

**Ministry of Higher education and Scientific Research
Mouloud MAMMERI University of Tizi Ouzou
Faculty of Letters and Humanities
Department of English**



*Dissertation Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Magister*

Option: Literature.

Speciality: English

Theme

War, Peace and Knowledge in William Shakespeare's Drama

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Academic Year: 2008/ 2009

Acknowledgements

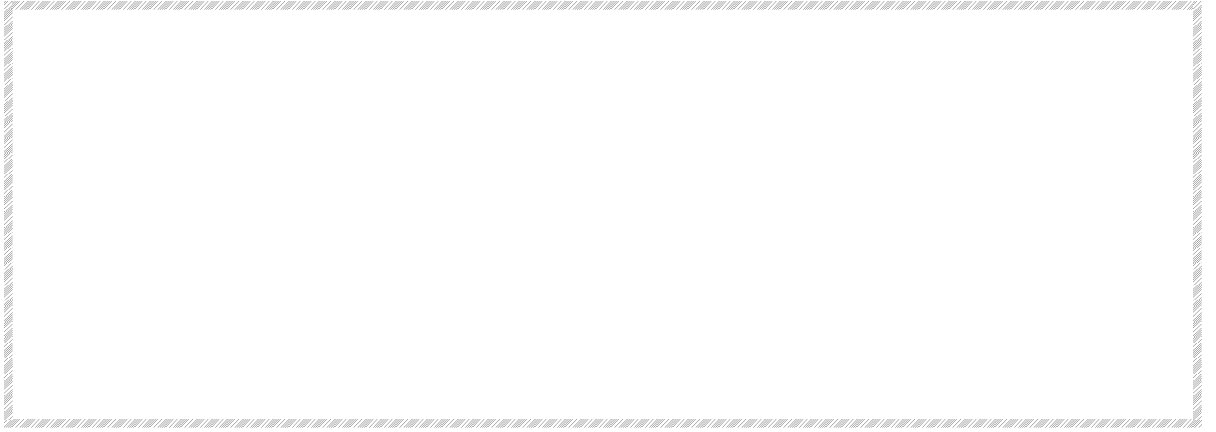
I would like to express my gratitude to Professor RICHE Boutelja for his help and guidance to achieve this research work.

Dedications

I would like to dedicate my research work to my family members and to all those who helped me.

My research work is equally dedicated to my fiancé *Youcef*.

Salima



Abstract

This dissertation deals with three representative plays by William Shakespeare with reference to the themes of war, peace, love and knowledge. The three plays are *Henry VI*, *Coriolanus*, and *The Tempest*, written respectively in 1594, 1607 and in 1611. One of the arguments developed in the dissertation is that Shakespeare's position concerning these themes was determined to a large extent by the intellectual and socio-political contexts in which they were produced. For example, the analysis shows that *Henry VI* was produced at a time of political turmoil and fear of political instability due to intrigue both at home and abroad, and that Shakespeare observed an ambiguous position towards war and peace. He praised the ideal of peace, he put more emphasis on the danger of war which can lead the country back to the chaos of the War of the Roses. War remained in the background, but it did not disappear completely as Elizabeth I and Henry VI were depicted as royals in love with knowledge. In *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare did not fail to poke fun at the war mongers. The times changed with the ascension to power by King James known for his pacifism. As he moved to the writing of *The Tempest*, Shakespeare depicted the Renaissance man par excellence in the shape of Prospero. The latter introduced revolutionary ideals in the practice of politics. Prospero was regarded as the best representative of this Renaissance man also who linked up the practice of politics with that of ethics. Knowledge became the best means to impose power and ensure political stability. The study is carried from the new-historicist perspective since it pays attention to the political and intellectual contexts of their production and consumption.

Introduction

Reason and passion, war and peace are among the polarities that Renaissance writers persistently thought about. Reflection upon war and peace was at the core of the Humanist movement. This concern with war and peace arose from the defining traits of humanism: its exaltation of fame, its ambiguous fascination with the military cultures of Greece and Rome, its emphasis on human dignity and freedom, its pursuit of secular knowledge in history and psychology, and its political commitment to improving the quality of institutional and personal life.

The humanist response to war and peace often came into opposing positions categorized as militarist opposed to pacifist. Associated with what some scholars name 'civic humanism', militarists like Machiavelli glorified an ideal of the Prince or courtier as soldier and scholar and regarded the warrior's activity as essential for individual achievement and satisfaction as well as for social order and stability. Their pacifist rivals, like Erasmus and Baldesare Castiglione, often branded as 'Christian Humanists', envisioned the ideal Prince or courtier as a jurist and philosopher, and condemned the military philosophy as irreligious, immoral and impractical. This debate shaped the actions of monarchs as well as the productions of artists and writers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Shakespeare repeatedly dramatized the disagreement between militarist and pacifist insights in the many plays he devoted to political issues. This dissertation charts Shakespeare's development from an irresolute and a hesitant enthusiast for war to a decisive partisan of peace in the course of his dramatic career. It argues that the central turning point of this development occurred between 1594 and

1607--the publication dates of his battlefield plays *Henry VI* (1594) and *Coriolanus* (1607) and that the shift in position reflects a shift in British foreign and domestic policy that began during the last decade of Queen Elizabeth's reign and was completed with the accession of King James I to the English throne.

William Shakespeare (1564 -1616) stands out among all other writers in English literature. His plays have caught the interest of critics all along centuries since their publication. The publication of these plays took place in a period of seventeen years (1594 -1611), spanning both the Elizabethan and the Jacobean eras. Among the most representative critics of Shakespeare's plays figures E. M. Tillyard, who belongs to the historicist school of criticism. In his *Shakespeare's History Plays* (1991), Tillyard interprets Shakespeare's *Henry VI* (1594) by resorting to the idea of the Great Chain of Being, which is supposed to be the image of the actual world. He tries to establish a link between the historical plays and the circumstances and the social as well as the intellectual backgrounds in which Shakespeare produced his plays.

Tillyard justifies his interpretation by the fact that there exists a direct link between the theme of order and dissension and the concept of the Great Chain of Being in the trilogy of *Henry VI* (Tillyard, 1991: 171). According to him, the Chain is built upon an order that must be respected and protected from all sorts of external threats that may cause chaos and disorder. Tillyard contends that chaos and disorder within the framework of the Chain would automatically lead to the same pessimistic state within the actual world. Other Historicist critics such as McEachern emphasise the fact that there is almost a total absence of the coercive power as far as the character of King Henry VI is concerned. Yet, whether the King

is actually looking for another kind of power or not is not developed further by these critics (McEachern, 1994: 33).

Feminist theorists constitute another category of critics who have tried to interpret Shakespeare's historical plays. These critics' views start exactly where the historicists' stopped. They consider King Henry VI as being overloaded with his Queen's demands. Coercive power for feminist critics manifests itself through Queen Margaret who indulges herself in the world of politics for fear of her son's loss of the English throne (McEachern, 1994: 104). Women in *Henry VI* are invested with a potential for manly activities like politics. This is true for both Queen Margaret and Eleanor who overpass some of the male characters in the trilogy in their thirst for political power.

Humanist criticism, on its part, is interested in the nature of the characters of Shakespeare's trilogy. Historicism is based upon the assumption that the humanist attitudes are based on two major characters in the play, King Henry VI and his Lord Protector Gloucester. The specificity of these characters is that they are not involved in warlike performances. Their philanthropic attitudes towards their entourage are given more prominence than their military activities. Furthermore, they display neither interest in political power nor ambition to hold the throne (Hazlitt, 1981: 27).

Scholars believe that *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare's last tragedy and arguably his most political play, was written and first performed in 1607. Set in republican Rome, the drama concentrates on the warrior-hero Caius Martius Coriolanus, a figure noted for his personal integrity, military ambition, devotion to martial virtue, and disdain for the Roman plebeians. Critics have traditionally maligned

Coriolanus, pointing to the shortcomings of its single-minded and unsympathetic tragic hero, atypical plot structure and rhetorical flatness. Modern scholars, however, have undertaken new critical approaches to the play's character, structure, and language, and have increasingly admired the drama for its rich socio-political and psychological significance.

Scholars consider *Coriolanus* to be one of the most psychologically interesting of Shakespeare's tragic heroes. Joyce Van Dyke (1977) approaches *Coriolanus*' character through his non-verbal self-expression and use of language, from his enraged outbursts of pride to his almost expressionless exchanges with his domineering mother Volumnia. In Van Dyke's reading, *Coriolanus* is unable to adequately articulate his thoughts verbally, which leads him to rely on a sequence of easily misinterpreted gestures that ultimately fail to convey his true intentions and contribute to his solitude, banishment, and political failure. Nancy Carolyn Michael (1978) concentrates on *Coriolanus* as an isolated, tragic figure whose failure involves an inability to assert his own humanity. The critic remarks on the general process of dehumanization that follows *Coriolanus* throughout the drama, and contends that although he attempts to define himself through his personal integrity, he instead projects an image of overweening pride.

Christopher Givan (1979) disagrees with critics who view *Coriolanus* as having gained a level of diplomacy and maturity by the play's end. Instead, Givan argues that *Coriolanus*' self-destructive and fragmented personality remain throughout the play and notes that "[b]ecause he has allowed others, especially his mother, to define his identity, his struggle to maintain the integrity he values so

highly can only run into defeat” (Yates, 1975: 128). Offering another perspective on character, John Bligh (1987) highlights Coriolanus' unswerving devotion to a set of aristocratic ideals and an inflexible belief in honour that, by the end of the drama, degrades into an amoral desire for simple vengeance. Presenting an analysis of *Coriolanus* informed by feminist theory, Woodbridge (1984) views the play as a critique of matriarchal power embodied in the disturbing psychological presence of Volumnia and her emotional manipulation of Coriolanus.

Although considered to be one of Shakespeare's least popular plays, there has been a continued interest in theatrical staging of *Coriolanus* in the twenty-first century. Recent productions of *Coriolanus* have emphasized the play's compelling hero as well as its political themes. David Rosenberg admires Fiennes's emotionally-charged Coriolanus and Barbara Jefford's Volumnia notes that this production rejected reconciliation and withheld dramatic catharsis. Also reviewing Kent's staging, Charles Isherwood (2000) praises the scope of Fiennes' energetic and “mesmerizing” performance as the Roman warrior and Jefford's “fire-breathing” Volumnia. The critic notes that the production delved deep into the psychological persona of Shakespeare's dehumanized protagonist.

Critics are interested in the predominance of political and power-related issues in *Coriolanus* as well as the play's depiction of psychological tensions, especially those involving the relationship between Coriolanus and his mother. R. B. Parker (1994) surveys political, psychological, and existential approaches to theme and character in *Coriolanus*, including Shakespeare's analysis of the body politic, his insight into the psychological dominance of Volumnia as an emblematic

overbearing mother, and his depiction of Coriolanus' self-destructive intensity. Vivian Thomas (1989) contrasts Shakespeare's dramatic presentation of Coriolanus with Plutarch's historical assessment of the figure, comparing the two authors' divergent handling of character, story, and theme. Thomas traces the ways in which Shakespeare manipulated material from Plutarch in order to contrast Coriolanus' victory in war with his defeat in the political arena. According to the critic, Shakespeare demonstrated that although Coriolanus' personal characteristics—his courage, integrity, and unbending turned out to be valuable on the field of battle, these same characteristics had a contrary effect on his domestic role as Roman consul.

Critic Anne Barton is rather interested in Shakespeare's historical influence (1985). She considers the influence of the Roman historian Livy on Shakespeare's dramatization of republican Rome in *Coriolanus* and acknowledges the presence of a Machiavellian system of *realpolitik* operating in the clash between Coriolanus and the plebeians. Adrian Poole (1988) likewise explores political themes in the drama, centering on the moblike mentality of the mutinous Roman people and the strategies used by Menenius and Coriolanus to pacify them. According to Poole, the compelling power of shame becomes a thematic touchstone in the early portions of *Coriolanus* as these leaders attempt to sway the body politic. Later in the play, Poole asserts, Volumnia turns the tactics of shame on her son as a means of coercing him into action.

In its turn, *The Tempest* (1611) may be considered as one of Shakespeare's plays that have received the authenticity of many critics. The post-colonial theory

regards this play as an embodiment of a colonial discourse. They emphasise the scale and significance of English involvement in the colonization of America in the early decades of the seventeenth century (Loomba & Orkin, 1998: 24). They also focus on the assertion that Prospero's settlement on the island that belongs to Caliban is a reflection of the English colonisation of foreign lands. The Duke's enslavement of Caliban, in their view, is an allusion to the enslavement of the blacks in America (Cartelli, 1994: 24-25).

Within the same post-colonial theory, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Aimé Césaire are two post-colonial writers who have tried to demonstrate their anti-colonialist views in response to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611). Ngugi, from Kenya, mentions Shakespeare's hero Prospero by name in his novel *A Grain of Wheat* (1967). He makes one of his white characters, Mr. Thompson, write a book called *Prospero in Africa* as an allusion to the British settlement in Kenya. Aimé Césaire revises Shakespeare's play through his *Une Tempête* (1969). This work foregrounds racism and colonialism in Shakespeare's play. It is interpreted by many a reader as a response to Shakespeare's tragi-comedy *The Tempest*.

The autobiographical type of criticism is oriented towards another aspect of the play. It claims that Prospero is but the concrete image of his creator William Shakespeare. The critics of the autobiographical trend have brought evidence to this assumption mainly from the epilogue spoken by the character of Prospero by the very end of the play. In the epilogue, Prospero expresses his farewell to his favourite hobby, i.e., the art of magic, and to the whole world in a way that gives hints about his fear of old age. *The Tempest* is Shakespeare's last play, just as the

final play of Prospero is his last magical performance in tragi-comedy (Omesco, 1993: 31-33).

This dissertation purports to study the ideas of peace, war and their embodiments in the characters of the intellectual, the lover and the warrior in three of the most impressive works of Shakespeare: *Henry VI* (1594), *Coriolanus* (1607) and *The Tempest* (1611). The study is based on the assumption that literature cannot be confined to the domain of aesthetics, but can indeed be stretched to include both ethics and politics. This is especially true of Shakespeare who, as his historical works testify, can be categorised as the chronicler of his time.

The choice of the theme of the interplay of peace and war in Shakespeare is justified on several grounds. One of the main justifications lies in the fact that this theme, to the best of our knowledge, has not received enough attention on the part of critics. The second justification is that the treatment of the theme can help in one way or another to understand the major events that characterise our current war-ridden world. Indeed, war and peace are two important domains of human life, and if our reflection on these themes can help in some way to create a conflict-resolution mechanism, then, the dissertation will have reached its objective.

Shakespeare wrote his plays at a transitional period in British history. This transition involved the passage from the late Middle Ages to the early Renaissance period. We assume that in such a transitional period Shakespeare was certainly at the crossroads of several ideals of man, namely the warrior, the lover and the intellectual. It is our belief that it is this interplay of ideals that Shakespeare's plays *Henry VI* (1594), *Coriolanus* (1607) and *The Tempest* (1611) best reflect, no matter what the genre the plays belong to. One of the reasons that led

Shakespeare to be involved in the theme of war is that he had a lesson to teach to the Elizabethan and Jacobean Englishmen about the Wars of the Roses.

The Wars of the Roses (1455 -1487), which lasted for nearly thirty years after the Hundred Years War, bedevilled the English social system and divided the nation. The Tudors, who reconciled the Yorkists with the Lancasters, remained haunted by the civil war. The Wars of the Roses were 'a faction fight between the families allied to the royal house, contending for power and wealth and ultimately for the possession of the crown' (Trevelyan, 1987: 198). Both the Yorks and the Lancasters formed branches of the Plantagenet royal house, tracing their descent back to King Edward III. The antagonism between the two houses started when Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster, overthrew King Richard II in 1399. As a result, Henry Bolingbroke became King Henry IV.

Henry V succeeded his father Henry IV after his death in 1413. He was known for his military prowess and his mastery of the art of war. His enormous triumph against France in the Hundred-Year War bolstered his popularity, which enabled him to strengthen the Lancastrian hold on the English throne (Wagner, 2001). Henry V died in 1422 and the Lancastrian King Henry VI ascended to the throne when he was just nine months old. He was surrounded by unpopular regents and advisors, who were blamed for having poorly waged the Hundred-Year War. During his reign, all English holdings in France were lost. His era was also marked by the execution of the Duke of Suffolk for treason and the death of the innocent Humphrey of Gloucester in prison.

