefore York manages to earn the advantageous post of Regent to the troubled Ireland:

Post. Great Lords, from Ireland am I come amain,
To signify that rebels they are up,
And put the Englishmen unto the sword.
Send succours, lords, and stop the rage betime,
Before the wound do grow uncurable;
For, being green, there is great hope of help.

Car. A breach that craves a quick expedient stop!
What counsel give you in this weighty cause?

York. That Somerset be sent as Regent thither
'Tis meet that lucky ruler be employ'd;
Witness the fortune he hath had in France.

Som. If York, with all his far-fet policy
Had been there the Regent there instead of me
He never would have stay'd in France so long.

York. No, not to lose at all, as thou hast done
I rather would have lost my life betimes
Than being a burden of dishonour home,
By staying there so long till all were lost
Show me one scar character'd on thy skin;
Men's flesh preserv'd so whole do seldom win.

Queen. Nay then, this spark will prove a raging fire
If wind and fuel be brought to feed it with.
No more, good York; sweet Somerset, be still:
Thy fortune, York, hadst thou been Regent there,
Might happily have prov'd far worse than his.

York. What I worse than nought, Nay, then a shame take all!

Som. And in the number thee, that wishest shame.

Car. My Lord of York, try what your fortune is.
The uncivil kerns of Ireland are in arms
And temper clay with cloud of Englishmen;
To Ireland will you lead a band of men,
Collected choicely, from each county some
And try your hap against the Irishmen?

York. I will, my lord, so please his Majesty.

Suf. Why, our authority is his consent
And what we do establish he confirms:
Then, noble York, take thou this task in hand.

York. I am content; provide me soldiers, lords,
While I take order for mine own affairs.

Suf. A charge, Lord York, that I will see perform'd
But now return we to the false Duke Humphrey.
Car. No more of him; for I will deal with him
That henceforth he shall trouble us no more.
And so break off; the day is almost spent.

Suf. Lord, you and I must talk of that event.
York. My Lord of Suffolk, within fourteen days
At Bristol I expect my soldiers;
For there I'll ship them all for Ireland.

Suf. I'll see it truly done, my Lord of York. 25

This development is of particular significance. We
have seen that the Tudor State, in its attempt at centralisation
had not actually disbanded the feudal armies. These armies could
always be summoned, only now the State centrally commissioned
chosen nobles (Lord Lieutenant), and authorised the mobilisation
of the army. The feudal nobility continued to train and have
access to these trained bands. Thereby the possibility of revolt
from factious lords did not recede, for it was the nobility that
substantially controlled the armed forces. Despite this, the
central authority had control over the mobilisation of the army
through its trusted nobles. In the circumstances, York's sudden
access to the land was fraught with menace. Soon York declares

his resolution to bring disorder to the nation to gratify his secret desires, that is to acquire the 'golden circuit';

York. Now, York, or never, steel thy fearful thoughts,
And change misdoubt to resolution;
Be that thou hops't to be, or what thou art
Resign to death; it was not worth th' enjoying
Let pale-fac'd fear keep with the mean-born man,
And find no harbour in a royal heart
Faster than spring-time showers comes thought on thought,
And not a thought but thinks on dignity.
My brain, more busy than the labouring spider,
Weaves tedious snares to trap mine enemies.
Well, nobles, well; 'tis politicly done,
To send me packing with an host of men:
I fear me you but warm the starved snake,
Who, cherish'd in your breasts, will sting your hearts.
'Twas men I lack'd, and you will give them me:
I take it kindly; yet be well assur'd
You put sharp weapons in a madman's hands,
While I in Ireland nourish a mighty band,
I will stir up in England some black storm
Shall blow ten thousand souls to heaven, or hell;
And this fell tempest shall not cease to rage
Until the golden circuit on my head,
Like to the glorious sun's transparent beams,
Do calm the fury of this mad - ored flaw. 26

26 ibid., Act III Sc. I. 1. 331-54.
How York plans to make use of the ensuing advantage is as significant as York's professed intentions indicate, it is this feudal nobility, under whose instigation the peasantry is able to mobilise its man power to revolt. The Kentishman, Jack Cade, was to be used as the instrument to bring dissolution of the State:

York, ..... 
And, for a minister of my intent
I have seduced a headstrong Kentishman,
John Cade of Ashford,
To make a commotion, as full well he can,
Under the title of John Mortimer.
In Ireland have I seen this stubborn Cade
Oppose himself against a troop of kerns,
And fought so long, till that his thighs with darts
Were almost like a sharp-quill'd porpentine;
And, in the end being rescued, I have seen
Him caper upright like a wild Morisco
Shaking the bloody carts as he his cells.
Full often, like a shag-hair'd crafty kern,
Hath he conversed with the enemy,
And undiscover'd come to me again,
And given me notice of their villainies.
This devil here shall be my substitute;
For that John Mortimer, which now is dead,
In face, in gait, in speech, he doth resemble:
By this I shall perceive the common's mind,
How they affect the house and claim of York.
Say he be taken, rack'd, and tortured,
I know no pain they can inflict upon him
will make him say I mov'd him to those arms.
Say that he thrive, as 'tis great like he will,
Why, then from Ireland come I with my strength,
And reap the harvest which that rascal sou'd;
For Humphrey being dead, as he shall be,
And Henry put apart, the next for me. 27

The process of centralisation that the Tudor State was
conducting with such ardour was always under the shadow of
counter-action, in the absence of a standing army. Where a
traditional feudal nobility was in discord with efforts at
convergence upon the centre, it was not possible for them to
mobilise the armed forces with such supreme command as in the
feudal era, though such a nobility had access, through the
system of retainers, to the people armed. On the other hand
a distraught peasantry was also a potential source of unrest
even more so at the outset of ambitious nobles. As noted
earlier, the commons, especially the peasantry, were compulsorily
armed, trained and expected to be handy. They were a potential
source of unrest as the Jack Cade rebellion illustrated. (This
also includes the rumpole). Yet it was a fact that the Elizabethan

and the Jacobean era distinguished the necessity of war in the face of colonial subjugation, privateering, buccaneering in the high seas, and armed retaliation in trading disputes. As Bacon notes the people of a nation must be trained in arms, occupied in manly professions and exercised in the war experience.

28 Walled towns, stored arsenals and armouries, goodly races of horses, chariots of war, elephants, ordnance, artillery and the like. All this is but a sheep in a lions skin, except the breed and disposition of the people be stout and warlike. Nay, number (itself) in armies imparteth not much where the people is of weak courage.... Many are the examples of the great odds between number and courage, so that a man may truly make a judgement, that the principal point of greatness in any state is to have a race of military men.

Neither is money the sinews of war (as it is trivially said), where the sinews of men's arms, in base and effiminate people are failing.... Therefore let any prince or state think soberly of his forces, except his militia of natures us of good and valiant soldiers. And let princes, on the other side, that have subjects of martial disposition, know their own strength, unless they be otherwise waiting unto themselves.....

It is certain that secentary and within door arts and delicate manufactures (that require rather the finger than the arm) have in their nature a contrariety to a military disposition ...... (That which cumeth nearest to it) is to leave those arts chiefly to strangers (which for that purpose are the more easily to be received) and to contain the principal oulk of the vulgar natives within those three kinds: tillers of the ground, free servants, and handicraftsmen of strong and manly arts, as smiths, masons, carpenters etc, not reckoning professed soldiers......

Nobody can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body or politic and certainly, to a kingdom or estate, a just and honourable war is the true exercise. A civil war, indeed, is like the heat of a fever; but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health

("Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms" F. Bacon, Essays, Everyman, Lond. 1986 p. 90-95)
Aristocratic rebellion which had its eyes directly upon the Crown was not the only form of revolt. It could be induced by discontent issuing out of favours not received, in that aristocracy, whose political and chivalric business was to make or break kings. To such a derailed feudalism belonged those noblemen who had forwarded Bolingbroke's claims against Richard II (in 'King Richard II') and consequently went up in arms against Henry IV himself. To this party belonged Henry Percy of the North, his father Northumberland and uncle Worcester, the Welsh chief Glendower, the Scottish noble Douglas and brother-in-law Mortimer. (Significantly the chieflainries of Scotland and Wales and the North had been the areas where militancy had fostered against the Tudor central monarchy.)