As the mental illness of the King grew worse in 1453, the Duke of York became Lord Protector and started claiming the English throne. But King Henry

VI's recovery in 1455 along with the help of Queen Margaret of Anjou thwarted the Duke's plans. This failure made him turn his interests towards military work. He led several battles against the English state. The War of the Roses came to an end as the Yorks triumphed over the Lancasters and Edward VI was enthroned in June 1461 (Weir, 1998).

The second reason for the predominance of the themes of war and peace in Shakespeare's drama is arguably due to the fact that Shakespeare was taking part in the philosophical debate about the qualities that a prince should have. The debate is best reflected in Machiavelli's work *The Prince* (1513), Erasmus' *The Complaint of Peace* (1517) and Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* (1605). In his revolutionary work entitled *The Prince* (1513), Machiavelli founded a political theory that urged rulers to try by all possible means to acquire political power (Ford, 1982: 22). In his piece of writing, he advocates the Art of War, which he describes as a set of pragmatic principle that incites the sovereign to take advantage of all opportunities in his thirst for power (Ibid, 18).

For Machiavelli, war is the best means of access to power and a symbol of bravery whereas peace is a 'quiet nurse / of Idleness and Idleness the field / where wit and power change all seeds to worse' (Cited in Machiavelli, 1513: 67). Operating under the influence of such ideas, the Renaissance man became a machine of disaster. He even forgot all about the necessity of using his reason. In a successful attempt to lessen the impact of such Machiavellian ideas, Desiderius Erasmus (1466 -1536) advocated his Art of Peace in *The Complaint of Peace* (1516) as a response to Machiavelli's Art of War. Erasmus could not tolerate the sundry crimes committed by politicians in their pursuit of political power and

everlasting glory (Plumb, 1964: 31). He was deeply influenced by humanism, which was known for 'its positive appeals to fame, to public glory, to the ideal of the courtier along with statecraft and poetry' (Ford, 1982: 21). He tried to draw the politicians' attention to the benefits of using peace in political issues.

As a committed humanist, Erasmus urged sovereigns to orient their energies towards more peaceful means, primarily knowledge. Bacon did almost the same thing. He incited his contemporaries to pursue knowledge because it was the real power one can ever hold. For Bacon knowledge and power were synonymous. Bacon expressed the same opinion:

It is not possible to have the true pictures or statues of Cyrus, Alexander, Caesar, nor of the kings or great personages of much later years; for the originals cannot last, and the copies cannot but lease of the life and truth. But the images of men's wits and knowledges remain in books, exempted from the wrong of time and capable of perpetual renovation.

(Bacon, 1605: 32)

Both Erasmus and Bacon were attempting, as the quote above clearly demonstrates, to convince politicians that it was possible to hold power through pacific methods only. Erasmus argued that the more durable power was the one attained by means of books. He further asserted that knowledge was more likely to become a lasting monument than the battlefield victories used to be. Both scholars tried to address themselves to man's reason. They argued that the animals were the creatures naturally depending on their physical capacities to improve their living conditions whereas human beings were distinguished by the divine gift of intellect. This gift of intellect could not be appropriately used without peace.

Man is not instinctively ready to harm his fellow men in his attempt to better his life. This philosophy was highly promoted by humanism, which trusts in man's

reason and his ability not only to lead a rational life but also to reach happiness and prosperity on earth rather than after death. As one of the ideals of the humanist philosophy, the Great Chain of Being, which is the theoretical equivalent of the actual life, came to organize the individual's life as well as to tame the passions of his ambitious soul. The Great Chain of Being can be represented in a pyramid that includes all kinds of higher life at the top and those of lower life at the bottom.

God occupies the highest position of the higher life in the pyramid of the Chain. His superior position is due to his possession of divine powers. The angels are placed just below. They are characterised by their purity. Human beings occupy the position which comes right after the angels'. They are immediately followed by animals, which are classified according to strict hierarchical rules. Birds come first, followed by fish, and then come the earthly animals such as camels, dogs, lions, etc.

This hierarchy is based upon the classification of the cosmic elements (air, water, fire and earth). Air is refined above water. Water is refined in its turn above the earth. The creatures that are more attached to the earth are placed right below the animals, at the bottom of the Chain. These are plants, rocks, metals and liquids. The different elements of the Chain are deeply inter-related in the sense that each stage completes the other. This complementary relationship between the Chain's layers is justified in terms of man's need for animals' meat for his food, animals' need for plants, plants' need for liquids, etc. Therefore, to ensure a peaceful life there should be a set of rules and constraints to maintain order in the world (Braggs, 1983: 118).

Man is placed between the angels and the animals, a position that is justified by some hidden reasons. The angels are close to God and are the purest among all creatures. If the human being behaves in a pure way, he can be morally refined to their status. On the contrary, if he behaves in a passionate way, the animals' stage is ready in its turn to include him. Therefore, reason makes man nearer to angels whereas passion brings him closer to the position of beasts. In other words, the intellect is the only characteristic that differentiates animals from human beings.

We consider that, due to their wide circulation, Shakespeare could not have ignored Machiavelli's ideas about the necessity of war and the antithetic ideas of Erasmus, Bacon and Pico Della Mirandola about the power of love and the obligation to maintain the Great Chain of Being, representing divine law and order. The influence of Machiavelli and Erasmus on Shakespeare's writings might well explain the interplay of what we would call the art of loving and the art of making war in his plays in general and in *Henry VI*, *Coriolanus* and *The Tempest* in particular. Given this assumption, most of our analytic categories in the study of the three Shakespearean plays mentioned above will be borrowed from the writings of Machiavelli, Erasmus and Bacon.

We will supplement the theoretical framework mentioned above by an appeal to two contemporary scholars: Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci. Michel Foucault (1926-1984), French historian and philosopher, was interested in analysing Renaissance texts while looking for the patterns of the relation between knowledge and power. In his philosophical book, *The Will to Knowledge* (1990), which forms the first part of his *History of Sexuality*, he distinguishes three major

'mechanisms' of holding power. The first mechanism is war elevated to an art that provides the subjects with their 'Right to Death' and the sovereign with the necessary 'Power over [their] life'. In other words, the monarch is able to decide whether to send his subjects to death or not by leading them to fight in wars, which Foucault names the subjects' 'Right to Death'. Thanks to the sovereign's authority over his subjects, i.e., the authority to put an end to their lives in war or to save their lives in peace, he acquires a power over their lives. This power is what Foucault calls the monarch's 'Power over Life'.

After having studied some Renaissance texts, Foucault became sceptical about the fact that he was the pioneer in the process of deciphering the power/knowledge relationship. Indeed, Shakespeare was the first to have paid attention to it. For him, the history of the quest for power began with classical means (war), but the latter was soon followed by peaceful means (love). Knowledge came in the third position as the most modern and moderate mechanism.

Antonio Gramsci, the Italian political activist and theorist, has his own philosophy about political power and its mechanisms. For him, War, the most ancient tool for acquiring power, deserves to be called coercive power because it depends on physical coercion by means of the army. In modern states, the hegemonic power has replaced the coercive power. Hegemonic power, as defined in the quotation below, tends to be more durable and more secure:

By hegemony, Gramsci meant the permeation *throughout* society of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality that has the effect of supporting the status quo in power relations. Hegemony in this sense might be defined as an 'organising principle' that is diffused by the process of socialisation into every area of daily life. To the extent that this prevailing

consciousness is internalised by the population it becomes part of what is generally called 'common sense' so that the philosophy, culture and morality of the ruling elite comes to appear as the natural order of things.

(Qtd in Boggs, 1976: 39)

Hegemony is a whole system, or network, that exploits all possible ideological means to impose supremacy over people. Hegemony can include scientific knowledge that is an aspect of an 'entire system of values', which is humanism. The hegemony of knowledge aims at legitimating the supremacy of intellectuals over warriors.

Applying these Gramscian ideas about power (Coercive and Hegemonic power) and discourse, we conclude that humanism is the discourse or the system of values that allowed knowledge, as a hegemonic discourse of power, to have the monopoly during the Renaissance period. It used peaceful means (schools, books, rhetoric, etc) to facilitate its internalisation of power by the common people. Consequently, knowledge became part of the Renaissance man (the intellectual), as was war for his medieval fellow (the warrior).

It is in the light of what has been said so far that we have decided to divide this dissertation into three chapters. The first chapter will explore the interplay between the issues of war, love and knowledge in Shakespeare's trilogy *Henry VI* (1594), with the use of traditional literary categories, such as themes, characters and plot. The chapter will unfold under the significant and pertinent umbrella title **The Victimisation of the Intellectual**. This title is justified by the fact that Shakespeare places the intellectual (King Henry VI) in harsh conditions that make of him a scapegoat and a victim. King Henry VI's entourage was still faithful to war

as the best means for acquiring power while he sought to preserve peace and to spread knowledge in the kingdom.

As for the second chapter, which deals with *Coriolanus* (1607), it will develop under the title **The Praise of Peace**. Through this title we aim at showing that Shakespeare moved to praise peace in his drama in this period after his ambiguous position in his previous drama as far as the issues of war and peace are concerned. To attain this target, Shakespeare goes through satire, a means that enables him to speak his mind concerning the issue of peace in an oblique way.

The third chapter, entitled **Knowledge is Power** (a paradigm first coined by Francis Bacon), will tackle Shakespeare's last play *The Tempest* (1611). This chapter will differ from the preceding ones in the sense that it is a completion of the shift from war to peace that establishes the supremacy of the intellectual over the warrior. It displays an open celebration of peace and humanist ethics, which we can see in the character of Prospero mainly and a condemnation of war and the disasters it is responsible for, that is why the play ends in a general reconciliation.

Each of the three chapters will begin with a historical background that would serve as a contextual reference to better understand our argument. The historical backgrounds will also serve as a reservoir of facts to support the arguments as the plays were written at decisive periods of British history. *Henry VI* (1594) was performed in the Elizabethan era whereas both *Coriolanus* (1607) and *The Tempest* (1611) were performed in the Jacobean era during James I's reign.

Chapter One: The Victimization of the Intellectual in *Henry VI*

*Nature, that fram'd us to four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds:
Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wonderous Architecture of the world,
And measure every wond'ring planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres,
Will us to wear ourselves and never rest
Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
The sweetest fruition of an earthly crown.*

(Marlowe, C.1587: 1st part, 11; 7)

Political, Intellectual and Social Background of the Elizabethan Age

Before moving to the analysis of the Elizabethan era and exploring its different aspects and features, we ought first to know what the Renaissance means. Knowing about the contours of the target era would be of a paramount importance to our research in regard to the key ideas it embodies which are equally key concepts in our dissertation. Originally, the word 'Renaissance' was derived from French, meaning 'Rebirth'. Historians considered the Renaissance as the beginning and the most important step towards modern history in regard to the huge innovations it brought about.

The Renaissance encompasses the revival of learning based on classical sources and advancement in science (Clare & Dr. Millen, 1994: 14). Yet, this should not be considered as being the rightful conception of the Renaissance. The

concept rather means advancement at all levels of human enterprise: arts, literature, philosophy, architecture, science, etc. By means of such a great intellectual leap, the Renaissance formed, indeed, a step towards the modern era.

The reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) is referred to as the Elizabethan age. Queen Elizabeth was the fifth and last monarch of the Tudor Dynasty after Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I. She ruled England during a period marked by an increase in English power and influence over the world. She was known for her motto 'Video et taceo', meaning 'I see and keep silent', which saved her from political misalliances on several occasions.

When she ascended to the throne of England in 1558, the Queen's major interest was to put an end to religious conflicts. To achieve this aim, she passed a series of acts among which figured the Act of Uniformity (1559) and the Act of Supremacy (1559). She tried her best to end all kinds of conflict to ensure a prosperous life for her subjects. In fact, the Elizabethan era was distinctive in the history of British monarchy due to the particular policy of the Queen herself. Elizabeth I worked hand in hand with parliament and was respectful of its opinion. She was not against sharing political power with the Members of Parliament, believing in no such ideas as the absolute power of the monarch.

However, in her later years, Members of Parliament started complaining about some of her practices like her granting of royal monopolies. She replied to them in her famous Golden Speech to Parliament in November 1601:

Though you have had and may have many princes more mighty and wise sitting in this seat, yet you never had or shall have any that will be more careful and loving. Though God hath raised me high, yet this I count the glory of my crown that I have reigned with your loves.

(Qtd in Weatherly, 2005: 65)

This tolerance of hers did not prevent her from facing some home as well as foreign troubles. Her reign witnessed a number of wars and military conflicts, namely the rebellion of the Earl of Essex (civil war) and the Spanish war (international war). The Tudor Queen was able to overcome both enemies thanks to her care for military affairs (Black, 1959: 121).

Queen Elizabeth had also to face Mary, Queen of Scots's claim to the English throne. She was able to end this conflict by means of a treaty. She also made other treaties with France in 1564, not for fear of military confrontation since England was the mistress of the seas then, thanks to its powerful Royal Navy. The peace treaty was signed to establish peace inside the kingdom, rather than outside. As Sharpe writes it so well:

Peace was a central concern of Elizabeth's foreign and domestic policies. Having been educated by a group of humanist scholars who themselves were students of the London Reformers, the Queen was inclined to avoid war for humanitarian as well as economic reasons. (Sharpe, 2000: 105)

Those foreign as well as home military conflicts did not mean that her rule was not successful. On the contrary, her remarkable interest in trade and economic affairs provided great benefits for the country. Her reign brought an era of comfort and prosperity for the British.

In the meantime, she was attaching great importance to education. Her interest in knowledge can be seen in her awards to famous organisations. For instance, she awarded The Royal Charters to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1592, as an encouragement for education. Queen Elizabeth was not only a monarch who encouraged education and intellectuals, but she was also an intellectual herself.

She inherited her father's (Henry VIII) passion for poetry and writing. In addition, she had religious interests. The day she learned about her coronation, she was found reading the Bible under a tree (Hume, 1984: 85).

Almost similar to the Elizabethan era, the reign of King Henry VI witnessed in its turn a great number of domestic as well as foreign conflicts and upheavals. During the reign of King Henry VI, England was first subject to an international war with France, known as the Hundred-Year War. After a series of fierce battles led by General Talbot, the King's worship of peace led him to solve the military conflict by a marital match. He got married to the French Princess, Margaret of Anjou, in order to put an end to war and to ensure peaceful relations between the two kingdoms, England and France.

After ridding the kingdom of the overseas war, the King had to face another type of war that developed at home. It was a domestic war that rose between the house of York, which took the white rose as their symbol, and that of the Lancasters who picked the red rose to represent them. The civil war between the Yorkists and the Lancasters broke out because each of the two antagonists was claiming its being the rightful heir of the British throne.

Shakespeare's *Henry VI* (1594) was written during the reign of Elizabeth I, and this is the reason why it reflects a great deal of her age. The idea that *Henry VI* reflects a great deal of the Elizabethan era can be evidenced by the fact that Shakespeare was performing his plays in the court of the Queen, so he had to look for what best pleased her. Like the Queen, King Henry VI is dependent, by the opening of the trilogy on the military work, on the military prowess of General Talbot. As both Queen Elizabeth and King Henry VI were educated monarchs and

both give importance to scholasticism, each of them tried to move towards peace and knowledge by the end of their reign.

Before the Renaissance, Europe went through a period called the Middle Ages, an era that was largely viewed as being a dark spot in the history of Europe (Plumb, 1991: 15). However, by the dissemination of the Renaissance learning, the whole continent, most importantly England, knew deep changes in many fields. The intellectual life was enriched by innovative ideas and achievements that could never be made without the indispensable care of the monarchs, namely Queen Elizabeth of England.

During Queen Elizabeth's reign, education was given much importance. More than three hundred (300) schools were founded between 1500 and 1620 (Braggs, 1983: 129). Queen Elizabeth considered knowledge as an activity of great value. Her main concern was the spread of literacy among the individuals. This earnest interest in knowledge and intellectual life on the Queen's part was mainly due to the kind of education she received. She was tutored at her father's court by Sir Roger Ascham, one of the most outstanding scholars and thinkers of the Renaissance and of the Elizabethan age. Her knowledge was vast, ranging from history and science to art, literature and philosophy.

In the Elizabethan era, knowledge gradually displaced war and violence and became the main means to gain political power and social status. Nevertheless, this did not mean that the Queen did not resort, from time to time, to war to protect the kingdom from foreign as well as local attacks. This shift in policy adopted by the Queen saved the realm sometimes from military confrontations and sometimes from being defeated. Though she could have maintained a peaceful relationship

with Spain by accepting to marry the Spanish Prince, the Queen refused to do so. She preferred military confrontation to the loss of her power as a Queen and submission to a Spanish husband.

One of the most characteristic features of the era we are concerned with is that marriage was closely linked to state affairs. Marriage in the Renaissance period was not considered as something personal, depending only on the free choice of the individuals involved in the match. It was rather seen as a business affair. The marital match was accepted only if it was thought to be likely to bring political or economic benefits. (Trevelyan, 1987: 196). Shakespeare's *Henry VI* fairly reflects this social custom.

In this first chapter, we shall deal with the trilogy of *Henry VI* (1594). We have chosen this first play of Shakespeare for two main reasons. First, because it was produced during the last decade of the sixteenth century, thus covering the late Middle Ages, a period overwhelmed by war, and anticipating the Renaissance age. Second, we suppose that Shakespeare's drama was interested in the themes of war and peace. Therefore, by selecting *Henry VI*, we mean to trace the gradual change in the themes of war and peace as they were perceived respectively in the late Middle Ages and in the Renaissance era.

We will study the themes of war and peace, through the analysis of some major literary aspects of the trilogy of *Henry VI*. We will deal first with the three major themes in the play: war, love and knowledge as they appear in the target play. Afterwards, we will move to the plot of the play then to the major characters. These characters will be classified according to their major interests. They are, in fact, either warriors or intellectuals.

Theme of War

To begin with, the analysis of the theme of war in the three chapters has not been randomly done. On the contrary, we have decided to start with it because we want to follow a chronological order in our research. War was the dominant occupation in the Middle Ages and this aspect of medieval life was faithfully echoed in Shakespeare's drama. Therefore, to be logical and coherent in our analysis, we should respect this order and begin by war then we will move to both love and knowledge.

War is not only the main activity of the majority of the characters in *Henry VI*, it is also the central concept around which political life is centred. For this same reason, war can be considered as the discourse that dominates people's life then. The term discourse is defined as being a set of statements that foster the establishment and the re-enforcement of a given system. In Foucault's words, discourse is:

A group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation; it does not form a rhetorical or formal unity, endlessly repeatable, whose appearance or use in history might be indicated (and, if necessary, explained); it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined.

(Foucault, 2002: 116-117)

The quotation above not only states the terminology of the word 'discourse', but it also provides some major features of the notion of discourse. The latter is not constant; it is rather a specific formation that includes some mechanisms. A particular type of discourse is specific for a given era, a given regime, etc.

For a long time, war was a means that enabled an individual or a group of

people to spread their authority over other individuals or groups. During the Middle Ages, the same motive led rulers to declare war against one another. Therefore, all along the Middle Ages, the mastery of the Art of War was fundamental not only for rulers but for common people as well. However, in parallel with the ideals of war and the sovereigns' blind thirst for political power, a new ideal was born. It was the ideal of peace that came into being by the earliest decades of the Renaissance.

A brand of educated men came to defend this ideal, namely Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536), who stood out as a major figure among other Renaissance scholars with his ideal of the Art of Peace. These early pacifists were mainly intellectuals and University graduates. They were also religious men, who were able to perceive the Christian faith from a more humanist point of view. In this respect, they thought that the fact of killing a man was a kind of bestiality. These intellectuals were giving more importance to the intellect rather than to muscles.

In this sub-section, we are mainly interested in analysing the theme of war as it is dealt with by Shakespeare in the trilogy of *Henry VI*. The theme of war is essentially displayed through the war between General Talbot, Joan of Arc, Jack Cade and more importantly in the Wars of the Roses. To study the theme of war in the play, we must first distinguish between the different wars that are represented. In the first part of *Henry VI*, the theme of war is treated through the battles that oppose General Talbot to the French Joan La Pucelle. In the second part, war is led by the British outlaw named Jack Cade against the King and his educational achievements. In the third part, we are faced with the civil war, commonly known as the War of the Roses, between the Yorkists and the Lancasters. The war

between General Talbot and Joan la Pucelle was an inheritance from the reign of the Black King, Henry V. It is an international war fought between the English and the French. Both kingdoms engaged in this war in order to possess some strategic territories, namely Anjou and Maine.

Shakespeare did not devote the first part of the play to the portrayal of the heroic aspect of the battles between the French and the English. On the contrary, he put emphasis on the extremely bloody and dire scenes of war. It is on this negative portrayal of the theme of war that we are going to focus in this study of the theme of war. The theme of war is introduced right at the opening stage of the first part of *Henry VI*. It is revealed through a conversation held by the members of the English court who are mourning the death of King Henry V. These mourners start by praising their dead King, Henry V, who came to be called the Black King due to his impressive military prowess and continual triumph over his enemies.

Henry V was a man of war. He was a valiant warrior who achieved great military victories over his enemies, namely over the French. The result of these triumphs was the acquisition of new strategic territories for the English kingdom. These military achievements were originally due to the King's care for military affairs rather than other civil issues. Thanks to his military skills and achievements, the dead King enjoyed a glorious status among his citizens and his fellow monarchs. We can grasp this idea from the words of Lord Saye. Saye also asserts that England would never have such a mythological warrior as King Henry V again. This statement can be explained by contrasting the son to his father.

While Henry V was a famous warrior and a valiant leader of war, his son's

attention is rather drawn by something else. His successor Henry VI was interested in peaceful activities, such as religion and knowledge. He was a humanist, a philanthropist, a man of religion and a scholar and an intellectual. The father's opposing tendencies with those of his son point to the fact that England was going through a prominent transitional period, from late Middle Ages to the early Renaissance.

In the process of illustrating the shift from war to peace, Shakespeare went through some major scenes of war. In its three parts, the trilogy focused on the negative consequences of war. The playwright chose to portray different dire crimes committed in the name of war, which was justified on patriotic grounds in the trilogy. Among the many terrible scenes of war, Shakespeare presented the scene of a father who murders his son on the battlefield, as both the son and his father belong to two different armies. Before these members of the same family engage in war, they had been living peacefully. However, when the rulers had declared war against each other for the sake of holding political power, the father and the son found themselves serving in opposing armies.

The playwright's purpose here is to introduce, clarify and further emphasise an Erasmian humanist principle in this very scene. Erasmus argued that in Christianity all human beings belong to one and the same family. All of them are God's offspring. Therefore, they are brothers, and brothers should not be in enmity with one another (Marx, 1992). Actually, in Shakespeare's drama, they were much more than that; they were fathers and sons. Hiding behind their helmets, the father and his son could not recognise each other. This device denotes the fact that,

exactly like a helmet, which hides the individuals' identities, war hides and further buries the human aspect of the individual and makes him cruel to his fellow human being.

To emphasise the cruelty of war, the playwright also portrays a son who murders his father in the same conditions as those that prevailed in the previous incident. Exactly as the father who murders his son and bitterly regrets his deed, this son feels guilty and wonders what to tell his mother. This scene reveals Shakespeare's desire to condemn war, because he considers that it is one of the major means of destruction in the world. War causes the death of human beings in a cruel way.

Both General Talbot and his son John lose their lives on the battlefield. They are valiant warriors fighting for the glory of their kingdom. Talbot has inherited some of Henry V's warlike features. He is brave and very strong as a warrior. On many occasions, he has been able to defeat Joan of Arc, the woman who leads the French army. However, by the end of the play, he is murdered in one of his fights against the French. His son John is fighting by his father's side. He wants to follow in his footsteps. Like his father, he fights until he is killed on the battlefield. Both Talbot and John stand out as the only inheritors of the Black King in the play. Their heritage is not the crown of England but the Art of War. They stand after him as unique warriors, defending the military glory of the kingdom.

Henry V's death is announced right at the opening of the first part of the trilogy. Before its close, both warriors, General Talbot and his son John, are dead. The death of three major warriors at the beginning of the play reveals an important

strategy adopted by the playwright so as to rid the play of the whole breed of warriors. By means of this device, Shakespeare aims at foreshadowing the end of war in the play. He starts by condemning war through negative portrayal. Then, he eliminates the warriors, one by one, from the scenes of the play.

This does not imply that the theme of war totally disappears from the play at this level. It rather means that the classical glorification of war has come to an end. However, the war that comes later is different in the sense that it is no longer led for noble reasons (patriotism) but rather for personal ones (greed and thirst for political power). The latter type of war – that is characterised by personal motives – leads us to speak about the war led by Jack Cade and the civil war (the War of the Roses) between the Yorkists and the Lancasters. Jack Cade is an English rebel, who has not tolerated King Henry's peaceful policy and his shift towards intellectualism through building schools and neglecting military affairs.

The rebellion of Jack Cade, who is the leader of a militia of outlaws, appears right after the end of the international war with France (the Hundred Years War). Cade leads these peasants' rebellion because he is unable to tolerate the peaceful policy of the King. Cade and his followers have gradually developed an attitude of resentment and intolerance towards the monarch's interest in knowledge and education. For this same reason, he declares war against the King himself and against Lord Saye, whose help to the King enables him to spread literacy and knowledge in the realm.

The antagonism between Cade and the state is marked by a bloody war in which peacemakers are deliberately murdered. Among these stand Lord Saye and

Gloucester. Gloucester is the most remarkable pro-intellectual in the trilogy. However, this does not mean that Saye is no longer behaving as a warrior. To show the importance of literacy and to spread knowledge among ignorant people, Lord Saye is thought to be responsible for the murder of many innocent people, whose unique guilt is illiteracy.

The execution of Lord Saye can be explained by the fact that in time he is a major promoter of knowledge, which requires a peaceful environment; he is still bearing seeds of a fierce warrior. He could, for instance, educate those illiterate people instead of killing them. Therefore, we can conclude that even Saye represents a threat to the peaceful policy of the present state, though he commits his crime to rid the state of ignorant people. Through these events, we can conclude that *Henry VI* reveals the struggle between the theme of war and the theme of peace. War was useful in the medieval era, in regard to the lack of awareness from people's part about the reality of their life. The medieval individuals were not educated; so, they did not know about their human duties towards each other. All that mattered for them was to find a means by which they could assert themselves in society.

By the dissemination of the intellectual revolution known as the Renaissance, man started getting aware of the necessity of respecting human life. Afterwards, the individual began looking for new possible means to realise his ambition in different fields. By this time, war was no longer well appreciated, which led sovereigns to avoid it. They were shifting towards making peace treaties by means of which they could solve political problems peacefully and without any human

losses. This same peaceful policy was carefully followed by King Henry VI who dedicated his time to knowledge. He read books most of the time. He was also a King philosopher, who meditated upon different issues, especially political matters.

The King's love for peace was mainly due to the religious education he received from his Lord protector Gloucester. Because of this, he was thought to be a priest, as the intellectual life was restricted to priests and monks by the early as well as the late Middle Ages: *'I would the college of the cardinals / Would choose him Pope, and carry him to Rome...'* (1-3 / 64). He was also accused of being effeminate and mentally ill. For these reasons, his enemies prepared plans to dethrone him. This triggered off the War of the Roses.

Besides this peasants' rebellion led by Cade, the War of the Roses is another example of the kind of wars that spring during Henry VI's reign. The Yorks are thirsty for political power, the reason for which they lead a civil war against the Lancasters who are holding the throne of England. The War of the Roses is a series of wars led by Richard of York to regain the British crown from the Lancasters. Although he belongs to the house of the Lancasters, King Henry is neutral towards the War of the Roses. He does not participate in the war as he is an extremist worshipper of peace.

Therefore, his wife Margaret of Anjou takes hold of the British crown and manages to face the Yorks' quest for the throne. After a series of bloody battles, the Yorks triumph over the Queen. This Yorkist victory marks the end of the civil war. In the meantime, the King is imprisoned in the Tower of England before being murdered in an extremely significant manner, reading a book. What comes out of

violence will lead to more violence; consequently, the reign of the Yorks is subject to various murderous rebellions and conspiracies.

By the end of the trilogy, the theme of war has disappeared. Nevertheless, the seeds left by Gloucester and King Henry are still standing as monuments in British history, namely Eton school. Later, and especially under the influence of the Renaissance ideas, it is not the battlefield that is remembered; it is rather the value of knowledge that can only spring under the peaceful conduct of a wise and a humanist monarch like King Henry VI.

Theme of Love

During the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance sovereigns used war as a means of maintaining power over their subjects. Nevertheless, it was also used to realise the sovereign's political ambition and to re-enforce his power. The Renaissance condemned war, viewing it as a passionate means of realising one's ambition. The Renaissance came to teach the individual that he should be ambitious, but his ambition should be realised through peace and not through war, because he is a human being and not a beast.

By the Renaissance time, the most moderate means of realising the individual's ambition became knowledge. This belief was due to the mounting value given to reason and to the intellectual calibre of man. Instead of behaving as an animal to acquire and maintain power, only through a peaceful means as knowledge could man indeed gain the same benefits, or may be better, without wasting a single drop of his fellow's blood in war.

Love was also a peaceful means followed by ambitious men in their pursuit of political power. Although it was not widely used as war nor was it as effective as knowledge, love stood as a transitional phase in the history of power acquisition. It cannot be included under the theme of war because it has nothing to do with violence. Love is closely linked to peace to achieve purely political gains. In other words, lovers came in order to realise the same aims warriors wanted to reach through the art of war. Lovers chose the art of love.

In this sub-section, we will first study the major appearances of the theme of love in the play. We will try to cover all aspects of the marriage of King Henry and Queen Margaret. We will also look into Suffolk's position as far as this marriage is concerned, knowing that he is deeply in love with the Queen of England. Then, we will try to look for the true reasons behind the marital match between the British and the French and see to what extent this marriage can be read as a peace treaty on the part of an extremely wise monarch.

King Henry and his future Queen have never met before. A few words from Suffolk, praising her beauty and her moral qualities, are sufficient for the King to fall in love with her. This impact of Suffolk's praising words on King Henry VI reveals an important art of the Renaissance, which is the art of rhetoric. Suffolk masters this art, which makes Henry VI dependent on his words in his desire to marry Princess Margaret:

Tush, my good lord, this superficial tale. Is but a preface of her worthy praise; / the chief perfections of that lovely dame/ Had I sufficient skill to utter them, / Would make a volume of enticing lines, / Able to ravish any dull conceit: / And, which is more, she is not so divine, / So full-replete with choice of all delights, / But with as humble lowliness of mind/ She is content

to be at your command; / Command, I mean, of virtuous chaste intents, / To love and honour Henry as her lord.

(5 –V/ 10)

In spite of the King's deep love for his future Queen, we are not faced with one of those romantic love stories of Shakespeare's in *Henry VI* but rather with a story in which marriage is arranged in a strange way, for the modern audience. The way the King and the Queen marry was acceptable for the Elizabethan audience. At that time, marriage was a form of economic and political transaction. In this way, *Henry VI* is one of Shakespeare's histories, which 'for the most part look backward to an older conception of marriage as a political and economic union between feudal families' (Howard, 1997: 44). What mattered in a Renaissance marriage were the benefits both families could get in return: 'Marriage was not an affair of personal affection but of family avarice, particularly in the 'chivalrous' upper classes' (Trevelyan, 1987: 196). However, in some cases, it proved to be worse than this situation.

Indeed, there is a clear difference between marrying for interest (power, money, or status) and marrying for love, 'To marry for affection alone was deemed irresponsible, even immoral' (Stone, 1977: 152). Renaissance people perceived both marriage and love in the same way. Among these people, emotion was an indication of weakness, meaning that the person who marries out of love is guided by his feelings. Furthermore, love was a destructive and immoral passion that thwarts one's pursuit of power and status in society. In other words, the power of love was deemed responsible for the destruction of the love of power. In this respect, Stone writes:

In the sixteenth century, marriage among the gentry and aristocrats-- those people owing property--is a collective decision of family and kin, not an individual one. Past lineage associations, political patronage, extension of lineage connections, and property preservation and accumulation were the principal considerations. Property and power were the predominant issues which governed negotiations for marriage, while the greatest fear in a society so acutely conscious of status and hierarchy was of social derogation in marriage, of alliance with a family of lower estate or degree than one's own.