Powerful, anarchic, pompous, their grievances fostered in the political neglect in the hands of the monarch:

Hot. The King is kind, and well we know the King
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay
My father, and my uncle, and myself
Did give him the same royalty he wears,
And when he was not six and twenty strong
Sick in the world's regard, wretched and low,
A poor unminded outlaw sneaking home,
My father gave him welcome to the shore;
And when he heard him swear and vow to God
He came out to be Duke of Lancaster,
To sue his livery, and beg his peace
With tears of innocency, and terms of zeal,
My father, in kind heart and pity mov'd,
Swore him assistance, and perform'd it too.
Now when the lords and barons of the realm
Perceiv'd Northumberland did lean to him
The more or less came in with cap and knee,
Met him in boroughs, cities, villages,
Attended him on bridges, stood in lanes,
Laid gifts before him, proffer'd him their oaths,
Gave him their heirs as pages, follow'd him
Even at the heels in golden multitudes.
He presently, as greatness knows itself,
Steps me a little higher than his vow
Made to my father while his blood was poor
Upon the naked shore at Ravenspurgh;
And now forsooth takes on him to reform
Some contain edicts and some strait decrees
That lie too heavy on the commonwealth;
Cries out upon abuses, seem to weep
Over his country's wrongs, and by this face
This seeming crow of justice, did he win
The hearts of all that he did angle for;
Proceeded further -- cut me off the heads
Of all the favourites that the absent King
In deputation left behind him here
When he was personal in the Irish war
Blunt. Tut, I came not to hear this.

Hot. Then to the point.

In short time after he depos'd the King,
Soon after that deprived him of his life,
And in the neck of that task'd the whole state;
To make that worse, suffer'd his kinsman March
(who is, if every owner were well plac'd
Indeed his King) to be engag'd in wales,
There without ransom to lie forfeited;
Disgrac'd me in my happy victories,
Sought to entrap me by intelligence,
Rated mine uncle from the Council-board
In rage dismiss'd my father from the court,
Aroke oath on oath, committed wrong on wrong,
And in conclusion drove us to seek out
This head of safety, and withal to pry
Into his title, the which we find
Too indirect for long continuance. 29

Like Hotspur, Worcester too finds cause for grievance
30 on similar lines.

The aristocratic rebellion of Henry IV - Pt I may be seen as Shakespeare's exposition on the category of chivalry

29 Shakespeare, King Henry IV Part I, Act IV, Sc. III, 1 52-105.
and the ramifications of this integral concept in the changed context of the Renaissance. If Hotspur displays chivalry in its medieval spirit, Hal by contrast, assumes a new spirit of pragmatism and allegiance to the central authority. Heroism is replaced by new military interests where strategies of warfare bear more immediate and rewarding fruits than personal glorification and bravado. If older notions were seen to degenerate, their outright devaluation is conducted by none other than Falstaff. However, as with most other important conceptions, the cultural category of chivalry is permeated by a dichotomy of values. Chivalric decadence had not erased its preponderance, and in fact the changing scene at times project the lineaments of chivalry with even greater fanfare. Besides, in the newly emerging international arena, chivalry continues to render diplomatic service.

In the middle ages, the concept of chivalry was viewed as a sublime form of secular life. It was an aesthetic idea, assuming the form of an ethical ideal, where heroic fancy and romantic sentiment was permeated by the religious ideal of piety and virtue. The chief characteristic of chivalry as a feat of arms was related to the metaphysical vision of the host of angels around God's throne. 31 To the religious and heroic

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concept of chivalry, attributed to the nobility, with history and politics viewed as a spectacle of honour of princes and virtues of knights, there was introduced the Renaissance concept of personal glory and hero-worship. Spenser's "The Faerie Queene" is the most substantial example of this revived notion, incorporating the fairy-land sphere of the Round Table, as well as reviving the ancient conception of Roman chivalry.

In 'King Henry IV Pt I', Shakespeare evaluates the inadequacy of medieval chivalry in the new conditions of the Renaissance. Older values and traditions continue to linger and even take on revived forms. In the flamboyance of Hotspur, his renowned courage and martial prowess, those older values are revived. Thus the King is urged to compare him with the insubordinate Hal:

King. Yea, there thou mak'st me sad, and mak'st me sin
In envy that my Lord Northumberland
Should be the father to so oliest a son;
A son who is the theme of honour's tongue,
Amongst a grove the very straightest plant,
who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride;
Whilst I by looking on the praise of him
See riot and dishonour stain the brow
Of my young Harry. O that it could be prov'd
That some night-tripping fairy had exchang'd
In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,
And call'd mine Percy, his Plantagenet!
Then would I have his Harry, and he mine:
but let him from my thoughts, what think you, coz,
Of this young Percy's pride? The prisoners
which he in this adventure hath surpris'd
To his own use he keeps, and sends me word
I shall have none but Mordake, Earl of Fife. 32

Those traits of truth, honour and chivalry are rein­
forced in the person of Hotspur. What has been characterised
as passion in Hotspur by some critics, are in fact those
chivalrous traits that are projected with a vehemence and yet
are devalued in the face of more sophisticated virtues. Thus
Hotspur exclaims:

Hot. Well said, my noble Scot! If speaking truth
In this fine age were not thought flattery,
Such attribution should the Douglas have
As not a soldier of this season's stamp
Should go so general current through the world.
By God, I cannot flatter, I do defy
The tongues of soothers, but a braver place

In my heart's love hath no man than yourself:
Nay, task me to my word, approve me, lord.

Doug. Thou art the king of honour:
No man so potent breathes upon the ground
But I will beard him. 33

Again

Hot. No more, no more! Worse than the sun in March,
This praise does nourish agues. Let them come!
They come like sacrifices in their trim,
And to the fire-eyed maid of smoky war
All hot and bleeding will we offer them;
The mailed Mars shall on his altar sit
Up to the ears in blood. I am on fire
To hear this rich reprisal is so nigh,
And yet not ours! Come, let me taste my horse,
Who is to bear me like a thunderbolt
Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales
Harry to Harry shall, hot horse to horse
Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse. 34

The chivalrous idea of pride that sublimates into
honour, pervaded by an egotism, is apparent in Hotspur:

33 [Note: Footnote reference to Act IV, Sc. I, 1-12.]

34 [Note: Footnote reference to Act IV, Sc. I, 111-123.]
Hot. By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from a pale-fac'd moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up crowned honour by the locks,
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear
without corrrival all her dignities;
But out upon this half-fac'd fellowship!

Wot. He apprehends a world of figures here,
But not the form of what he should attend;
Good cousin give me audience for a while.35

Hotspur continues to embrace the attributes of chivalry in its
medieval spirit:

Hot. But as he as he will, yet once ere right
I will embrace him with a soldier's arm
That he will shrink under my courtesy.36

However these traits are thrown into negative light
as Hotspur betrays the initial faith of the King in him, and
is shown to be the epitome of irresponsible chivalry. He
exemplifies the type of chivalry which was to be highly
discouraged in the process of directing a gravitation towards

a centralised state. In the spirit of medieval knight-errantry and romances, Worcester and Hotspur continue to derange the central authority:

Wor. ....
And now I will unclasp a secret book,
And to your quick-conceiving discontents
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As full of peril and adventurous spirit
As to o'er-walk a current roaring loud
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.

Hot. If he fall in, good night, or sink, or swim!
Send danger from the east unto the west,
So no honour cross it from the north to south,
And let them grapply; o, the blood more stirs
To rouse a lion than to start a hare! 37

With youthful recklessness Hotspur cries defiance against the King:

Wor. Those same nooble Scots
That are your prisoners -

Hot. I'll keep them all;
By God he shall not have a scot of them,
No, if a Scot would save his soul he shall not
I'll keep them by this hand!

Wor. You start away,
And lend no ear unto my purposes:
Those prisoners you shall keep — — — — — —

Hot. Nay, I will; that flat!
He said he would not ransom Mortimer,
Forbade my tongue to speak of Mortimer,
but I will find him when he lies asleep,
And in his ear I'll holla "Mortimer!"
Nay, I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
Nothing but "Mortimer", and give it to him
To keep his anger still in motion.

Wor. Hear you, cousin, a word.

Hot. All studies here I solemnly defy,
Save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke;
And that same sword-and-suckler Prince of wales,
But that I think his father loves him not,
And would be glad he met with some mischance — —
I would have him poison'd with a pot of ale.

Here the chivalric prejudice, as an admixture of egotism and romantic fancy is represented through Hotspur. It falls short of the demand of the new strategical interests in warfare. Thus Hotspur flaunts a posture of nonchalance and recklessness at the news of the enemy's preparations for war. He disregards the

advice of his peers, fails to surmise the limitations of his resources, and even declines to listen to important news that would intimate him of the absence of Mortimer's promised supply of arms (besides the retirement of the peers Northumberland and Glandower). By his own admission he is ineffectual in the rhetorics of war. 39 This is seen as crucial to the upliftment of the morale of a medley of men that had neither the discipline of any army of State nor the motivation of mercenaries, in the

Richmond's oration in 'King Richard III' or Henry V's before the battle of Agincourt are the prime example of this kind of rhetoric in Shakespeare's plays. Elizabeth's own collection of prayers, especially that of the post Armada victory, has the same familiar ring:

"A prayer used in the queen's chapel, and other places, for preservation, and success against the Spanish navy and forces.