(Ibid: 87)

Stone's statement illustrates the tendencies of the sixteenth century individual towards emotional affairs. Emotions were not appealed to in a marriage affair. Business and interests (social, economic, financial and more importantly political) were the major requirements behind a marital match. This is exactly what happens in Shakespeare's *Henry VI* in which the King of England marries the French Princess to establish peace between the two realms. That is why they sign a treaty of peace before the wedding.

In this political contract under the shape of marriage, Suffolk's love for Queen Margaret is suppressed because he is of a lower position than Princess Margaret. Their marriage will bring no benefits for either, except personal satisfaction. However, for his part, through the love affair he maintains with the Queen, Suffolk is seeking to get the realm and to reach a higher position in the state. He plans to take hold of the Queen, who controls the King. By so doing, he can control King Henry VI in an indirect way: '*Margaret shall now be queen and rule the king; / But I will rule both her, the King and realm*' (5-7/ 107).

Because of King Henry's being moved by the beauties of his Queen, Suffolk

reaches one of his hidden aims in his pursuit of a better status. The King has appointed him first Duke: *'We here create thee first Duke of Suffolk, / And gird thee with the sword'* (1-1/ 61). Right after seeing her, the Duke of Suffolk demonstrates a deep emotion for Princess Margaret and carries on doing so even after she becomes the Queen of England. In fact, there exist instances in the play, which allude to an adulterous relationship between them. Among these textual evidence stands the following dialogue between Suffolk and Queen Margaret:

Queen Margaret:

Ay me! what is this world? What news are these?

But wherefore grieve I at an hour's poor loss

Omitting Suffolk's exile, my soul's treasure?...

Now get thee hence. The King, thou know'st, is coming.

If thou be found by me, thou art but dead.

Suffolk:

If I depart from thee, I cannot live.

Dying with mother's dug between his lips;...

So shouldst thou either turn my flying soul

Or I should breathe it, so, into thy body__

[He kisseth her]

And then it lived in sweet Elysium.

By thee to die were but to die in jest;

From thee to die where torture more than death.

O, let me stay, befall what may befall!

Queen Margaret:

...sweet Suffolk...

[She kisseth him]

(3-2/ 383)

In this scene, Suffolk farewells his lover and reveals his emotions towards her. The Queen for her part does the same thing, telling Suffolk about the love she bears for him. She urges him to go into exile so as to protect him against the rage of her husband, King Henry. In an extremely romantic way, Suffolk responds to her by saying that real death for him is when he departs from her. At this point, he sounds careless about the King's rage; all he desires is to keep by her.

Indeed, what makes Queen Margaret respond to Suffolk's appeals of love is the fact that she is not at ease with her husband's peaceful attitudes. She is unable to stand his manners. King Henry is extremely favouring peaceful, humanist and even popish ideals. In such conditions and because she is rather attracted by men of action, Queen Margaret responds to her suitor's appeals as the quote above shows. For Queen Margaret, emotion can be put aside for the sake of ambition. She cannot love her husband. For her, King Henry's pacifist tendencies, highly affected by the religious education he got from Gloucester, are synonymous with cowardice. That is why she tends to compare him to Suffolk on different occasions:

*Is this the fashion in the court of England? / is this the government of Britain's
isle, / And this the royalty of Albion's king? / What shall King Henry be a pupil
still/ under the surly Gloucester's governance?.../ I thought King Henry had
resembled thee / In courage, courtship and proportion: / But all his mind is
bent to holiness, / To number Ave-Maries on his beads; / His champions are
the prophets and apostles, / His weapons holy saws of writ, / His study is his
tilt-yard, and his loves / Are brazen images of canonized Saints.*

(1-III/ 35)

In spite of this reality, the Queen remains by her husband's side since she

has a status and property as long as she keeps near him. She prefers daring, active, and brilliant men, which she finds in the person of Suffolk. This is what we learn through her speech with him in which she expresses her disillusion in her inactive husband: *'I tell thee, Pole, when in the city Tours / Thou rann'st a-tilt in honour of my love / And stol'st away the ladies' hearts of France, / I thought King Henry had resembled thee / In courage, courtship, and proportion'* (1-3/ 40). The Queen wishes her husband were like Suffolk, an active man who attracts women's attention through his skill in the arts of war and rhetoric. However, the King is a deception for her. He cannot go far from peace, loving humankind, tolerating the others and pitying them. He could not near the sword and kill the others because of his philanthropist beliefs.

Contrary to Suffolk, for King Henry love is not a means of reaching higher positions nor is it for the sake of political power. It is rather a means that can realise noble and humanist aims and not personal ambition. It may be helpful to spread the peaceful principles King Henry highly promotes. Love for him is no longer a mere passion as it proves to be with Suffolk. It is a feeling that is liable to be tamed by the intellectual abilities of wise men. More explicitly, it can be used as a means of maintaining peace in the world, exactly as King Henry perceives it.

The King does not only love truly and with great passion, he also tries to use this feeling for the benefit of both his citizens and his kingdom. This is fairly evidenced through his words. King Henry VI told his ambassadors when they leave for France in order to negotiate his marital match with Princess Margaret: *'Your purpose is both good and reasonable, / And therefore are we certainly resolved /*

To draw conditions of a friendly peace...' (5-1 / 36). The quotation shows the King's care for his citizens' lives, which fairly denotes his humanist aims. In so doing, he relies on his intellectual capacities. He allies with the French while considering the interests of his citizens. He tries to end war with France and to maintain a peaceful relation with it, preserving as such the lives of the English. Peace and order are precious gains for the whole kingdom, not only for him as a person.

The following quotation represents the contract signed between King Henry VI and the French under the cover of a social contract, which is marriage:

It is agreed between the / French King Charles and William de la Pole, Marquis / of Suffolk, ambassador for Henry, King of England, that / the said Henry shall espouse the lady Margaret, / ...It is further agreed / between them that the duchy of Anjou and the county / of Maine shall be released and delivered to the king / her father, and she sent over of the King of England's / own proper cost and charges, without dowry. (1-1/ 41)

The contract made King Henry give away the Duchy of Maine and the County of Anjou as a dowry to his French wife. Traditionally, it is the wife who should pay a dowry to her husband, not the other way round. Yet, to achieve his highly humanist aims, the King of England neglects such trivial traditions.

It follows from the discussion above that the French are Machiavellians. They use marriage to gain more power. The French King has well calculated what the match with the English King would earn him before accepting to marry his daughter. This proves that love is also used as a crucial means of gaining power. Thanks to his daughter's dowry, the French King triumphs politically over the English. The bride's father regains two strategic territories France lost previously to England, Anjou and Maine. He also assures a peaceful relation with England,

since his daughter becomes the Queen of England. Similarly, King Henry VI's momentous aim, which is to put an end to the Hundred Years War and to maintain peace in the kingdom, is realised, too.

After getting rid of the harms of war, love comes to replace it and to be one of the means of gaining political power. Every faction in *Henry VI* (the King, the Queen, her father and Suffolk) use love the way that best suits its interests. The English King marries the French Princess to put an end to war, Suffolk tries to take hold of the crown through manipulating the Queen who manipulates her husband in her turn. Whereas the French accept the match to regain strategic territories it failed to regain in the field of battle:

*Since thou dost deign to woo her little worth/ To be the princely bride of such
a lord;/ Upon conditions I may quietly / Enjoy mine own, the country Maine
and Anjou,/ free from oppression or the stroke of war,/ My daughter shall be
Henry's, if he pleases.*

(5-III/ 152)

Theme of Knowledge

War was no longer the unique means on which ambitious men depended in the field of politics, especially with the dissemination of the Renaissance and the new ideals it brought about for the individual. The ideals of the Renaissance were extremely favouring peace in all fields. Indeed, the Renaissance came essentially with a worship of peace and an emphasis on the necessity to respect human life. Therefore, the knowledge and the intellectual revolution it brought were full of ideas of peace and humanism, which enabled educated people, especially intellectuals, to distance themselves from war.

These educated people's withdrawal from war led them to look for a more moderate means through which they could realise their ambition, especially since the Renaissance philosophy embodied an encouragement for the individual to be ambitious and to respect the ethics as well. Henceforth, knowledge became the most suitable way of realising man's dreams and showing respect for human life:

Men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and profession; and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason to the benefit and use of men.

(Bacon, 1605: 20)

In order to trace how knowledge gained this status among men of worth and became the most important field a Renaissance man could follow, we should go through some details from the trilogy of *Henry VI* itself. We are essentially interested in the appearance of the theme of knowledge in the ideals of three main characters in the play. These are King Henry, Gloucester and Lord Saye, who are supposed to be the intellectuals of the trilogy.

First, we will initiate our analysis by focussing on the major intellectual in the play, King Henry because he does his best for the sake of spreading knowledge. Then, we will speak about instances of knowledge and intellectual life related to both Gloucester and Lord Saye. It is thanks to the indispensable help of these intellectuals and peacemakers that knowledge could find a status among people. King Henry VI is thought to be an idle monarch. He is further seen as effeminate because he hates bloodshed. He admires meditation. He reads most of the time and tries his best to avoid war. His peaceful nature and policy lead his entourage

to accuse him of being effeminate and coward.

The peaceful policy of King Henry VI was due to the fact that he was taught by humanist tutors, mainly by his Lord protector Gloucester. Gloucester is an educated man, whose knowledge is based on a great deal of the Renaissance ideals and on religious beliefs. He respects knowledge, human life and ethics. These beliefs of his are heavily influenced by Christian ethics. Gloucester planted these ideals in the young King, preparing him in this way to adapt to the requirements of the Renaissance age in which he rules England.

By contrast to the previous Kings, i.e., his predecessors, King Henry VI is not taught the Art of War as the most important activity he should master as a sovereign. He is rather taught how to read, to meditate, to maintain peace in his kingdom and to preserve his citizens' lives. For this same reason, the King is accused of being weak and fit to lead a church rather than a Kingdom. Gloucester's neglect of the art of war and of active life while bringing up the King seems to be the main reason behind his dissatisfaction with the issue of war all through his reign.

As he grows up, Henry VI's worship of peace is still manifest in his behaviour. That is why he makes an effort to maintain peace in the kingdom. He aims at avoiding war in order to have a peaceful political climate. If we consider Elizabeth I's peaceful policy, we can notice that she sometimes made peace treaties to avoid war. The same policy is pursued by Henry VI, the only difference lies in the nature of the peace-treaties themselves. Queen Elizabeth signed a peace-treaty with the Spaniards in order to avoid war with Spain. King Henry VI makes a marital match

by means of which he marries the French Princess Margaret of Anjou and gives the territories of Anjou and Maine as a dowry to her father. Both the marriage and the territories are aspects of the peace treaty King Henry chooses to make in exchange of peace with France.

By ensuring a peaceful climate at the international level, King Henry VI rids the kingdom of blood and disaster and enables the individuals to look for other activities since they will not be all the time in need of war. As it was the age of the Renaissance, people were looking for knowledge, especially since the state was encouraging intellectual activities. It was at this moment that the building of schools flourished in England: 'The end of the Middle Ages was a great period for the formation of schools, besides William of Wykeham's and Winchester and Henry VI's Eton' (Trevelyan, 1987: 197).

In *Henry VI*, the end of the war with France along with the dissemination of the Renaissance ideas causes a remarkable change in the perception of the Art of War among ambitious men; war used to be a major preoccupation of men of worth in the English society. As a result, knowledge and the intellectual life could find the best conditions to prosper in, i.e., peace. This is clearly demonstrated in the policy of Henry VI, who starts building grammar schools. Eton school was built with the help of Lord Saye. It was destined for the spread of literacy and knowledge among people. When being literate, people could be aware of the world around them and of the new ideas circulating in their environment.

Human beings are ambitious by nature, and so was the case with the literate people during Henry VI's reign. They were looking for better living conditions and

better social status. With different ideas that condemned war and praised peace, they became aware that true prosperity and true refinement, which were ideals highly promoted by the Great Chain of Being, could be attained only through peace. They drew the conclusion that it was only in a peaceful climate that the human beings could advance indeed.

Renaissance men got rid of the cruelty of war and their interests shifted to knowledge. After war, knowledge became the best means thanks to which they could preserve and improve their lives. As an intellectual, a worshipper of peace and a Renaissance ruler, Henry VI begins by avoiding war and making peace treaties and finishes by building schools. He is aware of the importance of a peaceful life for the individuals. It is indeed the best condition under which their intellectual calibres can be best exploited. That is why he puts an end to wars, to found better conditions under which his citizens join schools and find time and space for intellectual activities.

Besides the end of the Hundred Years War, the building of schools and the peaceful policy of the state, religion was one of the major reasons behind the adoption of peace and the mounting neglect of war. Christianity formed a major factor that encouraged the spread of peace and condemned war. It embodied ideals that stood against the human being's murder of his fellow human beings. Moreover, war was seen as a punishment of God to human beings because of their ancestors' (Adam and Eve) Original Sin (Ford, 1982: 25).

The speech about religion and its relation with peace leads us to speak about Desiderius Erasmus again. Erasmus was a devoted advocate of peace. He was

equally a man of religion that is why he used the principles of Christianity to defend peace. He made use of illustrations from the Bible that condemned war. In addition, people could grasp his ideas along with those included in the Bible easily thanks to the increasing percentage of literacy, promoted by the gradual spread of schools. One of the most invective arguments of Erasmus against war is the one stated in the following quotation:

Let us now imagine we hear a soldier, among these fighting Christians, saying the lord's prayer. 'Our Father' says he; O hardened wretch! Can you call him father when you are just going to cut your brother's throat? 'Hallowed be thy name' how can the name of God be more impiously unhallowed, than by mutual bloody murder among you, his sons? 'Thy kingdom come' do you pray for the coming of his kingdom, while you are endeavouring to establish an earthly despotism, by spilling the blood of God's sons and subjects? Dare you to say to your Father in heaven 'Give us this day our daily bread'; when you are going, the next minute perhaps, to burn up your brother's corn fields.

(Erasmus, 1936: 72)

The quotation above denotes that under God's rule, human beings are brothers. Normally, brothers should be in harmony with each other, avoiding doing harm to each other and realising God's wish for brotherhood and sisterhood on earth. However, in case they fall to enmity with each other, they become hypocritical, praying to God and murdering his offspring in the meantime.

In *Henry VI*, Erasmus' religious and philanthropist ideals are echoed through the character of King Henry VI. He stands firmly against the slaughter of his fellow human being. That is why he tries his best to avoid war once by marrying the French Princess Margaret of Anjou and once by providing the English people with the necessary means that enable them to adopt a peaceful way of life. It is during the reign of King Henry VI that a number of schools were founded, namely Eton school, to attract people's attention to knowledge and intellectual life.

The schools that were built were not restricted to the teaching of academic knowledge (mathematics, grammar, etc). They are equally concerned with the religious education which included the ideas of Erasmus, who tried to convince people about the sinfulness of war and the refinement of the use of reason. In Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, the same process of change is undergone by some characters such as King Henry, Lord Saye and Gloucester. These are the intellectuals of the trilogy, who sacrifice their lives in exchange of peace and spread of knowledge.

In addition to religion, the Great Chain of Being is another framework used by Renaissance people to organise the actual world. It came to organize man's life as well as to refine him and to improve his status. The refinement lies in the overcoming of passion and the worship of reason because it is what distinguishes man from the remaining creatures. It was equally the unique means of progress and refinement in the Renaissance world. Both religion and the Great Chain of Being meet in a central point. They are both interested in peace and reason. Religion includes ethics that praise peace. It teaches people to keep order and to respect morals. The Chain, for its part, includes such ideals. It aims at the preservation of peace and intellect through its appeals to the preservation of order. To achieve this aim, it was divided into stages that are strictly guided by a set of rules. Its rules, as those of religion, were made to protect the individual above all.

If we look for the real reason behind man's appropriation of war in the medieval era, we can first notice that war was an art highly appreciated by men of worth (Kings, Knights, Dukes, etc). These men, namely the sovereigns, were extremely ambitious people. Therefore, they appropriated the art of war only to

realise their ambition. Hence, war was the unique means available for men to follow, especially with the encouraging ideas of Niccolo Machiavelli, who dedicated a whole book (*The Prince* (1513)) of his to the encouragement of rulers to execute all military power they possessed in order to protect themselves and to realise their aims.