'O Lord God heavenly Father, the Lord of hosts, without whose providence nothing proceedeth, and without his mercy nothing is saved; in whose powers are the hearts of princes, and the end of all their actions; have mercy upon thine afflicted church; and especially regard thy servant Elizabeth, our most excellent queen, To whom thy dispersed flock to fly, in the anguish of their souls, and in the zeal of thy truth, behold! how the princes of the nations do bend themselves against her, because she laboureth to purge thy sanctuary and that thy holy church may live in cosider 0 Lord, how long thy servant hath laboured to them for peace; but how proudly they prepare themselves into battle. Arise, therefore, maintain thy on cause, and judge thou between her and her enemies. She seeketh not her own honour out thine; nor the dominions of others, but a just defence of herself; nor the shedding of Christian blood, but the saving of poor afflicted souls. Come down therefore, come down, and deliver thy people to her. To vanquish is all one with thee, by few or by many, by want or by wealth, by weakness or by strength. 0 ! possess the hearts of our enemies with the fear of thy servants. The cause is thine, the enemy is thine, the afflicted thine; the honour, victory, and triumph shall be thine.

Consider, Lord, the end of our enterprises. Terrify the hearts of our enemies; and make a joyful peace for thy Christians.
context of the 16th century Tudor State. Thus Hotspur exclaims:

Hot. Arm, arm with speed! And fellows, soldiers, friends, better consider what you have to do Than I have not well the gift of tongue Can lift your blood up with persuasion.

and ruminates instead, after a last gesture of courtesy and embrace, on the chivalric prejudice of heroic resignation and fair conscience,

Hot. O gentlemen, the time of life is short! To spend that shortness basely were too long If life did rise upon a dual's point, Still ending at the arrival of an hour. And if we live, we live to tread on kings, If die, brave death when princes die with us! Now, for our consciences, the arms are fair When the intent of bearing them is just.

By contrast it was the 'madcap' Hal who personifies the type of the Renaissance soldier and Prince. As the play

Cont'd 39 And now, since in this extreme necessity, thou hast put into the heart of thy servant Deborah to provide strength to withstand the pride of Susira and his adherents bless thou all her forces by sea and land. Grant all her people one heart, one mind, and one strength to defend her person, her kingdom and thy true religion. Give unto all her council and captains wisdom, wariness, and courage; that they may speedily prevent the devices, and valiantly withstand the forces of all our enemies; that the fame of thy gospel may be spread unto the ends of the world. We crave this in thy mercy, O heavenly Father, for the precious death of thy dear Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

(quoted from: Essays on Shakespeare and other Elizabethans, Tucker Brooke, 1948, YUP p. 147-148)

40 ibid. Act V Sc. II 1 75-78
41 ibid. Act V Sc. II 1 81-88.
progresses, Hal personates chivalry and courtesy in a unique form, commensurable with the features attendant upon the sixteenth century Prince, rather than the type of dare-devilry that Hotspur poses. If Hotspur expects contempt from Hal in the challenge that Hal sends forth, Vernon belies his expectation thus:

Ver: No, my soul, I never in my life
Did hear a challenge urg'd more modestly,
Unless another should another dare
To gentle exercise and proof of arms.
He gave you all the duties of a man,
Trim'd up your praises with a princely tongue,
Spoke your deservings like a chronicle,
Making you ever better than his praise
By still dispraising praise valu'd with you,
And, which became him like a prince indeed,
He made a blushing cital of himself,
And chid his truant youth with such a grace
As if he master'd there a double spirit
Of teaching and of learning instantly.
There did he pause; but let me tell the world —
If he outlive the envy of this day,
England did never owe so sweet a hope
So much misconstru'd in his wantonness. 42

42 i.e. Act V, Sc. II, 1 51-68.
Percy's valianee warrants admiration and even Hal pays tribute to it as he admits his own relaxation of the rigours of chivalry. While challenging Percy to single combat he admits that the type of chivalry flaunted by Hotspur was fast becoming obsolete:

**Prince.** .... Tell your nephew
The Prince of Wales doth join with all the world
In praise of Henry Percy; by my hopes,
This present enterprise set off his head,
I do not think a braver gentleman,
More active—valiant or more valiant—young,
More daring or more bold, is now alive
To grace this latter age with noble deeds.
For my part, I may speak it to my shame,
I have a truant seen to chivalry,
And so I hear he doth account me too;
Yet this before my father's majesty——
I am content that he shall take the odds
Of his great name and estimation,
And will, to save the blood on either side,
Try fortune with him in a single fight. 43

Over the corpse of the just vanquished Hotspur in Shrewsbury, Hal makes the gesture of chivalric decency that is in keeping with the new spirit of self-esteem, rather than

43 i@id. Act V, Sc. I l 85-100
paying lip-service to feudal chivalry:

Prince. ....... Fare thee well, great heart!
Ill-avow'd ambition, how much art thou shrunken!
when that this body did contain a spirit,
A kingdom for it was too small a balm;
but now two paces of the vilest earth
Is room enough. This earth that bears thee dead
Bares not alive so stout a gentleman
If thouwert sensible of courtesy
I should not make so dear a show of zeal;
but let my favours hide thy mangled face,
And even in thy behalf I'll thank myself
for doing these fair rites of tenderness.44

The outright devaluation of the chivalric code is
translated by none other than Falstaff. Falstaff has no qualms
about wounding the corpse of Percy and then claiming it as his
own prize, much to the amazement (and indulgence) of the Prince.
The show of bravado, distinctive of the heroic life is misre-
presented by Falstaff in this gesture. Falstaff, it may be noted,
is a titled knight, but does not fulfil the feudal imperatives
of knightage, by birth and inheritance, nor does he belong to
the new aristocracy of money and acquired property. He personates

44 ibid., Act V, Sc. IV 1 86-97.
knighthood in a decadent form, for he does not even extol
the virtues proper to his title. His scrutiny on the code
of Honour renders this regulation insignificant:

Fal. ....... well, 'tis no matter, honour pricks
me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I
come on, now then ? Can honour set to a leg? No.
Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound?
No. Honour had no skill in surgery then? No.
What is honour? A word, what is in that word
honour? What is the honour? Air. A trim reckon-
ing! Who hath it? He that died a - Wednesday.
Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. 'Tis in-
sensible, then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live
with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer
it. Therefore I'll none of it. Honour is a mere
scutcheon --- and so ends my catechism. 45

To Falstaff Honour offers no purchase. It is impertinent to
his scheme of things:

Fal. Well, If Percy be alive, I'll pierce him. If he do come
in my way, so; if he do not, if I come in his willingly,
let him make a caroon ao of me. I like not such
grinning honour as Sir Walter hath. Give me life,
which if I can save, so; if not, honour comes unlocked
for, there's an end. 46

46 ibid., Act V Sc. III, 1.56-61.
In a sense Hal represents the essence of the modern soldier, national and military, rather than aspiring to the high feudal ideas of the universal and the religious. Chivalry had disengaged itself from the monastic and ascetic traits imperative upon knighthood, such as piety, austerity etc. However the exploits of valour and armed combat did not recede in practice, although the spirit of chivalry was in conflict with the new military spirit.47

47 John of Lancaster's trickery of the rebel army was a case of Machiavellian strategy in warfare that went against the very ethics of chivalry. Such a strategy had proved to be productive for Lancaster. The morality of such a strategy is deliberated, and yet it seems to vouchsafe for the cause of suppression of rebellion:

Mowb. Is this proceeding just and honourable?
west. Is your assembly so?
Arch. will you thus break your faith?
Lanc. I pawn'd thee none,
I promis'd you redress of these same grievances
whereof you did complain; which, by mine honour,
sut, for your rebels, look to taste the due
Meet for rebellion and such acts as your.
Most shallowly did you these arms commence,
Fondly brought here, and foolishly sent hence
Strike up your drums, pursue the scatter'd stray;
God, and not we, hath safely fought today.
Some guard these traitors to the block of death,
Treason's true bed and yielder-up of breath.

(King Henry IV Pt II, Act IV,
Sc ii, i. 110 - 123)
The King's chidings upon his errant son and comparison with the indomitable Hotspur also make tribute to chivalry:

King, .......

Now by my spectre, and my soul to boot,
He hath more worthy interest to the state
Than thou the shadow of succession.
For of no right, nor colour like to right,
He doth fill fields with harness in the realm,
Turns head against the lion's armed jaws
And being no more in debt to years than thou
Leads ancient lords and reverend bishops on
To bloody battles, and bruising arms.
What never-dying honour hath he got
Against renowned Douglas! whose high deeds,
Whose hot incursions and great name in arms,
Holds from all soldiers chief majority
And military title capital
Through all the kingdom that acknowledge Christ.
Thrice hath this Hotspur, Mars in swathing clothes,
This infant warrior, in his enterprises
Discomfited great Douglas, taken him once,
Enlarged him, and made a friend of him,
To fill the mouth of deep defiance up,
And shake the peace and safety of our throne.
And what say you to this? Percy, Northumberland,
The Archbishop's Grace of York, Douglas, Mortimer
Capitulate against us and are up.
But wherefore do I tell this news to thee?
Why, Harry, do I tell the of my foes,  
Which art my nearest and dearest enemy?  
Thou that art like enough, through vassal fear,  
Base inclination, and the start of spleen,  
To fight against me under Percy's pay,  
To dog his heels, and curtsy at his frowns,  
To show how much thou art degenerate.  

The new chivalric pursuit of personal glory is common  
to both Hal and Hotspur. But whereas Hotspur's egotism is not  
tempered and mellowed, Hal diverts his heroism towards the  
glorification of King and country and preparedness for future  
kingship:

Hot. If I mistake not, thou art Harry Monmouth.  
Prince. Thou speak'st as if I would deny my name.  
Hot. My name is Harry Percy.  
Prince. Why then I see  
A very valiant rebel of the name.  
I am the Prince of Wales, and think not, Percy,  
To share with me in glory any more;  
Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere,  
Nor can one England brook a double reign  
Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales.

---

Hot. Nor shall it, Harry, for the hour is come
To end the one of us, and would to God
Thy name in arm were now as great as mine!

Prince. I'll make it greater ere I part from thee,
And all the budding honours on thy crest
I'll crop to make a garland for my head.

Hot. I can no longer brook thy vanities. 49

Thus Hal makes a solemn vow to his father and King, even as
he aspires to heroism;

Prince. And God forbid them that so much have sway'd
Your Majesty's good thoughts away from me!
I will redeem all this on Percy's head,
Be bold to tell you that I am your son,
And stain my favours in a bloody mask,
Which, wash'd away, shall scour my shame with it;
And that shall be the day, whe'er it lights,
That this same child of honour and renown,
This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight
And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.
For every honour sitting on his helm,
Would they were multitudes, and on my head
My shames recooled! For the time will come
That I shall make this northern youth exchange
His glorious deeds for my indignities.

49 I. p. 58-73.
Percy is my factor, good my lord,
And I will call him to strict account
That he shall render every glory up,
Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,
Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.
This in the name of God I promise here,
The which if He be pleas'd I shall perform,
I do beseech your Majesty may salve
The long-grown wounds of my intemperance;
If not, the end of life cancels all bonds,
And I will die a hundred thousand deaths
Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow. 50

The knightly vow composite in the chivalric constitution
was of manifold dimensions. It contained social, moral and religious aspects and was even put to romantic service. In the feudal system the vow comprised the oath of allegiance of tenants to overlords and the reciprocal oath of feudal protection by the noble. The oath as practised by the nobility, was stamped with the incontestable mark of religiosity. In the absence of elaborate judicial procedures it was seen to be a necessary constitutional form. As the social structure was beginning to be redefined, such an oath was also being shaken in its solid

50 ibid., Act III, Sc. II, l 130-159.
foundation. As for the vow, constituting a form of chivalrous culture, there was a marked decadence as to its significance, sometimes degenerating into a mock convention for amusement and reillery. In the new social circumstances, the oath was also assuming more sophisticated instrumentation. In the sixteenth century as civil procedures were hammered out, the oath was put to vigorous practice in the judicial and bureaucratic system. The Tudor State also deployed the instrumentation of the oath in its efforts at curbing non-conformist and sectarian organisation. The crucial importance of the oath is reinforced out its significance had altered. In the newly conceived Tudor monarchy of the 16th century, and the mission of a centralised State, the question of allegiances to a sovereign Prince was made the cardinal point of consideration. In this context, the chivalrous vow of Hal assumes prominence

51 See J. Huizing, op.cit., p. 39.
53 Ibid. p. 373.
by virtue of its avowal to the King and father. What is equally significant is the new protestant liberalisation.

In a changing scene of values the oath is seen to be taken and broken in a variety of contexts, as shown in 'King John'. The oath of allegiance to overlord, the oath to one's peers, oath to the orthodox church and oath of a league of nations are all shown to be at conflict, calling into question the authority of the oath itself.

Constance insists on the validity of an oath made by the King:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Const. It cannot be; thou dost but say 'tis so.} \\
&\text{I trust I may not trust thee, for thy Lord} \\
&\text{Is but the vain breath of a common man;} \\
&\text{Believe me, I do not believe thee, man;} \\
&\text{I have a King's oath to the contrary.}
\end{align*}
\]

(The Desdemona, Act II, Sc ii, l 6-10)

The bastard, with usual outspokenness and practical insight remarks: 'Since kings break faith upon commodity, 

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee!}
\end{align*}
\]

However it is the Papal legate Pandulph who shows the confusion that the oath has created as he quibbles:

\[
\begin{align*}
&P\text{and, So makes't thou faith an enemy to faith} \\
&\text{And like a civil war set'st oath to oath,} \\
&\text{Thy tongue against thy tongue, u, let thy vow} \\
&\text{First made to heaven, first be to heaven perform'd,} \\
&\text{That is to be the champion of our church,} \\
&\text{What since thou sware'st is sworn against thyself} \\
&\text{And may not be performed by thyself,} \\
&\text{For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss} \\
&\text{Is not amiss when it is truly done,} \\
&\text{And being not done, where doing tends to ill,} \\
&\text{The truth is then most done; not doing it;} \\
&\text{The better act of purposes mistook} \\
&\text{Is to mistake again; though indirect} \\
&\text{Yet indirectness thereby goes direct,} \\
&\text{And falsehood falsehood cures, as fire cools fire} \\
&\text{By what thou sware'st against the thing thou sware'st} \\
&\text{And makes't an oath the surety for thy truth!} \\
&\text{Against an oath the truth thou art unsure} \\
&\text{To swear - swears only not to be forsworn!} \\
&\text{Else what a mockery should it be to swear?} \\
&\text{But thou dost swear only to be forsworn,} \\
&\text{And most forsworn, to keep what thou dost swear} \\
&\text{Therefore thy later vows against thy first} \\
&\text{Is in thyself rebellion to thyself;}
\end{align*}
\]

(The Desdemona, Act III, Sc i, l 189-215)
of the oath, in the context of expanding trade and commerce, to the conscientious promise, and eventually to an economic contract. 55

It was one of the transforming features of the later middle ages that the apparatus of chivalry are induced in all their splendour. However the heroic feats, the tourneys and jousts, and the juridical duels, prepared with grand display, all fall short of being carried to their logical outcome. Personal allegiances and customary law made verdict by duel tenable in the case of disputes between noblemen. However, such recourse to subjective solutions would act as a deterrent to the process of consolidation of a centralised State. Yet it was specific to chivalric decadence that such display be arranged in a persistent manner, just as verbal expression of a determination to embark on a crusade became a practice. Neither were the trade routes to the East as materially fruitful, nor was the concept of an universal Christendom and dictates of a Christian Church that sanctified such ventures, wholly welcome to the unitary State. However, lip service to practice of crusades

persisted in ritualistic form. In 'King Richard II' the preparations for a juridical duel is shown in ceremonial detail, but the actual combat never occurs as Richard calls it off. Here the King is seen to arbitrate, rather than the combat itself to seal the matter. As Richard himself declares, the clash of such a nobility would result in civil chaos. That Richard makes the fatal mistake of proclaiming the decree of banishment and repealing Hereford's terms to six years is a question of insufficiency of political strategy on his part, which dolingerroke capitalizes upon. Henry IV's reference to an intended crusade may also be seen as a decadent form of medieval chivalry.

The gestures of chivalry now extended to the forging of international relations. Codification of international law was based on the principles of the canon law and the Roman law.

Critics have been baffled by the termination of the combat by Richard. To some it has revealed petulance on Richard's part and therefore builds his 'character' for the later irresponsibility that he reveals. Others have seen the combat as Shakespeare's treatment of a stereotype upon which he had breathed new life. (See Intro. King Richard II, Arden, 1975, p. lxiii - lxv). We maintain that the chivalric stereotype is seen to become deficient in the modern era, whereas the rulers' legal powers are emphasized. At the same time rebellion, as an aftermath of aristocratic antagonism, stood as a constant threat in the bourgeois consciousness.
However the chivalric code was often enlisted for the establishment of the new principles of international relations.\textsuperscript{57} The chivalric gesture of King Henry IV in releasing Douglas, the Scottish rebel, free of ransom is perhaps a tribute to such a development.

The peasant uprising led by Jack Cade requires an assessment. We have seen that rebellion from the peasantry was often instigated by the nobility, who counteracted the central authority. That there was social discontent and that the conditions for subversion were genuine and acute was a fact of history of this period.\textsuperscript{58} What we are here concerned

\textsuperscript{57} See J. Huizinga, op.cit. p. 104-5.