With the dissemination of Renaissance ideas, war started losing its classical status among ambitious men. Gradually, knowledge took the place of war, especially with the helpful ideas of both Erasmus and Bacon. The latter believed that:

There is no power on earth which setteth up a throne or chair of estate in the spirits and souls of men, and in their cogitations, imaginations, opinions, and beliefs, but knowledge and learning.

(Bacon, 1605: 31)

It was only in a peaceful atmosphere that those highly ambitious men of worth could have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and to appropriate it as a more moderate means through which they could realise their ambition and improve their life. Bacon's ideas are echoed through the ideas of Erasmus, but they are more likely similar to the philosophy of Shakespeare. The latter is thought to be the major playwright to reflect Bacon's ideas in his drama.

When we think of Shakespeare's plays, we often think them to be authored by Francis Bacon. There is reason to believe that, it is the strong similarity in their views not only about war and peace but about an unlimited number of issues like knowledge, marriage, love, etc. This affinity in views between both Shakespeare and Bacon was the major reason behind the assignment of Shakespeare's plays to Bacon. To be more explicit, we can consider Bacon's essays in which he included

his ideas about different matters like revenge. Bacon thinks that revenge is a wild justice.

Plot and Characters

Besides the themes, both the plot and the characters of *Henry VI* tend to be prominent devices that trace the shift from the celebration of war to the worship of peace. To analyse this shift, we are proceeding through the major events of the play. These are inter-related in a way that best serves my present hypothesis. In addition, we are interested in the characters of the trilogy, their thoughts and their dialogues. We are not going to definitely separate the plot from the characters because when describing the characters we will state the events and experiences they go through. Therefore, we saw no need to separate them.

In this sub-section of the plot and the characters, we will display how Shakespeare proceeded to show the shift from man's interest in the art of war as a unique means through which he could reach an interesting status in power to the worship of peace. Peace, as Shakespeare's trilogy shows, became a major interest of men of worth because it was the best state under which they could acquire knowledge. As a result, in a state of peace, ambitious men found a new way of looking for power, which was restricted to knowledge. To illustrate this fact, the playwright puts an end to war then he moves to focus on the intellectual of the trilogy, King Henry VI.

The first part of *Henry VI* opens with the funeral of King Henry V, who was the major warrior in the play. He was seen as a mythological figure in regard to the physical power he was endowed with. He mastered the Art of War, which enabled him to overcome his enemies and to be the symbol for his kingdom's military

victory. In the first part of the trilogy, Gloucester, Bedford and Exceter begin praising their dead King:

We mourn in black; why mourn we not in blood? Henry is dead, and never shall revive/ Upon a coffin we attend, / and death's dishonourable victory/ We with our stately presence glorify; / like captives bound to a triumphant car. / What! Shall we curse the planets of mishap / That plotted thus our glory's overthrow? Or shall we think the subtle-witted French/ Conjures and sorcerers, that afraid of him/ By magic verse have contrived his end?

(1-I / 17)

They try to state all his qualities, which were centred around his military prowess in the battlefield. Exceter shares the same opinion with his fellow members of the court, but his lamenting words are not only meant for praise.

Exeter introduces a new and a different idea in comparison to those of Bedford and Gloucester. He says: '*We mourn in black; why mourn we not in blood? Henry is dead, and never shall revive*' (1-1/17). His words are lamenting the literal death of the Black King. He leaves no possibility for the dead King to revive as if King Henry V had no heir to inherit him and to be reborn literally through his person. Shakespeare opens his play with the funeral of the King warrior to announce the end of the age of war. The use of King Henry V to announce the end of the age of war is due to the fact that he was not only the major warrior in the play but the ruler of a kingdom as well. He was labelled the Black King because of his military prowess and his mastery of the Art of War.

The death of the King warrior right at the opening of the trilogy is not the only event Shakespeare makes use of to symbolise the end of the age of war. There is also the death of John Talbot, his father General Talbot, Joan la Pucelle and Jack Cade. These are the major warriors in the play after the death of King Henry V. Their death, like that of the Black King (King Henry V), is but a step Shakespeare

goes through to establish the end of the age of war and its replacement by a new and a different age at all levels.

Therefore, the plot Shakespeare makes use of is not only a reflection of the actual history of the War of the Roses; it is equally the playwright's interpretation of these successive events in the history of England. In other words, he models those actual events in the history of England to suit and to serve his themes. He tries to read and to analyse them at the deep level and to philosophise about them. Above all, he knows, as his drama fairly shows, how to use history in order to display implicit philosophical and intellectual facts.

King Henry V

Before analysing the character of any other warrior in the trilogy, we should first deal with King Henry V. King Henry V is the major warrior in the trilogy of *Henry VI*. Although the play opens right after his death, more precisely with his funeral, he remains the symbol and the glory of English warlike history. King Henry V used to be a valiant warrior, a soldier whose military prowess exceeded that of all his descendants. His mastery of the art of war is first evident through the Hundred Years War, in which he defeated the French armies in different battles. His successive triumphs made him identical to an epic hero as he was hardly defeated:

England ne'er had a King until his time. / Virtue he had, deserving to command: / His brandish'd sword did blind men with his beams: / His arms spread wider than a dragon's wings; / His sparking eyes, replete with wrathful fire, / More dazzled and drove back his enemies/ Than mid-day sun fierce bent against their faces. / What should I say? His deeds exceed all speech: / He ne'er lift his hand but conquere.

(1- I/ 8)

With these military achievements, King Henry V built the military glory of England and made her a powerful country among the other countries, a status England could only enjoy during his lifetime. With his death, England not only lost a powerful and a valiant King and warrior, it also entered in an extremely important transitional era in which, apart from General Talbot and his son, John, the warriors who defend the glory of their Kingdom are totally absent from the political scene in the realm.

General Talbot

After the death of King Henry V, General Talbot becomes the major warrior in the trilogy. He takes the charge of defending the kingdom after the Black King. He is the General of the English army, a position that enables him to achieve huge military triumphs over the French enemy in the Hundred Years War. Such victories lead the Countess of Auvergne to describe him as follows: *'Is this the scourge of France? / Is this the Talbot, so much fear'd abroad / that with his name the mothers still their babes?'* (2-III / 17). Although the Countess tries in these words to mock General Talbot's physical appearance, she is indeed praising him in an indirect way. His power makes his enemies afraid of him just at the mention of his name. In fact, this is what we grasp from her figurative language.

After a number of military achievements, General Talbot dies in the battlefield of battle. With his death, a great change has been introduced into the life of the English. The war between England and France reaches its end. No fierce battles between the two kingdoms take place afterwards, since Talbot dies soon after his son John in the battlefield. Shakespeare portrays this quite significant scene in these words spoken by General Talbot:

*Poor boy! He smiles, methinks, as who should say, / had death been
French, then death had died to-day. / Come, come and lay him in his
father's arms: / my spirit can no longer bear these harms. / soldiers, adieu! I
have what I would have, / Now my old arms are young John Talbot's grave.*
(4- VII/ 27)

General Talbot and his son John are not the only warriors who announce the end of the age of war. Joan of Arc is also one of the warriors who die by the end of the first part of the trilogy. She is a French warrior. In addition to the Art of War, she masters witchcraft. It is thanks to both her military prowess and her witchcraft that she can lead France through a number of military triumphs over England. As it is the case with her enemies, General Talbot and his son John, Joan la Pucelle dies soon, leaving the French with no strong or valiant leader who resembles her to lead the French army and to bring more military triumphs to the kingdom. Jack Cade is another example of the warriors who die at the beginning of the play. He is a warrior who rebels against the peaceful policy of King Henry VI. He dies after being defeated by the followers of King Henry VI and the admirers of his peaceful policy.

King Henry VI

After the end of the age of war, announced by the death of the different warriors in the play, Shakespeare moves to deal with the peacemakers, whose deeds announce the birth of the age of peace. These peacemakers are not interested in the Art of War. They are rather intellectuals. These are King Henry VI, Lord Saye and Gloucester. King Henry VI is the son of Henry V and his successor to the throne of England. Yet, he is quite different from his father. While the father was the glory of his age thanks to his military prowess, the former is an intellectual whose interests go far from war. He neglects war and does his best to avoid it,

which is mainly due to the religious education he underwent thanks to his lord protector Gloucester: *'Ay, marry, uncle; for I always thought / It was both impious and unnatural / That such immanity and bloody strife / Should reign among professions of one faith'* (5- I/ 11). He is highly influenced by religious ideas, like Gloucester.

In order to avoid war, Henry VI makes peace treaties with his enemies. We are referring in this context to his marital match with the French Princess Margaret of Anjou. To his bride, King Henry gives the strategic territories of Anjou and Maine as a bride price. By so doing, he ensures a peaceful setting for his later performances, aiming at spreading education and encouraging people to acquire knowledge. After securing a peaceful life for his citizens, the King moves to build schools so as to spread literacy in the kingdom and to make it possible for his citizens. Knowledge forms the most prominent aim behind King Henry VI's peaceful policy. In other words, King Henry VI put an end to war because he became aware that knowledge can prosper but in a peaceful climate.

Lord Saye

Lord Saye is one of the faithful followers of King Henry VI. He respects the peaceful policy of the King. He is responsible for the building of the paper-mill and the grammar school. These are meant to spread literacy and knowledge among people. Saye tries to convince Cade of this reality in these words: *'my books preferr'd me to the King, / And seeing ignorance is the curse of God, / Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven'* (4- VII/ 68). Unfortunately for him, Saye's efforts in helping his sovereign to spread knowledge and literacy are ended by his

assassination by Jack Cade who proves unable to understand the refined and the noble aims of both King Henry and lord Saye.

Jack Cade who is totally against Saye's support to the King's policy, which is manifest in his words that are backed by religious evidence: *'It will be proved / to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually / talk of a noun and a verb and such abominable words / as no Christian ear can endure to hear..'* (4-7/ 35). In spite of his being a major figure of peace and knowledge, Saye's death does not mean the end of peace. Peace is carried on through the character of King Henry, who is the prominent intellectual in the trilogy. The era of peace continues in England and the same rule applies to knowledge and literacy thanks to the efforts and the sacrifices of King Henry VI.

Gloucester

Though Gloucester and his wife Eleanor are taken for conspirators, and are soon executed for the same allegations, Gloucester has a very important role in influencing King Henry VI and in orienting him towards peace and knowledge. Gloucester is the Lord Protector of the King. He is equally responsible for his education after his father's death. Gloucester is a worshipper of peace and knowledge with refined religious tendencies. He does not only educate the King, but has also taught him how to worship peace and knowledge.

The fact that he grows up in an atmosphere that worships peaceful and intellectual life, King Henry becomes more devoted to this kind of life than his Protector used to be. All of Gloucester, Lord Saye and King Henry stand out as major figures in the play, who have a very great role in founding the grounds for both peace and knowledge in political life. Gloucester, whose efforts in spreading

knowledge are considerable, faces a tragic fate. He is executed because of the conspiracy plotted by his ambitious wife Eleanor.

Unlike Gloucester, both Lord Saye and King Henry die because they favour peace and make efforts to spread knowledge. Saye is executed by Jack Cade for his building of the paper-mill and his participation in founding Eton school. Because of these deeds, Saye is accused of being a corrupt person who wants to change the political traditions in the realm. Cade considers himself as the hero who will clean the court and reorder things:

*I / am the besom that must sweep the court clean of such / filth as thou art.
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 caused printing / to be used and,
contrary to the king his crown and / dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill.*

(4-7/ 29)

In fact, Saye is murdered because he attempts to spread literacy which is something new for warriors like Cade. This may mean that Cade is aware of the threat peace and knowledge represent for the tradition of war since he is a warrior that is why he reacts in such a violent way.

King Henry VI, the major intellectual in the trilogy, the King philosopher and the peacemaker, dies too by the end of the play as a victim to the blind lovers of power, i.e., his wife and the Yorks in the war of the roses. Yet, he dies after planting the seeds of peace and knowledge among his citizens, especially among those who had the chance to become literate during his lifetime. Before his execution, King Henry VI is imprisoned in the Tower of London. In prison, he is given a book, which he appears reading in the final scene. Before he is executed, he is enthroned with a paper throne. This very act is included by Shakespeare as

final proof that real power lies not in a sword or in a golden throne but in words, in papers, in books and in mastering one's passions: 'real power and true heroism lie not in physical dominance over others but in self mastery' (Erasmus: 142). In other words, the real and the more durable crown is that made by means of papers (knowledge) and not by the sword (war).

The one who is supposed to inherit the throne of England after King Henry VI died before the latter. Prince Edward, the son of King Henry is murdered by Gloucester, who is greedy to take hold of the British throne in the war of the roses. As he learns news about his son's murder, the King laments his death and likens the situation to the myth of Dedalus:

*I, Dedalus; my poor boy, Icarus; / Thy father, Minos, that denied our
course; / The sun that sear'd the wings of my sweet boy / thy brother
Edward, and thy self the sea / Whose envious gulf did swallow up his life. /
Ah, kill me with thy weapon, not with words! / My breast can better brook thy
dagger's point / Than can my ears that tragic history. / But wherefore dost
thou come? Is't for my life?*
(5- VI/ 21)

In these words, King Henry likens himself to Dedalus who escapes the labyrinth thanks to the wings he makes out of wax whereas his only son fails and sinks in the sea. Dedalus uses his intellect to find a way to escape the maze; he flies far from the sun to protect his waxen wings from melting. His son lacks the wisdom of his father which leads him to fly near the sun that makes his wings melt. This mythological story is the best reflection of his case.

Exactly like Dedalus, King Henry escapes the labyrinth of the war of the roses and the political struggles England is subject to. He rather withdraws to his intellectual activities. Dedalus, too, knows thanks to his intellect how to escape the maze. King Henry's son, Prince Edward, follows his mother in her military battles

against the Yorks, as a result, he falls victim to these struggles. In this sense, he is like the son of Dedalus, Icarus, who flies near the sun (the war of the roses) whose heat makes his wings melt and caused his death in the sea. In the same way, Prince Edward sinks in a sea of blood.

Within this first chapter, we have tried to display the shift from war to peace through the themes, the plot and the characters of the trilogy of *Henry VI*. We have analysed the themes of war, love and knowledge in order to show how the individuals could absorb the ideals of the Renaissance that only praised ideals like peace and knowledge. We have also tackled the theme of love, which may stand as a peaceful means that suits more the Renaissance ideals and which can be viewed as a transitional phase between war and knowledge.

After the analysis of the themes, we have moved to the study of the plot and the characters. We mainly focused our analysis on the major events of Shakespeare's earliest play. These tend to show the way in which the playwright manages to move from the age of war to that of peace. Shakespeare does so through the successive deaths of the warriors and their disappearance from the play. The analysis of the characters in its turn is directed towards the display of the end of the age of the warrior and the birth of the age of the intellectual. This is fairly evidenced through the ends of the characters in the trilogy. The warriors died and the intellectuals succeeded them to lead the state in a new and different era. The latter can be best referred to as the age of knowledge.

At the end, we can conclude that the celebration of peace by Shakespeare was due to the fact that the playwright did not want his people to go back to the civil war that infected the depth of the English society. He rather directed his

argumentation towards the praise of peace along with the display of its advantages upon all parts of the society. Therefore we can say that historical plays, especially *Henry VI* are incessant tales enacted on the stage with a purely didactic aim. *Henry VI* is a play destined by Shakespeare to the revelation of the real effects of both war and peace upon the lives of people and the choice for what suits them best remains totally theirs.

Chapter two:

The Praise of Peace in *Coriolanus* (1607)

Power is war, a war continued by other means...none of the phenomena in a political system should be interpreted except as the continuation of war. They should, that is to say, be understood as episodes, factions and displacements in that same war. Even when one writes the history of peace and its institutions, it is always the history of this war that one is writing.

(Brock, 1972: 90-91)

Political, Social and Intellectual Background of the Jacobean age

After the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603, King James I (1566-1625) succeeded to the throne of England. By this access to the throne of England, he announced the end of the Elizabethan era and the beginning of the Jacobean era in the history of England. The Jacobean age, like its precedent, i.e., the Elizabethan age, was characterised by a set of distinctive features. More prominently, the Jacobean age was the age during which Shakespeare's plays *Coriolanus* (1607) and *The Tempest* (1611) were first performed whereas the trilogy of *Henry VI* was first performed during the lifetime of Queen Elizabeth I.