\textsuperscript{58} In cultural materialist theory, this subversion is seen to be contained or destroyed when it was presented in literature, and especially in the theatre. From this perspective, power (especially in literature) is seen to enlarge upon subversion and then to contain it. The syndrome of power is in fact this subversion-containment condition.\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{(See Stephen Greenblatt, "Invisible bullets; Renaissance authority and its subversion, 'Henry IV' and 'Henry V'," in Holm and Sinfield, op.cit. p. 28-30.) Thus in literature, a constant vilification of the 'other' is conducted. Political transgression or sexual deviancy is displaced on to the 'other', to demonise it. But it also requires to be constantly produced, for power thrives on it.}
to locate is Shakespeare's representation of certain important cultural categories through the dramatisation of the Jack Cade rebellion and which are thereby reinforced.

One of the programmes of the Tudor State had been the drive for literacy and the control of educational institutions by the State, that had earlier been under clerical control. For the new State to establish its power, education not only of the gentry, but also of the nobility, was perceived to be necessary. For the 'new men' of the Tudor age, education had become the stepping-stone to success in political careers. Here, the perverted view of literacy, so recklessly adopted by Jack Cade, reveals the social tension that this new drive for literacy had generated, and at the same time renders demonical that constituent of society which opposes this programme. Thus Jack Cade orders for the mindless execution of the Clerk of Chartham:

Cade. ..... Dost thou use to write thy name? Or hast thou a mark to thyself, like an honest plain-dealing man?

Clerk. Sir, I thank God I have been so well brought up that I can write my name.

All. He hath confess'd; away with him! he's a villain and a traitor.
Cade. Away with him, I say: hang him with his pen and ink-horn about his neck. 59

Cade orders for the dismantling of the Savoy and the Inns of Court, and accuses Lord Say:

Cade. ....... Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar-school; and whereas, before, our forefathers had no other books but the score and the tally, thou hast caus'd printing to be used, and contrary to the king his crown, and dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill. It will be prov'd to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun, and a verb, and such odious words as no Christian ear can endure to hear. 60

And as the Messenger reports to the King: "All scholars, lawyers, courtiers, gentlemen/They call false caterpillars and intend their death". This in fact undermines Cade's whole strategy of revolt, which is rendered ridiculous in the theatrical representation.

60 Ibid., Act IV, Sc. VII, 130-38.
Secondly, the Jack Cade rebellion focuses on the manifestation of tyranny and arbitrary power. Before Cade proclaims himself the king and emerges the self-styled tyrant, he establishes what was the primary definition of monarchical power, that is the question of pedigree:

**But.** Silence!

*Cade.* My father was a Mortimer----

**But. (Aside)** He was an honest man, and a good bricklayer.

*Cade.* My mother a Plantagenet,---

**But. (Aside)** I knew her well; she was a midwife.

*Cade.* My wife descended of the Lacies---

**But. (Aside)** She was, indeed, a pedlar's daughter, and sold many laces.

*Weaver. (Aside)* But not of late, not able to travel with her furtr'd pack, she washes ocks here at home.

*Cade.* Therefore am I of an honourable house.  

*Cade* confirms his lineage by dubbing himself a knight, reducing the venerable institution to a mere gesture:

*Cade.* To equal him, I will make myself a knight presently.  

(kneels) Rise up Sir John Mortimer. (Rises)  

*Now have at him!*  


The arbritariness of absolute power is evident as Cade plans to enhance his powers to their limit:

Cade. Now is Mortimer lord of this city. And here, sitting upon London Stone, I charge and command that, of the city's cost, the pissing-conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign. And now henceforward it shall be treason for any that calls me other than Lord Mortimer.63

Again,

But. Only that the laws of England may come out of your mouth.

Hol. (Aside) ...........

Cade. I have thought upon it; it shall be so. Away I burn all the records of the realm; my mouth shall be the parliament of England.

Hol. (Aside) Then we are like to have sitting statues, unless his teeth be pull'd out.

Cade. And henceforward all things shall be in common.64

Thus the claims to absolutism not only drives the state's commissioners to their gruesome deaths, but also proposes an egalitarianism, and which is rendered outrageous by the advantages

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63 ibid., Act IV, Sc. VI, l 1-5.
64 ibid., Act IV, Sc. VII, l 5-17.
that he tyrannically claims for himself. Indeed Cade inverts the directives of private property and ownership in no uncertain terms:

Cade. ...... There shall be in England seven half-penny loaves sold for a penny; the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops; and I will make it felony to drink small beer. All the realm shall be in common, and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass. And when I am king, as king I will be, —

All. God save your Majesty!

Cade. I thank you, good people — there shall be no money; all shall eat and drink on my score, and I will apparel them all in one livery, that they may agree like brothers, and worship me their lord. 65

By the same inverted logic he maintains:

Cade. .......

The proudest peer in this realm shall not wear a head on his shoulders, unless he pay me tribute; there shall not a maid be married, but one shall pay to me her maidenhead, ere they have it. Men shall hold of me in capite; and we charge and command that their wives be as free as heart can wish or tongue can tell. 66

65 I. i. 62-72.
66 I. v. 114-119.
The very conception of power and hierarchy, the social construct and state systems, that Jack Cade is here seen to turn topsy-turvy, were also the cause for resentment of that section of malcontents in society, expressed in the sectarian religiosity of Anabaptism. The State, social ranks, property and the state system was vociferously decried, such that they were hounded as anarchists (See section on 'Religion and the secular State').

Significantly, Cade meets his end at the hands of the country gentleman, Iden. Forming the backbone of the flexible organisation that was the Tudor army, the peasantry was encouraged to be hardy and fit (we have referred to Jacob's opinion in this regard earlier). The inomitable Cade, whose robustness York had earlier testified confronts the sturdy Iden thus:

Cade. .......
0, I am slain! Famine and no other hath slain me: let ten thousand devils come against me, and give me but the ten meals I have lost, and I'd defy them all.

......
Iden, farewell; and be proud of thy victory. Tell

Kent from me, she hath lost her best man, and exhort all the world to be cowards; for I, that never feared any, am vanquished by famine, not by valour. 68

To the spokesmen of the hierarchy, rebellion was the question that occupied their repeated exhortations. Its disastrous consequences was harped upon in no uncertain terms. The State conducted its own direct propaganda against rebellion, citing the scriptures to illustrate that Kings were directly appointed by God: "As it is written of God in the book of Proverbs 'Through me kings do reign, through counsellors make just laws; through me do princes bear rule and all judges of the earth execute judgement' "69

St Paul's dictum was repeatedly invoked:

"Let every soul submit himself unto the authority of the higher powers: for there is no power out of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, but they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." 70

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69 Quoted from Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, op. cit., p. 65.
70 Romans, XIII, 1-7.
The sanctity of the monarch was thus maintained and the most seditious literature of the times was wary of inciting rebellion directly. In fact obedience to the Queen was repeatedly urged. We have seen that from their partisan standpoints, the religious sects at times digressed from the official policy, but direct resistance was rarely incited. Catholics and Puritans, Separatists and Calvinists, by and large backed the Queen in England and exorted against disobedience. We have seen that resistance from the Roman Church was always a threat to government. Aristocratic defiance from various quarters was a nagging problem. However Tudor regime brought these refractory elements under control, while resistance from the lower orders was ruthlessly terminated.

To the elite and literate groups obedience to the Queen was of expressed concern. To English Catholicism as well as to the Puritans, disagreeable though some of the government's policies could be, rebellion against the Prince was never justified. Even the unflinching Calvinist, Cartwright, preached "tarrying for the magistrate", and even where conscience demanded disobedience, the magistrates' punishments were to be patiently endured. 71 Even to extreme Puritans, insisting upon a pure

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Church, like the Separatists, obedience to the civil magistrate was acknowledged. The private individual, said Darowe, must not obey the Prince in religious doctrine that went against his conscience, but must not take it upon himself "to reform the State", much less to rebel, which would be "most unlawful and damnable by the word of God".  

Shakespeare's version of an ordered, obedient society is perhaps expressed best in the honey-bee speech of Canterbury:

Exe. It follows then the cat must stay at home; 
Yet that is out a crush'd necessity, 
Since we have locks to safeguard necessaries 
And pretty traps to catch the petty thieves, 
While that the armed hand doth fight abroad 
Th' adviseo head defends itself at home: 
For government, though high and low and lower, 
Put into parts, doth keep in one consent, 
Congreasing in a full and natural close, 
Like music.

Cant. Therefore doth heaven divide 
The state of man in divers functions, 
Setting endeavour in continual motion; 
To which is fixed, as an aim or out, 
Obedience; for so work the honey-bees; 
Creatures that by a rule in nature teach 
The act of order to a peopled kingdom, 
They have a king and officers of sorts;  

72 ibid. p. 179.
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad,
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds;
which pillage they with merry march bring home
to the tent-royal of their emperor;
who, busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing masons building roofs of gold,
The civil citizens kneading up the honey,
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate,
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to executors pale
The lazy yawning drone. I this infer,
That many things, having full reference
To one consent, may work contrariously;
As many arrows, loosed several ways,
Come to one mark; as many ways meet in one town;
As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea;
As many lines close in the dial's centre;
So many a thousand actions, once afoot,
End in one purpose, and be all well borne
without defeat. 73

Providence, Religion and the Secular State

The conceptual change in the idea of what was to be termed 'Providence' in the Christian world, from that of the classical period is especially noteworthy. It forms the essence of the Christian philosophy which dominates all consciousness in the middle ages. Propagated mainly through clerical literature, the Christian philosophy makes the fundamental assertion that God was being above all; that he existed. While Platonism expounded a theory of God as a compound of essences, Aristotelian thought rendered him a self-contemplating cause. Christian thought attributed to God an unique existence, infinite and complete in itself, who was also the direct cause of creation. The Christian God was therefore the ultimate reference of all creation, making providence a separate being on the one hand, and yet divinely manifested in all creations, man included. Creation was seen as a free act of God, rather than as an eternal procession. From this basic inference it followed that (1) all existence was not a distortion of reality (in the Platonic sense), but was germane to enquiry. It was essentially good, what was evil, was also held to be the manifestation of God's free
will upon fallen man. (2) Within this framework, death and
then creation was succeeded by man's journey through the
world, to the final consummation of the soul in eternal
salvation or eternal reprobation, and finally, (3) the
breath with God and creation could be gulfed by man, only
with divine grace awarded to the rational creature.\footnote{74}

In the 16th century this composite picture took a
jolt, as these premises are redefined in no uncertain terms.
Religion forms the most potent form of ideological expression.
Religious doctrine gets confounded in a variety of sects, each
proclaiming itself as the "true church" while raising questions
of religious tolerance for the state. Besides its involvement
in the political administration of the medieval Church, the
State now became embroiled in questions of religion, for
social, political and moral issues were determined in terms
of religion. As such the idea of Providence finds doctrinaire
re-interpretation, most authoritatively defined in Calvinism.
Here Providence becomes a very active agent, directly parti-
cipating in the affairs of the world, yet remaining inscrutable
to rational definition. The overbearance of this supreme

\footnote{74For this discussion, see J. Leff, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 17-19.}
sanction was elucidated through the Calvinist concepts of (1) God's will (2) Justification by Faith (3) Predestination of Elect and (4) Communion with God through the Bible and the individual conscience. If God was therefore unavailable to rational explication, it was an unquestionable faith and acceptance of God's will that sought to explain the lot and the mission of men.

The avowed purpose of Calvinism was the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven, which again rested on the will of God. The temporal mission of men, relative to his spiritual existence necessitated the spreading of the true word of God. This was available to men in the scriptures and truth was therefore revealed and could be demonstrated rather than rationalised. It may be noted that Calvinism was the creed of the commercial classes, of those engaged in trade and industry. A point had been reached in intellectual discourse where the main features of a commercial civilization was taken for granted and likewise a social morality to represent it had emerged. Calvinism thus deviates decidedly from the economic efforts and religious morality sanctioned by the medieval church. Appeal was made to the conscience of the individual to act with natural justice.\[75\]

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75See Tawney, op.cit., p. 107.
The new license that appeared with the Reformation not only in the matter of church administration and policy, but also in the context of religious beliefs and practice was defined by the Protestant creed and by Calvinism and its Puritan version in England, where religion had been a unifying and palliating force in medieval society, the actual disintegration of societal relations finds expression in the vested interests of religious groups. Besides the creed of the dominant religious persuasion (in England Protestantism), a number of religious affiliations gave expression to the seething discontent of these groups in society. Anarchism among the lower classes, Calvinist deviations such as Separatists, dourists, Arminianism, and Puritanism (in England), Humanist Revival Groups, and of course the traditional Papal Catholicism and its revival of orthodoxy or the Counter-Reformation. The dislodging of the medieval church and consequently the traditional ecclesiastical feudalism called for momentous changes in the balance of power and property. In enfolding the church organisation in its power structure and disengaging Papal clutches on church and society, the State could in effect establish a national Anglican church, subsumed under it. Thus the State could not avoid the fundamental question of religion, which had been the dominant ideological
apparatus of the medieval church. In fact now the bourgeoisie 
finds in the visionary speculations that was religion, the 
foremost instrument for the legitimation of the state and 
social relations, and the most substantive prop for actually 
conducting the necessary state operations.

In this connection the chief questions that occupied 
the political pamphleteers and thinkers in their discourse 
were (1) repudiation of Papal claims and (II) how much was 
involved in the royal supremacy in the administration of 
God's word. In the first instance, it was necessary to make 
invalid all Papal claims, and to mention that the clergy 
possessed no rightful jurisdiction or coercive authority, and 
that they had no right to govern the church. Since the church 
itself could not be dissolved, the point for deliberation was 
how it was to be governed. It was argued that God intended 
that the government of the church should be in the hands of 
the final civil authority. This was deemed to be no new claim, 
but a resumption of duties allotted by God to the civil 
magistrates from the beginning. It was argued that in his own 
kingdom of the Jews, God had given the secular power the 
authority to punish evil doers. The care of the Church was 
therefore committed to civil authority, who would have to
account to God. Therefore spiritual jurisdiction was justified for the State, and was an imperative from God. As Cranmer noted "All Christian Princes have committed unto them immediately of God the whole cure of all their subjects as well as concerning the administration of God's Word for the cure of souls, as concerning the ministration of things political and civil governance". The Pope's power had therefore been usurped powers. And just as Acts of Parliaments regarding the supremacy of civil ruler were regarded to be resumption of ancient Acts, by the logic of the same archaism, Henry was resuming ancient powers in the Church. It was argued that the duty of every Christian was to adhere to the Church of his own land and live in obedience to his Prince, the head of this branch of the Church Catholic. The Church Catholic had however no need of any common Head. It was intended by God that a national king should rule a national Church.

As regards the actual degree of royal supremacy in the administration of God's Word, it was maintained that the magistrate had the confirmed duty of spreading the word of God, and punishing the heretic, if necessary by force. To this end, 

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76 See C. Morris, op.cit., p. 37.
the scriptures and the revealed word of God was available to the secular magistrate to demonstrate truth if required. It was his chief duty to establish true religion and as Calvin pointed out truth was 'manifestly known'. Nonconformists (to Protestantism in England) were to be suppressed by the sword, and intolerance of all other sects was the watchword of the Calvinist discipline, that was no less a part of Tudor royal supremacy. These circumstances had even installed a degree of divine right upon the ruler (see Chapter I).

The momentous changes in the nature of the state that includes in itself the powerful church organisation required a re-definition of these new circumstances and institutional changes. The old phraseology that had described the Church and State as two separate powers under one commonwealth or Church of God, were still applied but the implications had definitely altered. To quote the 12th century canonist again:

"In the one commonwealth and under the one king there are two peoples, two modes of life, two authorities and a two fold jurisdiction. The Commonwealth is the Church; the two peoples are the two orders of the Church - that is the clergy and the laity; the two modes of life are the spiritual and the carnal, the two authorities are the priesthood and the kingship, the
two fold jurisdiction is the divine law and the human. Give each its due and all things will be brought into agreement.\footnote{See R.W. Carlyle and A.J. Carlyle, \textit{A History of Medieval Political Theory in the West}, Vol. IV, p. 393.} 

This conception of a separation of State and Church was still contained in the Calvinist ideal that was Geneva. The Church-State that Calvin proclaimed insisted on the supreme authority of the Calvinist church, both in matters of jurisdiction and doctrine. This Church was however structurally and doctrinally different from the orthodox Church. The Papal church was no longer the authority over the Calvinist Church of Geneva. Calvin however continues with the old terminology of the two separate powers, viz. the spiritual and the civil. While the civil power existed for the suppression of blasphemy and idolatry, it was for the Church to declare true religion, or what constitutes godly living. Excommunication from Church, to Calvin, was the loss of civil rights. Calvin was also insistent upon the unity of religion in the interests of a unified nation, that was so necessary to bourgeois enterprise at that time. Calvin's 'Institute' defines a Church-State, so does deja's (1579)
'De Haereticus', which maintains that the end of political society was service to God and therefore the magistrate's function was to enjoin true religion.\textsuperscript{78}

English Protestantism and the more sharply defined religious persuasion, that is Puritanism, developed these notions of Calvin to denote the nature of the State vis-à-vis the Church. In England, the reins of power being drawn into the hands of a paternal monarchy, with a degree of decentralisation of a bureaucracy, the claims of a Church-state were weak. Puritanism had to assimilate genteel awareness, rather than pose a rigid Calvinism. The Anglican, or the official position was best illustrated by Hooker, where the archaic notion of the identification of Church and state in a single society is repeated, but which significantly differs from the medieval position that sought to divorce the two powers.\textsuperscript{79}

Here the jurisdiction of the church is seen to merge in what

\textsuperscript{78} See Allen, op. cit., p. 98.