Coriolanus (1607) was first performed during the reign of King James I, which makes it more likely to reflect some of the major aspects of the Jacobean age. This affinity between both Shakespeare's play and the Jacobean age leads us to speak about the importance of drama at that time. The plays were performed in the court of King James I and in his presence. They often dealt with various political and royal issues like triumph in war, conspiracies, murders, etc. Thanks to drama, Shakespeare was not only well-known during the Elizabethan age but also during

the Jacobean age. The playwright was further a member of the King's Men, a group of actors working for the King himself.

The King's Men were performing plays in the court of King James, usually dealing with affairs that caught the interest of the sovereign. As their name may suggest, the King's Men were working for the entertainment and the education of the King and not against him. This fact can explain, in one way or another, why the plays were performed in front of the King. The plays dealt mainly with political issues, usually with a link to some philosophical, social and even emotional facts. In other words, Shakespeare and his fellow actors were not interested simply in drama itself, but also in state affairs.

This interest can be seen through the plays' concern with politics within the King's Men drama. They were either interpreting political events in England or anticipating them. In their interpretation and anticipation of politics, the King's Men aimed at helping the King in his task. They interpreted issues for him in order to open his eyes to some hidden truths he could not discover by himself. If they anticipated possible events, they would perhaps warn him against a coming danger. Therefore, the King's Men were called so because they were supposed to work for his benefit.

However, before starting the analysis and the interpretation of *Coriolanus*, we ought to consider the age of King James I in order to prepare the ground for our own analysis and interpretation. James I was known as James VI in Scotland. He is the son of Mary, Queen of Scots and half-sister of Queen Elizabeth I. His reign was characterised by a number of political, social as well as intellectual features. As far as politics is concerned, the Stuart King stood firmly against sharing power

with Parliament. He believed that the sovereign's power is directly derived from the supreme sovereign, God. Therefore, as God is the supreme Lord of the whole cosmos and the King is his image on the Earth, the King is equally the supreme ruler in his earthly kingdom.

In 1597, King James I wrote two works, *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* and *Basilikon Doron* (*Royal Gift*), in which he established an ideological basis for monarchy. In the *Trew Law*, he sets out the divine right of Kings, asserting that for Biblical reasons Kings are higher beings than other men, which makes them closer to God than to human beings. The document states an absolutist theory of monarchy, by which a King may impose new laws by a royal prerogative but must also pay heed to tradition and to God. *Basilikon Doron*, written as a book of instruction for the four-year-old Prince Henry, provides a more practical guide to kingship.

These absolutist political theories of King James continually put him in serious conflicts with Parliament. His contempt of Parliament, which he took as merely the King's 'head court', foreshadowed some of the difficulties he faced with the House of Commons: 'Hold no Parliaments', he tells Prince Henry, 'but for the necesitie of new Lawes, which would be but seldome' (Ibid, 1597: 68). Moreover, in the *Trew Law* King James stated that the King was the owner of his realm as a feudal lord is the owner of his field, because:

Kings arose before any estates or ranks of men, before any parliaments were holden, or laws made, and by them was the land distributed, which at first was wholly theirs. And so it follows of necessity that kings were the authors and makers of the laws, and not the laws of the kings.

(Qtd in Willson, 1962: 132)

However, such political conflicts did not imply that the 'Golden Age' of Elizabethan intellectual life and literature did not continue under the reign of King James. The era of prosperity in terms of literature and intellectual life continued with major figures such as William Shakespeare and Sir Francis Bacon. These had contributed to the spread of ideas like peace and knowledge. In fact, King James I himself was a talented scholar who directed his efforts essentially towards the spread of peace and knowledge (Cannon and Hargreaves, 2001: 278).

James I was a pacifist that is why he did his best to avoid enmity with other kingdoms. He was thought to be an anti-war King. Historians describe him as follows: 'he loved not a soldier, nor any fighting man' (Kenyon, 1978: 61). Moreover, in spite of his extremist political ideas, James I was not the type of King who devoted himself to politics. On the contrary, he deserted his political duties in favour of intellectual activities, which he liked best. He spent his time reading, writing and meditating. To devote more time to knowledge, he even left state affairs to Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury (Cannon and Hargreaves, 2001: 288).

The dominating philosophy during the lifetime of King James was humanism. The latter influenced all aspects of life, mainly the field of politics. It had an equally heavy impact upon the policy of King James. Humanism led him to avoid the engagement in wars and to favour peace on several occasions during his reign. Therefore, his peaceful policy contributed to the founding of political stability in the kingdom and to many other advantages that can be listed in the following quotation: 'James's reign did see, however, the growth of political stability in England, a lessening of religious passions, domestic peace, and the continuing respect of international community' (Kenneth, 1988: 353).

Apart from state affairs, a suitable marriage was contracted by King James. Historians think that this match was necessary to reinforce his monarchy. The choice fell on the fourteen-year-old Anne of Denmark (1574-1619), the youngest daughter of the Protestant Frederick II. The King was thought to have an extremely romantic relationship with his Queen. It was said that shortly after their marriage in August 1589 Anne sailed for Scotland but was forced by storms to the coast of Norway. On hearing about the incident, King James sailed from Leith with a three-hundred-strong retinue to fetch his Queen personally.

Some believe that King James I was deeply in love with his wife and did everything that pleased her whereas others affirm that the King was not at all in love with Queen Anne. They claim that he did not even love any woman and had no desire for them. He was rather attracted by males, whom he loved most. He was thought to be a gay person. This can be quite evidenced by the fact that he lived far from his wife for a long time. Shortly after their marriage, Queen Anne sailed for Scotland and left her husband in England. Furthermore, he was surrounded by handsome men rather than by beautiful mistresses (Cannon and Hargreaves, 2001: 290).

King James's sexual orientation was so widely known that Sir Walter Raleigh joked about it in public saying 'King Elizabeth' had been succeeded by 'Queen James' (Ibid: 291). However, Queen Elizabeth is referred to as a King because she was powerful and strong in character whereas King James was labeled 'Queen James' because he was weak in character. He did not involve his kingdom in wars, which was perceived as a kind of effeminacy, and was fond of men. For some historians, he was a riotous homosexual who murdered his young lovers and

victimized countless women. His cruelty was in somehow justified by his 'divine right' of Kings. In this way, this divine right of the King extended from politics to social and personal affairs. Once, he declared in front of Parliament that 'Kings exercise a manner of resemblance of divine power on earth, accountable to none but God only' (Ibid, 292).

King James's wife, Queen Anne, did not differ much from her husband. While he was fond of males, she might have taken a lover for herself, since she lived far from her husband for long periods of time. She is thought to be lesbian like her husband. She committed adultery during the King's absence. Both the Queen and her husband were known for their love for each other in public, but the King and even his Queen behaved in a different way on several occasions. Her husband offered his favorites (his 'lovers') money and status in his court, and declared publicly that he loved them.

After 1603 the Jacobean theatre took on a strong pacifist slant that reflected the influence of the King's assertive political creed (Jorgensen, 1956: 200). Most modern scholars insist that this shift in perspective results from the playwrights' 'tactful heed to one of [the] sovereign's most deeply felt convictions' (Ibid, 201), but one might also argue that such a reassertion of Christian and Humanist attitudes about war and peace began to flourish simply because they were no longer repressed, or because people had become disillusioned with military heroics after the fall of Essex, or because King James's educational program as philosopher-king was actually working. Whatever its mechanism, the cultural shift toward pacifism influenced Jacobean plays in a variety of ways.

The Plot

Of all the plays, *Coriolanus* adopts pacifism in the most concerted manner. The satirical aspect of the play has been observed by many. G.B. Shaw called it 'the greatest of Shakespeare's comedies' (Qtd in Campbell, 1968: 26). The thrust of the satire has been interpreted variously: by right- leaning critics as an attack on the plebeian mob whose self-seeking opportunism brings a principled and noble patrician to destruction, and by left-leaning critics as an attack on the aristocracy for their uncontrollable hatred of the proletariat they exploit.

We believe, however, that as a political satire, the play makes more sense when it is regarded as an attack on the bellicose policies and attitudes which create the war that provides the framework of the play's action. That war is portrayed not in terms of glamour, glory, or heroism but rather as cruel butchery. *Coriolanus* criticizes war by repeatedly showing how military violence takes on a life of its own, severed from its purposes and justifications. The heroic Coriolanus switches from the defender of his city to its attacker because of a personal grievance: *'O world thy slippery turns! Friends now fast sworn...on a dissention of a doit, break out/ To bitterest enmity: so fellest foes/...by some chance/Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends/and interjoin their issues'* (4-4/ 12). And his erstwhile opponents, *'patient fools/ Whose children he hath slain,'* ignore their enmity and *'their base throats tear/With giving him glory'* (5-6/ 50). These Volscians are cast into the role of warmongers throughout the play. No less than Coriolanus and their own aristocratic general, Aufidius, the proletarians of Antium hate peace and relish battle for its own sake:

2 Servingman: Why then we shall have a stirring world

again. *This peace is nothing but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad makers.*"

1 Servingman: *Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace as far as day does night; it's sprightly, waking, audible and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.*

2 Servingman: *Tis so: and as war in some sort may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.*

1 Servingman: *Ay, and it makes men hate one another.*

3 Servingman: *Reason: because they then less need one another. The wars for my money...*

(4-5/ 223 -238)

The role of the peace-loving Roman commons in the play opens with an airing of legitimate grievances against the war policy of the patricians: *'the object of our misery is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them...If the wars eat us not up, they will'* (1-1/ 20-80). Their role concludes with their celebration of the end of hostilities with the Volscians and their reconciliation with the patricians after Coriolanus has been tamed (5-5).

As in his other late tragedies and even early histories like *Henry VI*, in *Coriolanus* Shakespeare goes beyond mockery and condemnation to study the causes of war. Following Erasmus' path, he traces the causes of political violence to psychological aggression. Even before Coriolanus' first appearance, a citizen suggests the connection between the general's battlefield heroics and domestic neurosis: *'Though soft-conscience'd men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it partly to please his mother and to be proud...'* (1-1/ 37). This diagnosis is confirmed by modern psychoanalytic critics like Janet Adelman:

The whole of his masculine identity depends on his transformation of his vulnerability into an instrument of attack ...The rigid masculinity that Coriolanus finds in war becomes a defence against acknowledgment of his neediness; .. In order to avoid being the soft, dependent, feeding parasite, he has to maintain his rigidity as soldier's steel.

(Adelman, 1980: 132-3)

As the play proceeds, the more he seeks to confirm his manhood in battle, the more infantilized he becomes.

Coriolanus' compulsive need to fight results largely from his vulnerability to the influence of a woman's vicarious aggression. His mother, Volumnia, is introduced as a horrifying creature, like Allecto, the Fury, or Bellona, goddess of war:

If my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements of his bed where he would show most love...had I a dozen sons...I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action...the breasts of Hecuba/ when she did suckle Hector, looked not lovelier/ than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood/ at Grecian sword, contemning.

(1-3/ 20-80)

(4.5.109-135)

Coriolanus is not only psychologically aberrant; it also portrays the soldier's personality as historically atavistic. This tragedy is not only a satire but also a history play. Its chief source, Plutarch's *Life of Coriolanus*, memorializes a past time when 'valiantness was honored in Rome above all other virtues' (Cited by Barton, 1988: 123-4). But, as Barton notes, the tragedy departs significantly from Plutarch's idealized vision of Coriolanus' society. By incorporating elements of Livy's and Machiavelli's historical accounts of Coriolanus' career into the play, Shakespeare depicts Rome's transition from an aristocratic military culture to an urban republic which eventually will balance the claims of patricians and plebs, of war and peace, in a contained, constructive tension:

Livy makes this clear ... it is ... a society which no longer ... is based ... primarily upon an ethos of war... Whatever the case in the past, or among the Volscians of the present, valour in this Rome is no longer "the chiefest virtue," Overriding all the rest. ... the patricians depended upon war as a way of stifling civic dissension, busying giddy minds with foreign

quarrels in order to keep them distracted from injustices and inequalities at home ... Sometimes, this strategy worked , uniting Rome temporarily against a foreign foe . But increasingly, over the years, it did not.
(Ibid, 131)

Shakespeare's Volscian society appears primitive and barbarous by contrast to his Rome. The commoners there are neither tradesmen nor citizens but only servants; the senate merely rubber-stamps the decisions of Aufidius, the strongman general; his henchmen murder Coriolanus with impunity; and women have no voice whatsoever. In Rome, on the other hand, the commons would really prefer, in Sicinius's words, to be '*singing in their shops and going/About their functions friendly*' (4-6/ 8-9). For these 'small shopkeepers and traders, orange sellers, makers of taps for broaching wine-barrels... had rather pursued their normal peacetime occupations than be out slitting Volscian throats' (Ibid, 133). But like the Volscians, Coriolanus has nothing but contempt for tailors and ballad makers. Only he, among all the patricians, refuses to acknowledge the growing influence and the changing role of the plebs (working class) in the economic and political life of the city (Ibid). His rigid subscription to old military values is portrayed as reactionary blindness rather than principled nobility.

In addition to mocking, criticizing and analysing militarism, *Coriolanus* demonstrates the possibility of stemming the tides of war and civil strife set in motion by its excesses. Its depiction of Rome's transformation from a warlike to a more pacific society recapitulates the evolution of England's foreign policy as well as of Shakespeare's political position between the early 1590's and 1607. The plot and the manipulation of dramatic tension induce the audience to move in a parallel direction. When they want to have him elected to political office, both his friends

and his mother regret having intensified Coriolanus' hatred of the commons and the Volscians. In the third act they belatedly try to teach him the peacetime virtues of tact and compromise:

Volumnia: *You are too absolute e... I have heard you say / honor and policy like unsevered friends / I th' war do grow together r: grant that and tell me/ In peace what each of them by th' other lose / That they combine not there. Throng our large temples with the shows of peace/And not our streets with war.*

(3-3/ 36)

After having created such a Frankenstein monster, mother Rome and mother Volumnia discover the difficulty of taming it. At first the general acquiesces to the civilians, but provoked by people, he loses control over himself altogether, insults them so intemperately that he is banished for treason, and ends up joining the Volscians, allowing his hatred of the plebs to extend to the hatred of his own family. As he threatens revenge against the whole city of Rome in the last act, peace is given a second chance. At her son's tent in the camp of the besieging army, Volumnia abjures both force and policy and invokes the agency of mercy: *'Our suit /is that you reconcile them: while the Volscies/May say 'this mercy we have showed' the Romans/This we received;' and each in either side/give the all-hail to thee, and cry 'Be blest/for making up this peace' (Ibid).*

This conversion scene of recognition and reversal displays the mother's ability to pacify her son with the persuasive force of language. The power of her love overcomes his hate, just as the power of her eloquence overcomes his refusal to speak:

Coriolanus [holds her by the hand silent]: Mother, mother O / you have won a happy victory to Rome; / But for your son.../Most dangerously hast thou with him prevailed / If not most mortal to him....I'll frame convenient peace ... Ladies, you deserve / To have a temple built you. All the swords / In Italy, and her confederate arms,/Could not have made this peace.

(5-3/ 183-209)

The cruel warrior has been transformed into a merciful emissary of peace who will approach the Volscians with humility and tact, subordinating his own mixed feelings to the requirements of his diplomatic mission.

This transformation is emphasized by the agonizingly prolonged moment of suspense indicated in the stage direction, a moment which also moves the audience from rejection to affirmation of peace. The same theatrical tactic of suspense is reinforced in the next scene, set back in Rome. Here patricians and plebs reproach one another while awaiting a common death at the hands of the Volscians, having abandoned hope that Coriolanus will ever relent: *'there is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger; that shall our poor city find'* (5-4/ 24).

One messenger brings further bad news that the plebs are turning on their own tribunes. But then comes the word that *'the ladies have prevailed'* (Ibid, 45), followed by a grand outpouring of celebration. The patrician response of Menenius—*'This Volumnia/Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,/A city full; of tribunes such as you/A sea and land full'* (5-4/ 52)--is echoed by Sicinius, the tribune of the people: *'We'll meet them/ And help the joy'* (5-4/ 63). The class conflict is resolved --for the moment at least--by the glorious outbreak of peace. Thus the dramatic climax of Shakespeare's play enacts King James' emblem: the triumph of Eirene over Mars.

If the play had ended here, without its short final scene, it clearly would have fallen within the classification of tragicomedy. However, Shakespeare concluded as he did, not only to follow his classical sources but also to deepen the play's

political message. In several respects, the conversion from war to peace is difficult and painful--in a word, tragic. Displaying those tragic costs as worthwhile can enhance rather than negate the value of such a conversion. Harshly contrasting with the brief and sacred social harmony of the fifth scene of Act 5, the final scene appals us with the horror of political violence. Irresistible aggression bursts the dikes of Coriolanus' self-restraint and drives the Volscian populace to shout '*kill, kill, kill, kill him*' (*Ibid*), it cannot be contained by the Second Lord's attempt to allow the embassy simply to be heard: '*Peace ho! no outrage, peace!/The man is noble, and his fame folds in/This orb o' th' earth. /His last offences to us/ Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius, / And trouble not the peace*' (*Ibid*, 123-7). But in fact it is not primarily irrational instinct--the iras, or ire of classical epic--that causes the final debacle. Rather, it is Aufidius' calculated manipulation that pushes both Coriolanus and the mob beyond the breaking point. The conspiracy of his hawkish political 'faction' torpedoes the peace process, a process which otherwise might well have completed the conversion of both former anti-pacifist parties. In this concluding scene, then, the playwright doesn't undermine our newfound sympathy with Coriolanus, as many critics have maintained; rather he makes the protagonist into something of a martyr (Campbell, 1968: 26).

But regardless of one's response to the manner of Coriolanus' death, its fact signals a positive rather than a negative outcome of the play, a progression to a new kind of society. Had Coriolanus not given in to his mother's pleadings, his 'manhood' might have been spared, but only at the expense of the lives of all the men, women and children in Rome. Had he not lost his composure at the final

moment, he might have avoided the rage of the Volscian mob, but Aufidius would have had him killed anyway (See Aufidius' aside at 5-3/ 202).

The 'sense of pain and anxiety' that Janet Adelman says we are left with at the end (Adelman, 1980: 144) is outweighed by our admiration for Coriolanus' conversion and consequent death, because they usher in a peace between the Volscians and the Romans and between patricians (aristocrats) and plebs. Jonathan Dollimore also offers a pessimistic interpretation of the ending: 'before peace stands a chance of ratification, Coriolanus is killed. The two main political conflicts which open the play--patrician against plebian, Romans against Volscians—remain' (Dollimore, 1985: 222). But it is clear that without Coriolanus, the Volscians will not succeed in continuing their offensive. Whereas Barton states that:

Coriolanus is a tragedy in that its protagonist does finally learn certain necessary truths about the world in which he exists, but dies before he has any chance to rebuild his life in accordance with them. Paradoxically, it is only in his belated recognition and acceptance of historical change, of that right of the commons to be taken seriously which the other members of his class in Rome have already conceded, that he achieves genuinely tragic individuality.

(Barton, 1988:145)

Coriolanus' enactment of the reversal from hate to love and from war to peace foreshadows the conversions and reconciliations of protagonists of the late romances like Prospero in *The Tempest* (1611). The happy ending of this play expands the festive moment of Volumnia's return to Rome with masque-like pageantry, and while maintaining a political theme, shift the tonality and setting of the performance to one of spectacle and magic, the typical style of Jacobean court entertainment. Elaborating images of harvest bounty, fertility and prosperity--iconography traditionally associated with Eirene--the romance plots resolve

political tensions in opulent celebrations combining seedtime and harvest in honour of the marriage of the offspring of rulers formerly at war. Such hoped-for outcomes guided King James' foreign policy, as he negotiated armistice between the Low Countries and Spain and marriages of his children into both Protestant and Catholic royal families.

Within this framework, Shakespeare's last plays function as propaganda for peace. James I himself might well have written an introduction to any one of them containing sentiments like those in his prefatory note to Middleton's *The Peacemaker*:

To all our true- loving and Peace-embracing Subjects...All that is required of us from you , is a faithful and hearty welcome ... For peace that hath been a stranger to you, is now become a sister, a dear and natural sister; and to your holiest loves we recommend her'

(Middleton, 1886: 8: 312)

As Linda Woodbridge points out in her essay, *Pallisading the Body Politic* (1984), the twenty year rule of King James forms an 'intercalary period' in British history, a respite between the obsessive fear of invasion during Elizabeth's reign and the manic aggression of expansionist imperialism and civil war which was to follow (Woodbridge, 1984: 112).

Jonathan Goldberg sees in this conclusion an exemplar of 'James' own self-proclaimed style: the 'style of the gods' (Goldberg, 1983: 240). But in addition to the pomposity of his public persona, King James had another style which also served his quest for peace. It was that of 'the wisest fool in Christendom': coarse, self-indulgent, tolerant, amiable, loving and self- effacing. Such tribute to the King has seemed to some modern commentators like a form of kowtowing unworthy of Shakespeare's stature. Others have cited it to proclaim that Shakespeare's lifelong

political agenda was to apologize for royal authority and beat the drum for British nationalism (Knight, 1958: 85).

But on the basis of the evidence presented here, one could also argue that after 1599, Shakespeare's own abhorrence of war became steadily more emphatic and that his enthusiastic support for King James stemmed at least partially from his own desire to further the king's peacemaking mission. It is true that after Shakespeare's death, King James' continuing endeavours in this cause could not forestall the tragic outbreaks of either the Thirty Years War, in the latter days of his reign, or of the English civil war, during the reign of his son. Nevertheless, by recovering the early Humanists' rejection of military politics, culture, and ideology, both the mature Shakespeare and his royal benefactor strengthened a fragile tradition that too often remains ignored or denied.

Characters

Coriolanus

Caius Marcius (Coriolanus) is an inflexible, arrogant heroic warrior, whose fortitude and perseverance win every match on the battlefield. Apart from war, however, his basic characteristics cause him problems and lead to his downfall. Much of Marcius' behaviour is motivated by his mother's demands. She has trained him to be an honourable and wilful soldier, sending him off to war at age sixteen. When he is challenged to be something other than a military leader, however, he is unable to rise to the occasion.

Coriolanus has a hot temper. His bursts of anger get him into trouble throughout the play; he provokes class antagonism, causes his own banishment

from Rome, and even makes his fellow patricians lose faith in him. He is also filled with **pride**. He shows disrespect to the commoners, feeling they are not as smart as the patricians and are unfit to be represented in the government. Because they do not share his values, Coriolanus refuses to hide his contempt for them. But then, Coriolanus is always brutally honest and speaks his mind. He believes that the commoners are inconstant and cowardly, and he clearly tells them so. He calls the tribunes, and then Aufidius, liars, angering them to the point that they must rid themselves of this arrogant warrior.

In spite of his obvious intelligence, Coriolanus lacks insight into himself. He never realizes the effect that he has on people, until it is too late. Largely due to his outspokenness, he angers the tribunes, the Senators, the common people, and even his family. He also fails to see how inflexible he is but he can never make a concession or accept another's point of view.

Coriolanus is greatly influenced by his mother. Although Volumnia denies it, he has inherited much of who he is from her. She herself acknowledges the influence she exercises over him when she reminds him in the intercession scene that there is no man in the world more bound to his mother. She has taught him to equate nobility with inflexibility. She has instilled in him arrogance and contempt of the commoners. He has inherited his choleric temperament from her although he carries it to uncontrollable heights. She has led him to value war wounds above everything else. She has catered to Coriolanus' pride by leading him to believe that he is a man who should imitate the graces of god.

As long as Coriolanus has her approval, he does not fear anything, nor does he need to be bothered about the moral implications of his actions, for she will be there to support him. When he is banished, he does not feel her influence on a daily basis, and it makes a difference. He truly becomes his own man - distancing himself from any emotion of or for Rome. However, when Volumnia presents herself to him near the end of the play and begs, on her knees, for her son not to attack Rome, he is powerless against her. He comments that although Volumnia has succeeded in winning a 'happy victory to Rome' (5-5/ 34), he has betrayed himself in a way and is, therefore, lost.

The play reveals how Coriolanus cannot win at the game of politics, for he lacks the ability to wear many guises. By being true to himself, he enrages those around him. If nothing else, he is a singular human being, and his aloneness is restated throughout the play. More importantly, he is also lonely in his being the only character in the play who turns out to be human and who adopts peace, which proves to be much better than war for him. For this same reason, Coriolanus is unique in his humanistic behaviour, which leads him to be a peacemaking politician rather than a warrior.

Volumnia

Volumnia is depicted as a powerful woman who exercises considerable influence over her son. She is an important character and appears in every act of the play. Her appearances are always significant, and her words have an important effect on Coriolanus. In fact, Volumnia is responsible for her son's arrogance and contempt of the commoners. It is Volumnia who has taught Coriolanus to treasure war wounds above the pleasures of common life. From an early age, she has

trained him to be a soldier, valuing honour and bravery above all else. At the age of sixteen, she sent him off to war and gloried in his successes.

Volumnia's ruling passion is fury but she is also judicious. As she tells Coriolanus she has '*a brain that leads my use of anger / To better vantage*' (3-2./38). While Coriolanus' anger is incorrigible, Volumnia's anger is not. In the same vein, Volumnia can be a political creature when needed, where her son has no sense of politics and refuses any part of pretension. At the end of the play, Volumnia 'plays politics' with her son in order to save her beloved country. She tells Coriolanus that he will have to pass over her dead body before he attacks Rome. She also plays upon his honour, saying that he will be forever remembered as a traitor if he attacks his own country. Although no one else in Rome could accomplish it, Volumnia succeeds in swaying her son, proving she is the stronger personality of the two. Although she loses Coriolanus physically, she has saved his reputation. In Rome, he dies an honoured man; additionally, she has gained her own glory.

Virgilia

Virgilia functions as a contrast to Volumnia. Although she is timid and retiring, she is not completely overshadowed by her domineering mother-in-law. Submissive and terrified of blood and wounds, she is more concerned about Coriolanus' safe return home than about his triumph on the battlefield. Yet she shows firmness of resolve when she refuses to leave the house despite Volumnia's admonitions and Valeria's entreaties to do so.

There is a fine delicacy about Virgilia. Although she rarely speaks during the play, her silence constitutes an effective foil to Volumnia's abundant rhetoric. Coriolanus calls her '*my gracious silence*' (2-1/ 179) It is interesting to note that when Coriolanus writes her a letter after his victory at Corioli, he does not mention his wounds, while his letter to Volumnia contains a detailed account of them. Virgilia is also highly emotional, often bursting into tears instead of expressing her feelings. After Coriolanus has been banished, however, she violently condemns the tribunes.

In the intercession scene, Virgilia's eyes and tears induce Coriolanus to abandon his plan of attacking Rome. She shows strength of character as she seconds Volumnia's threat and states that if he does attack Rome, he shall have to tread over her dead body. Coriolanus speaks no more tender lines in the play than in the intercession scene when he addresses Virgilia as the '*Best of my flesh*' (Ibid). It is a fair assessment of Virgilia, for she is the only character, apart from Menenius, who really loves Coriolanus for who he is, not what he can be for others.

Menenius

Menenius is the consummate diplomat, gracious and benevolent, and always displacing blame from himself. He is an old man who describes himself as Coriolanus' father and the book of his good acts. Menenius is a humorous patrician and a sensible and experienced commentator on events. He is palpably present throughout the entire play. Menenius functions as a counterpoise to all that Marcius represents.

Menenius paints his character for the benefit of the tribunes and describes himself as a:

Humorous patrician , and one that loves a cup of hot wine without a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect in favouring the first complaint --- hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion , one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning; what I think, I utter, and spend my malice in my breath.

(2-1/ 43)

Menenius is a hedonist and survives thanks to his ability to talk a mean streak and say what people want to hear. He is quick in reply and easily adapts himself to the changing circumstances.

Menenius is friendly toward the commoners and is seen as one who has always loved people yet he is as contemptuous of them as Marcius. Menenius is a hypocrite who can hide his feelings and adapt to situations. He holds the view that patricians must continue to rule Rome even if that means allowing the commoners to think they may have some representation. He is conservative in his political views and likes to maintain the status quo. It is this streak of conservatism that leads him to insist that Coriolanus wear the gown of humility and exhibit his wounds to solicit the citizens' votes according to the ancient custom.

Menenius is the only humorous character in the entire play. His wit does not provide laughter but surprises his opponents. He anticipates the tribunes by painting an indulgent portrait of his own faults and thereby does not allow them to get the upper hand in the argument. He captures the interest of the commoners by telling them the story of the revolt by the members of the body against the

stomach. The commoners realize what he is trying to do and one of them comments, *'You must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale'* (1-1/ 83). His humour is not apparent to the characters but achieves an ironical significance for the reader who sees clearly through his ruse.

Menenius is valuable in oiling the political machinery of Rome. He has a style which persuades the people that he is sympathetic towards them when he is not. This points out his hypocrisy but this attitude is essential to maintain peace, a lesson that Coriolanus is never able to grasp. His attempts to reconcile the Senators and citizens (when he placates the citizens by telling them the tale of the belly), the citizens and Coriolanus (in the central Act III conflict) and Coriolanus and his own nature (when he goes to intercede for Rome) are ineffectual. He aims at establishing a political compromise but is unsuccessful in his efforts. His speech to the commoners about the revolt by the members of the body against the belly is a common enough political parable. It reflects Shakespeare's abhorrence of democracy as a form of government.

Menenius believes that if the commoners try to usurp the powers of the patricians it will result in utter chaos. The belly of his tale stands for the patricians while the rebel members represent the plebeians. Menenius sees democracy as a many-headed monster. The political upheaval in Rome is a result of the inversion of roles. The commoners sought to play the role of the ruler. They thus allowed the foot to assume the role of the head. The central moral of the play denounces democracy as a form of government. This is why the play is so relevant to our times when democracy is seen as the right of the people. Menenius constantly

urges Coriolanus to exercise temperance, control his wrath and speak less arrogantly to the people, yet he wants him to wield his power at the same time. Throughout Act III, Menenius' tone is that of a peacemaker. He is constantly trying to soothe ruffled feathers.

He is the only character apart from Virgilia who really loves Coriolanus but in the end he does not stand by him because he does not have enough moral resolve. He allows the tribunes to manipulate him, which engenders his exile. His love for Coriolanus is evident in the verbal jig into which he breaks on learning that Coriolanus is returning victorious to Rome. His constant defence of Coriolanus does nothing but attempts to ameliorate a tense situation. As far as consolidating anything deeper, Menenius cannot.

In brief, Menenius is a conciliator who aims at effecting a political compromise. He is an aged Senator but he is not weak. Even at his advanced age he retains his fighting spirit. When Marcius is attacked by the commoners in the market place he declares that he too could fight the tribunes. He is verbally adroit whereas Marcius is physical, yet both are ineffectual as leaders. His speech is largely ironical and he possesses an easy tone of familiarity along with an innately good nature. As a politician he is flexible and able to adapt himself to the changing environment.

Aufidius

Aufidius is the Volscian war leader and Coriolanus' hated rival and enemy. At the beginning of the play he appears to be Coriolanus' mirror image. He is a courageous warrior who hates the common people. Aufidius is respected by the

Volscian lords and Senators, as Coriolanus' courage is admired by the Roman patricians and Senators. Aufidius is the only match for Coriolanus. He is not propelled by his mother's ambition as Coriolanus is yet he shares Coriolanus' ambition only his ambition is vitiated by malicious envy. He has been defeated by Coriolanus five times and feels that he must establish his superiority over his rival by defeating him. But the question of superiority is deliberately left unclarified when his encounter with Coriolanus ends abruptly in the middle. When Aufidius meets Coriolanus for the first time on the battlefield, he reveals the intense hatred that he harbours for his rival. He is angry when the Antiate soldiers come to his aid while he is fighting with Coriolanus and wishes to establish his superiority by fair play. But his character undergoes a moral decline after this battle.