\textsuperscript{79} In the 14th century this idea was threshed out by Marsilus of Padua (\textit{Defensor Pacis}) and in the works of William of Occam. Reacting against papal absolutism, or 'plenitudo potertasis' - both writers sought to merge the two powers within a self-sufficing secular community, national in composition as against an universal and apostolic church (see Böhme, op. cit., p. 298-305)
was the King's ecclesiastical laws of England:

"We mean by the Commonwealth that society with relation unto all public affairs thereof, only the matter of true religion expected; by the Church, that same society, with only reference unto the matter of true religion, without any other affair respect."

Archbishop Laud echoes a similar view: "Both Church and State are one Jerusalem;"

"Both Commonwealth and Church are collective bodies, made up of many into one; and so nearly alike, that the one, the Church can never subsist but in the other, the Commonwealth; nay, so near, that the same men, which in a temporal respect make the Common, so in a spiritual make the Church."

while the State as an institution, and the King as the chief executive, were demonstrated to be supreme in authority, from the viewpoint of a religious commonwealth and the establishment of true religion, there was opinion that detracted from such supernatural sanctions presumably conferred upon the State.


81 quoted from Tunney, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
The most antagonistic reaction to the state expressed in terms of religious sectarianism, was the Anabaptist protest. To that section of the society, dispossessed and pauperized, magistracy was considered to be evil, and state as hostile. The magistrate was an offender against God and had no right to coerce religious conformity. Magistracy was as hateful as episcopacy, and such forceful assertion of governance and law was an offence against God himself. Expression of social discontent was made by this section of society in no uncertain terms. Governance, law, jurisdiction, legal property and social ranks, in fact the whole fabric of society was specified and its forceful establishment decried. Everywhere they were relentlessly pursued by the state — not as heretics, but as anarchists. Yet their religious commitment made out their avowed purpose to be the establishment of the Church of the elect and the Kingdom of the spirit, with an egalitarian society where property was held in common. 32

Not as radical as the Anabaptist movement, but none the less contrary to the conservative Protestant position, the

32 For the Anabaptist protest, see Allen, op. cit., 43-44.
Puritan expression of dissatisfaction at state policy and performance was constantly voiced. Hopeful of a more insidious power through the Church, the Puritan faction harped upon the rule of the Elect, the punishment of the reprobate, and the authority of the ruler himself was seen as limited by the word of God, whereas early Puritanism/Calvinism insisted upon discipline, it was increasingly to inner conscience that they appealed and rested their faith. Towards the end of her rule Elizabeth was confronted with the Separatist movement that began to organise upon a centrifugal congregational system, and decisively divorced from the Tudor conservative position which sought to placate all sections of society. To establish a Church of the Elect that did not conform to the Protestant Church, but reliant upon the working of Conscience, was indeed a divergence that the state could barely tolerate. It also had its variations such as Arminianism of the 17th century, that relied on the freedom of will against predestination. Yet Puritanism of the Elizabethan age was not a movement for outright resistance, as voiced by some of the anti-monarchical opinion of the time like Knox, Goodman, Ponet et al (see Chapter I).
The Tudor State was confronted with the traditional orthodoxy of the Papal Church. However, adopting a mediatory position between the orthodox church, and royal supremacy, was the pacifism of the Humanist Revival Group. To this intellectual persuasion, a reformed undivided church was possible with scholarship and theology, Platonism and Christianity. To Castillon (1515), or Acontius (who worked under Elizabeth as an engineer), persecution was futile, for it could not touch the soul of man. Righteousness and salvation were the only undeniable truth. To the Commonwealth men (More, Starkey etc) moderation and study paved the path leading to peace.

The complex situation and the peculiarity of ideas that defined the State vis a vis the Church, was no less compounded by the presence of the orthodox views presented by the papal church. Argument centred upon the crucial question of salvation. Counter Reformation of the Church persisted upon the notion that the end of life was salvation. All earthly activity was meaningful towards that end. Since the Church was the guide to salvation, government action and all secular rulers must be controlled or directed by Pope or its general Council. 83 Here the secular

83 Allen, op.cit., p. 12.
and the ecclesiastical functions of society were divorced.

As we have seen, the Tudor official viewpoint identified the state and Church in a compounded form, with the secular authority in control. (There was also the Calvinist extremist view of a Church-state). The concept of a Church and state as aspects of a single organisation, made it possible to hold that the secular prince was head of the Church, and yet that the end of social organization was the salvation of souls.

Hooker asserts: "A gross error it is to think that royal power ought to serve for the good of the body and not of the soul, for men's temporal peace and not for their eternal safety; as if God had ordained kings for no other end or purpose but only to fat up men like hogs and to see that they have their masts." We have already quoted Cranmer who voiced a similar viewpoint. However, this was disclaimed by the more extreme section of the Puritans. To the separatist Robert Browne (1582), magistrates "have no ecclesiastical authority at all, but only as any other Christian" and magistrates have no "authority... to be prophets or priests or spiritual kings."

In so far as the Church is in a Commonwealth, it is of their

84 quoted from Morris, op. cit. p. 192.
Influential opinion was concerned that the civil magistrate had a right to govern the church on grounds of maintenance of order. The descent of chaos was presumed to be the alternative. Religion therefore had a value not to the individual only -- in his communion with God, for his salvation, and for prescribing his social morality -- but it was also essential to the maintenance of an ordered society. For these reasons resistance to the civil authority was discouraged most rigidly. Thus the politics of power and the social grievances found expression in the sectarian controversies, while the Elizabethan mediatory stance established its own orthodox position and rebutted the charges of religious minorities.

Shakespeare's expressed concern with the finer aspects of these questions, that we have so far analysed, can be estimated from his rendition of the "ideal king" that was Henry V. What goes to make Henry such a model of perfection such that

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35 Morris, op.cit., p. 169.
Shakespeare is here seen by critics to explicitly make state propaganda are these essential qualities of kingship:

1. his political prowess and knowledge of commonwealth affairs
2. his role as the warrior prince
3. his role as the ideal Christian prince

Thus the Archbishop of Canterbury observes:

Cant. Hear him out reason in divinity
   And, all-admiring with an inward wish
   You would desire the King were made a prelate
   Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs
   You would say it hath been all in all his study;
   List his discourse of war, and you shall hear
   A fearful battle render'd you in music:
   Turn him to any cause of policy,
   The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,
   Familiar as his garter; that, when he speaks,
   The air, a charter'd libertine, is still,
   And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears,
   To steal his sweet and honey'd sentences.

Henry V lays claims to perfection in matters of state, whether in the traditional role of justiciar (the treasonous

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86 Dollimore and Sinfield describe the play as an attempt at consolidating ideology, which however was more complex than a simple process of legitimation and contradiction, and conflicts are seen to exist putting ideology to strain. See Dollimore & Sinfield, "History and Ideology", in J. Drakakis ed. Alternative Shakespeares, Methuen, 1985, p. 211.

case of Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey) or the wise king who rules with counsel, acknowledges Parliament, and abides by the warrant of that law which is veritable, and not misguided sophistry. That the play advances national and imperialist designs in the presentation of a war pre-eminently lead by a warrior king is unmistakable.\textsuperscript{88} However it is the third important aspect of the play, that is the representation in King Henry of the Christian Prince, that is here scrutinised. We have seen that this particular function of the ruler had stimulated consistent debate in the Tudor era. The spokesmen of the hierarchy had imputed upon the Prince newly defined powers and accorded upon him a major clerical programme. Thus the ruler's part in the repudiation of Papal claims, insistence on secular supremacy in matters of church governance, and even in expounding upon theology if necessary, was counteracted with opinion with diverse and contradictory views relating to religious doctrine and the administration of the church.

Consolidating the orthodox Tudor position, Henry VII with the assumption of royal power presumes to make imperial claims

\textsuperscript{88} for this aspect of the play see, Dollimore & Sinfield, "History and Ideology", in Orakakis, op. cit., p. 215-217.
upon France, but does so with consummate political skill in maintaining the Crown's relation with the clerical administration. The Church administration is seen to continue to keep in abeyance the royal assumption of Church property, through divergence on to the French project. Yet Henry's adroitness in assimilating clerical knowledge for secular purposes and thereby mollifying possible discontent is noteworthy. Therefore, while the Salic law confirms the rights to the French incursions — thus also making the king honour the law — its extended illustration by the prelates in fact acknowledges their part in secular governance. 

What is particularly emphasised about Henry is the transformation that overcomes him from the irresponsible youth to a purged and reformed ruler. True to his claims: "We are no tyrant but a Christian King," Henry's metamorphosis has been incurred as if of divine intervention, while he was seen to be purged of his youthful dissoluteness and sinful state. The imagery definitely invokes a spiritual regeneration. Henry


90 For the allusions for what has been termed the Christian Prince as defined by Erasmus, Chelidonius and others see J.W. Walter (ed), Shakespeare's King Henry V, Arden, Lond. 1974, p. XVI-XVII.
was not in contrariety to the Church:

Cant. The king is full of grace and fair regard.

Ely. And a true lover of the holy Church.

Cant. The courses of his youth promis'd it not.

The breath no sooner left his father's body,

Seam'd to die too; yea, at that very moment,

Consideration like an angel came,

And whipp'd the offending Adam out of him,

Leaving his body as a Paradise,

T'envelop and contain celestial spirits.

Never was such a sudden scholar made;

Never came reformation in a flood,

With such a heady current, scouring faults;

Nor never Hydra-headed wilfulness

So soon did lose his seat - and all at once -

As in this king.  

If this transformation has its spiritual and Christian flavour, Henry is redeemed not by any baptismal service or through a reincarnated Christ, but through subjective repentance ('Consideration'). This idea is tested further as the self-proclaimed 'Christian Prince' is seen to be converted through

'practice' and is in fact compared with natural crucification, rather than as the occurrence of miracles. Thus the two clerics comment:

Cant. .......
So that art and practice part of life,
Must be the mistress to this theoretic;
Which is a wonder how his grace should glean it
Since his addiction was to courses vain;
His companies unletter'd, rude and shallow;
His hours fill'd up with riots, banquets, sports;
And never noted in him any study,
Any retirement, any sequestration
From open haunts and popularity.

Ely. The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,
And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
Neighbour'd by fruit of lower quality;
And so the prince occupi'd his contemplation
Under the veil of wilness; which no doubt,
Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,
Unseen yet vigorous in his faculty.

Cant. It must be so; for miracles are past;
And therefore we must needs admit the means
How things are perfected.92

True to the Elizabethan 'via media', Henry adopts the role of a 'Christian Prince', yet such transformation is seen as practising politics and attained by means that have their source in human faculties rather than in miraculous transformation. However there was also the question of divine intervention that was not overlooked (in the Puritan sense).

To the categorical instrumentation of God in this regard, due acknowledgement is made by Henry himself, rather than by the Church clerics. Thus to the messengers of the Dauphin Henry retorts:

\[
\text{K. Hen. \ldots...}
\]

Tell him he hath made a match with such a trullar
That all the courts of France will be disturbed
with chases. And we understand him well,
How he comes bett us with our wilder days,
Not measuring what use we made of them,
We never valued this poor seat of England,
And therefore, living hence, did give ourself
To wanton licence; as 'tis even common
That men are merriest when they are from home.
But tell the Dauphin I will keep my state,
Be like a king and show my sail of greatness
When I do rouse me in my home of France;
For that I have laid by my majesty
And plodded like a man for working-days,
But I will rise there with so full a glory
That I will dazzle all the eyes of France,
Yea, strike the Dauphin blind to look on us.
And tell the present prince this mock of his
Hath turn'd his oaks to gun-stones; and his soul
Shall stand sore charg'd for the wasteful vengeance
That shall fly with them; for many a thousand wits
Shall this his mock mock out of their dear husants;
Mock mothers from their sons, mock castles down;
And some are yet ungoten and unborn
That shall have cause to curse the Dauphin's son.
But this lies all within the will of God,
To whom I do appeal; and in whose name
Tell you the Dauphin I am coming on
To venge me as I may and put forth
My rightful hand in a well-hallow'd cause.93

Thus war as well as the conversion of Henry is seen to be the
strict involvement of God. Yet Henry avises by those tidings
that the erstwhile papal church had laid great store by. The
feast that the ire of a revengeful God may pay its visitation
upon an innocent people, for the sins of his father, still
haunts him on the eve of Agincourt;

K. Hen. O God of battles! steel my soldiers' hearts;
Possess them not with fear; take them now
The sense of reckoning, if the opposed numbers
Pluck their hearts from them. Not to-day, O Lord!
O not today, think not upon the fault
My father made in compassing the crown!
I Richard's body have interred new,
And on it have bestowed more contrite tears
Than from it issued forced drops of cloud
Five hundred poor I have in yearly pay,
Who twice a day their whiter'd hands hold up
Towards heaven, to pardon blood; and I have built
Two chantries, where the sad and solemn prayers
Sing still for Richard's soul. More will I do;
Though all that I can do is nothing worth,
Since that my penitence comes after all,
Imploring pardon. 94

The Elizabethan settlement continued to foster the
Church hierarchy and in fact used the Church network for the
purpose of secular governance. Though by and large, the
rituals and sacraments of the Catholic Church continued without
radical change, the establishment of the Protestant religion
required these new creeds of doctrine to be perpetuated. In

94 i. cl. Act IV, sc. I., l. 295-311.
fact the more trenchant religious precepts of the Puritan creed were forwarded with equal ardour by a large section of society. That the State had adopted some of these concepts with no less zeal was a fact of the Tudor State. Henry's acknowledgement of God's active agency in the miraculous victory of Agincourt was thus impressed:

K. Hen. ............

U God thy arm was here;
And not to us, but to thy arm alone,
Ascribe we all! when without stratagem,
but in plain shock and even play of battle
was ever known such great and little loss
On one part and on th' other? Take it, God,
For it is none but thine!

Exe. 'Tis wonderful!

K. Hen. Come, go we in procession to the village;
And be it death proclaimed through our host
To boast of this or take that praise from God
which is his only.

Flu. It is not lawful, as please your majesty, to tell
how many is killed?

K. Hen. Yes, captain; but with this acknowledgment,
That God fought for us.

Flu. Yes, my conscience, he did us great good.33
Besides these conceptual changes in the operation of Providence, we have seen that sectarian controversy had hinged upon the inevitable question of salvation, and the role of the secular ruler in his new founded supremacy, with regard to this crucial aspect of religion, and man's eternal life. The complexity of the idea as it is viewed from partisan standpoints is as aired once more in the drama. We have seen that to the spokesman of the hierarchy, the king's ecclesiastical function in this regard is acknowledged, whereas the traditional church was loathe to part with its own distinct prerogative as the mediator of the soul with the eternal spirit. The musings of Henry on the eve of Agincourt, as he converses incognito with his soldiers, analyses the king's mediatory role between his subject and God. Here the individual's responsibility for his own spiritual destiny is urged:

K. Hen. ......... methinks I could not die anywhere so contented as in the king's company, his cause being just and his quarrel honourable.

Will. That's more than we know.

Jeth. Ay, and more than we should seek after; for we know enough if we know we are the king's subjects. If his cause be wrong, our obedience to the king wipes the crime of it out of us.
Will. But if the cause be not good, the king himself hath a heavy reckoning to make; when all those legs and arms and heads, chopped off in a battle, shall join together at the latter day, and cry all, "We died at such a place"; some swearing, some crying for a surgeon, some upon their lives left poor behind them, some upon the debts they owe, some upon their children really left. I am afraid there are few die well that die in a battle; for how can they charity dispose of anything when blood is their argument? Now, if these men do not die well, it will be a black matter for the king that led them to it, and to disobey were against all proportion of subjection.

K. Hen. So, if a son that is by his father sent about merchandise do sinfully miscarry upon the sea, the imputation of his wickedness, by your rule, should be imposed upon his father that sent him; if a servant, under his master's command transporting a sum of money, be assailed by robbers and die in many irreconciled iniquities, you may call the business of the master the author of the servant's damnation, but this is not so: the king is not bound to answer the particular ending of his soldier, the father of his son, nor the master of his servant; for they purpose not their death when they purpose their services. Besides there is no king, be his cause never so spotless, if it come to the arbitrament of
swords, can try it out with all unsotted soldiers. Some, peradventure, have on them the guilt of premeditated and contrived murder; some, of sequestering virgins with the broken seals of perjury, some, making the wars their pulpit, that have defilest the gullet's bosom of peace with pillage and robbery. Now, if these men have defeated the law and outrun native punishment, though they can outstrip men, they have no wings to fly from God: war is his only, war is his vengeance; so that here men are punished for before-break of the king's laws in war, the king's quarrel: where they feared the death they have borne life away, and where they could be save they perish. Then, if they die unprovided, no more is the king guilty of their damnation than he was before guilty of those impurities for which they are now visited. Every subject's duty is the king's; but every subject's soul is his own. Therefore should every subject in the wars do as every sick man in his bed, wash every mote out of his conscience; and dying to, death is to him advantage; or not by no, the time was blissfully lost wherein such preparation was gained; and in him that escapes, if were not sin to think that, making so fine an offer, he let him outlive that day to see his greatness, and to teach others how they should prepare.

will. 'Tis certain, every man that dies ill, the ill upon his own head; the king, is not to mock it. 96

9bcid., Act IV, sc. 1, l. 127-194.