In the light of this mutual hatred of the rivals, his friendly welcome after Coriolanus has been banished from Rome is surprising and cannot be taken at mere face value. Even the servants comment on this "strange alteration" in Aufidius. Aufidius welcomes him because he sees Coriolanus as being somewhat vulnerable. He offers Coriolanus the joint command of the Volscian army and urges him to seek his revenge against Rome. His jealousy increases when Coriolanus gains popularity among the Volscians and soldiers flock to his part of the army to fight under his command. Coriolanus emerges as the better leader even though he has betrayed his country. But Coriolanus attacks Rome out of a sense of righting his wrongs. After Aufidius has killed him, he shows regret and concedes that Coriolanus was a noble warrior.

The Citizens

Although the citizens play a prominent part in the play, Shakespeare's attitude towards the mob is one of derision and contempt. They are derided by the nobles for lacking any kind of reason or intelligence and are also inconstant, a quality which Coriolanus finds deplorable. The citizens perform the task of the Greek chorus, often commenting on what has just taken place or is about to, and gossiping about the nobles. Animal imagery is used to characterize the commoners. Coriolanus denounces them as a beast having many heads after he has been banished from Rome and also refers to them as vermin and curs. Their loyalty wavers constantly and they constitute an ever changing backdrop to the tragic story of Coriolanus' downfall. They are essentially headstrong, foolish, inconstant, cowardly, easily swayed, and guided by passion rather than reason.

Cominius

Cominius is the Roman consul who is the general-in-chief of the army. He leads the army against the Volscians in Corioli. His name is derived from the Latin word "comis" meaning "cultured." Although he does not have a major role in the play, he represents the ideal Roman patrician. He is an elder statesman whose thoughts are always for the good of Rome. But he too is contemptuous of the commoners and their tribunes. He is a good soldier yet respectful of his men; however, he does not quite have a strong enough **personality** to be a great leader.

From what has been said, we conclude that *Coriolanus* aims at showing the bad effects of war and the advantages of peace. Its performance in 1607 came to complete the stream of thinking brought by the preceding plays. However, this

Roman tragedy is different from the others in the sense that it has a satirical tone to mock the ideals of war and heroic fighting. This tone was used in order to fit Shakespeare's desire to speak his mind as far as the issues of war and peace are concerned on the one hand, and to fit the specificities of a play which is essentially based on a Roman account on the other hand.

Chapter Three:

‘Power is Knowledge’ in *The Tempest* (1611)

A few gifted people may become leaders; most of mankind must be led. Leadership potential is inborn, but it will develop only if a proper education is begun early and systematically continued.

(Erasmus, 1936: 65)

William Shakespeare wrote his last play, *The Tempest* (1611), when James I was fully established on the English throne. The fact that it was first performed nearly eight years after the accession of King James I to the throne of England is significant in many a way. An alert reader will quickly notice that the same concerns with war and the danger of holding power by the force of arms are found in both Shakespeare’s play and the actual political life of England during King James’ reign. These are some of the points that are to be developed in this final chapter of the dissertation.

Theme of War

The Tempest is the story of Prospero, the Duke of Milan, who falls victim to his brother’s conspiracy. The Duke lives peacefully in his dukedom, but this peaceful life does not last long because his brother Antonio plans to overthrow him and take his Dukedom. To save his life, as well as that of his little daughter, Prospero escapes at night on a boat with the help of one of his faithful guards,

heading for an unknown direction. Eventually, both the father and his daughter Miranda reach a remote island.

The conspiracy performed by Antonio stands out as the origin of the symbolic war in *The Tempest*. The theme of war appears through the struggle that opposes Prospero on the one hand and Anthonio, Trinculo, Stephano and Caliban on the other. The struggle between both sides is not as violent as the wars depicted in the two previous plays, especially since it is based upon magic. Caliban, the deformed creature Prospero has found on the island, tries to disobey his master by refusing to bring his wood and to make his fire. He also plans with Trinculo and Stephano to kill his usurper. Thanks to the magical power that he acquired during his study of western lore, Prospero invokes a tempest that wrecks havoc on the fleet captained by his brother Antonio on his way to Tunis to betroth his son to a Tunisian Princess.

*Tonight thou shalt have / cramps, / Side-stitches, that shall pen thy breath up,
urchins / Shall for that vast of night, that they may work / All exercise on thee:
thou shalt be pinch'd / As thick as honey comb, each pinch more stinging /
Than bees that made 'em.*

(I- 2/ 496)

The conception of war in *The Tempest* differs largely from the conception of war in the two plays we have studied previously. In this final play of Shakespeare's, there is a shift from the traditional weapons, such as the sword, the rapier, etc. towards another type of weapons, i.e., magic. As a result, the scenes of armed war are not stressed in the play. These are dropped for a continual conflict opposing Prospero to his enemies, a war in which not a drop of blood is shed by Prospero, the most powerful character in the play. The peculiarity of Prospero's character lies in his shift from the coercive means of making war to

hegemonic means. Once he masters the art of magic, he feels it no longer necessary to use physical force to overcome them. His aim is not to exterminate his enemies so as to realise his revenge. All he desires is to regain his dukedom peacefully.

By introducing Prospero's objectives, Shakespeare seems to be aiming at exhibiting the global conception of the model ruler who best fits the Renaissance era. The Renaissance leader should distinguish himself from his predecessors by adopting the principles of the age he lives in. The pacifist character of Prospero's 'tempestuous' revolution blazes the best way for sovereigns to follow in order to adapt themselves to the new philosophy based on peace and knowledge. Shakespeare attempts to re-establish the link between politics and the love of power, on the one hand, and ethics (humanism) and politics on the other. This link cannot be matched with a concept other than knowledge. He illustrates the fact that the love of power is not sinful in itself, but what is questioned is the procedure the ruler should follow to reach this end.

Political pursuits could definitely be matched with ethics, according to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Erasmus is the one who not only shares but also defends this belief. In contrast with the two previous plays in which the main characters are given the personality features owned by Machiavelli's typical Prince, *The Tempest* borrows most of those features from Erasmus' categories. The latter contends that the sovereign is also able to hold power through peaceful and humanistic ways. He puts it as follows:

Follow the right, do violence to no one, plunder no one, sell no public office, be corrupted by no bribes. To be sure, your treasure will have far less in it

than otherwise, but take no thought for that loss, if only you have acquired the interest from justice.

(Qtd in *The Education of a Christian Prince*, 1936: 64)

This quotation is not randomly chosen. It has been selected for its relevance to the values fostered at a given point in the history of English thought. It enumerates the morals and the ethics the Renaissance sovereign should conform to in order to ensure a peaceful reign and a prosperous life for his subjects. Most importantly, these moral qualities would elevate the sovereign above the remaining human beings, exactly as he is elevated in the Great Chain of Being.

The Christian principles were the main source of inspiration for the ruler of that period (Ibid: 23). That is the reason why King Henry VI was closely bound to religion and behaved more as a Pope than as a politician. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that there exists a major significant device in the play that denotes Shakespeare's success to match politics with ethics. This device is but the reconciliation Prospero makes with all his enemies. He forgives them in spite of the fact that he is able to defeat all of them.

This reconciliatory policy of the Duke is a means that enables him to secure a peaceful relationship with his entourage after returning to Milan. After the experiences he has gone through on the island, Prospero learns the lesson that it is only under peaceful circumstances that one can both acquire knowledge and know how to use it appropriately. During his stay on the island he manages to master the Art of Magic, by means of which he is able to hold power and exercise it over his enemies, without resorting to the shedding of blood.

Theme of love

In this last play of Shakespeare, love is portrayed as being the purest feeling on which human relationship can be built. Besides the romantic considerations, love in *The Tempest* is presented as a momentous Christian means of ensuring and preserving peace in the world. The theme of love is displayed through the love affair of a single couple in the play, Miranda and Ferdinand. Both lovers are descendants of noble families: Ferdinand is the Prince of Naples and Miranda is the only daughter of the Duke of Milan. They meet on the island thanks to the sea-storm raised by her father's magical power. In Shakespeare's other plays such as *Romeo and Juliet* love becomes a reconciliatory force only with the death of its protagonists. In *The Tempest*, there is no such shedding of blood.

The first thing the stranded Ferdinand thinks about as soon as he sees Miranda is to make her his Queen: 'O, if a virgin, / And your affection not gone forth, I'll make you / The Queen of Naples' (1-2/ 250). In the long run indeed, their union will raise her to a higher social as well as political level. Miranda is so tender and innocent that she ignores all about the world of politics because she was brought up on an island. The only benefit she draws from this marriage is to be close to the man she loves. All that she dreams of is to discover the world from which she has been alienated because of her father's exile.

In contrast to Miranda, her father Prospero will take much more profit from the marriage of his only daughter to Prince Ferdinand. He will rid himself of his long enmity with Ferdinand's father, King Alonso, who is the main participant in the former usurpation of his dukedom. But as he is looking for a better future for himself and for his daughter, this match with the King of Naples will also prevent

the latter from plotting against him. On the contrary, as a result of this marital match between the two families, Alonso will help him. In a word, the match will provide much help for him in future political deals. This does not mean that Prospero is a Machiavellian Prince. The Duke is looking for power but through peaceful and just methods, without harming anyone, including his enemies. As a humanist, he cares a great deal for his people's happiness and prosperity by avoiding war. He equally tries to secure his daughter's happiness by accepting to marry her to Prince Ferdinand.

In *Henry VI*, love is meant to purge the kingdom of the bloody wars that oppose it to France. It is in Shakespeare's *Tempest* that the passion generated by love can finally be tamed by the intellect. No passion related to love is expressed, i.e., passion that leads to the destruction of the intellectual's efforts towards establishing the supremacy of knowledge. This condition would not have been secured without the efforts Prospero has made to keep an eye upon the young lovers:

Take my daughter: But / If thou dost break her virgin-knot, before / All sanctimonious ceremonies may / With full and holy rite, be minister'd, / No sweet aspersion shall the heavens let fall / To make this contract grow; but barren hate, / Sour'ey'd disdain, and discord shall bestrew / That you shall hate it both: therefore take heed, / As Hymen's lamps shall light you.

(4-1/ 15)

This does not negate the fact that in *The Tempest* too marriage is but a political contract held between two families in order to attain a certain number of interests. Prospero's main interest is to avoid enmity with the King of Naples and to gain his support. The latter represents an invaluable help for the Duke, who is just returning to rule his dukedom. By means of this marriage, Prospero becomes not only the Duke of Milan but the father of the Queen of Naples as well. For his part,

King Alonso can ensure the happiness of his son and rid himself of a supposed powerful enemy, Prospero.

The importance that the playwright assumes in the game of politics in *The Tempest* signifies Shakespeare's final repudiation of revenge. Revenge, it should be mentioned, was at the heart of the wreckage of the War of the Roses that nearly dislocated the Kingdom with the establishment of the Stuart dynasty, Shakespeare seemed to be shocked that England had weathered the political disturbance that came with the change of dynasty because Queen Elizabeth, a Tudor, died without an heir apparent. Many critics interpreted *The Tempest* as a case of a poet's farewell to art, without refuting this interpretation, it can be added that it is also a farewell to revenge in English politics and the celebration of love as the foundation stone of a beloved Christian community.

Theme of knowledge

Knowledge is the central theme in *The Tempest*. It is only in this last play that Shakespeare seems to circumscribe the global concept of knowledge. A distinction is established between negative and positive knowledge. The negative knowledge is best represented by Caliban's mother Sycorax. Sycorax is a witch and as such her knowledge is harmful. The positive knowledge is embodied by Prospero.

Being aware of the fact that Prospero is a man of knowledge, Shakespeare decided to dedicate this work to study the nature of this knowledge and its benefits. His knowledge revolves around magic, an art that Prospero accumulates thanks to the extensive readings to which he had access all along his life. The art of magic is the wheel that makes the events of the play move, besides being the greatest reason behind the victories Prospero achieves over his enemies.

It is, for instance, thanks to magic that The Duke controls Ariel, Caliban and all the inhabitants of the island. He also has control over the spirits he invites during the feast prepared by the end of the play. This is what we understand from his final speech in the play: *'I'll deliver all, / And promise you calm seas, auspicious gales; / And sail, so expeditions, that shall catch / Your royal fleet far off: my Ariel; chick / That is thy charge: then to the elements / Be free, and fare thou well...'* (V-1/ 373).

If we look back into history, we will find that magic was one of the major fields of knowledge during the Renaissance era. It caught the interest of a number of scholars, among whom figured the Stuart King James I, who was equally interested in so many other fields of knowledge. This is one of the major instances which denote that Prospero is partially reflecting the Stuart King himself. Before being able to control all the characters, Prospero was not such a powerful Duke. He spent most of his time reading books. He was not power hungry. It was rather his weakness that helped in the usurpation of his dukedom by his brother Antonio.

As he is busy with his readings, he is neither able to find out about the conspiracy nor even to defend himself. All he can do is to escape by sea, to save his life, his daughter's and more importantly his books. At that moment, he does not think about vital needs to survive; he rather thinks about his books. This excessive care for books on the part of the Duke reveals that Prospero's experience makes him desert the classical warlike methods. His soldiers were not able to protect him from the conspiracy, so he looks for a more effective means of securing power.

Prospero realises that knowledge is much more effective than physical power. He does not think about food because his knowledge enables him to distinguish between the vital needs of an animal and those of a human being. He considers that the Mind's food – books - is more important than the usual food of the body. If the body cannot keep alive without food and water, so is the case of the mind without books. Its life and growth depend greatly on the knowledge found in books. The Duke has reached this Christian faith in the necessity to feed the soul. Just after his arrival on the island, he starts marshalling his magical charms against Caliban and his mother by imprisoning her in the wedge of a tree, the tree of knowledge whose fruits are forbidden to Adam and Eve. He also enslaves that 'child of sin', Caliban, and uses Ariel. The latter stands up as a representative of the converts to Prospero's philosophy of power.

Prospero's ambition is not restricted to the limited geographical space of the island; it is extended to his dukedom. Indeed, his magical power is the first cause of the re-establishment of his status and its reinforcement in the world of politics. It has enabled him to regain Milan, overcome his enemies and attain more political power. All this success is attained through peaceful means, which shows the importance of knowledge in the Renaissance world. Although Prospero possesses a vast knowledge that enables him to be the most powerful man of his community, he neither uses it for negative nor for malicious purposes. He does not harm his enemies, though they formerly jeopardized his life and that of his innocent child. He rather shifts towards the noblest gesture a human can ever do: He forgives them, thus avoiding a possible devastating war.

In addition to what has been said above, one may mention that not only does the Duke demonstrate his power, but he also teaches a lesson to his enemies about the real meaning of power. He demonstrates that real power lies not in muscles and physical prowess; it rather lies in resisting the temptation of all sorts of passion, as Erasmus clearly states: 'Real power and true heroism lie not in physical dominance over others but in self mastery' (Erasmus, 1518: 142). In a word, the real power is not the blind execution and abuse of physical power but it is the wise use of the intellectual power.

From what has been said above, one may infer that, in addition to being one of the central themes of Shakespeare's play, the theme of knowledge may be considered as the most important preoccupation of society at large in the Renaissance era. It was under the reign of James I that *The Tempest* was first performed, and historians have recorded the Stuart King's strong desire for knowledge, especially for the art of magic. Both Prospero and King James I share the same passion for the accumulation of knowledge. The latter appointed Robert Cecil, who had played an important role in his accession to the throne of England, to rule the Kingdom while he devoted most of his time to reading and writing books. Prospero does almost the same thing: '*And Prospero, the prime Duke, being so reputed / In dignity; and for the liberal Arts, / Without a parallel; those being all my study, / The government I cast upon my brother, / And to my state grew stranger*' (1-2/15). Eventually, the Duke loses his dukedom for the sake of knowledge.

Both King James and Prospero are wise rulers. They have not withdrawn from ruling aimlessly but because of their thirst for an alternative and more

appropriate type of power, i.e., knowledge, especially because the traditional means (war) has proved to be insufficient and counterproductive. Prospero succeeds not only in achieving power but also true authority. This can be fairly deduced from the recognition of 'The Master' or the power holder by his entourage. It is for him that Antonio is looking during the tempest: '*Where is THE MASTER?*' (1-1 / 19). The characters that are on board the ship, much like the English embarked on the Renaissance vessel of intellectual and social transition, are in a real need for a leader who knows how to lead the ship of state. This reminds us of Plato's perception of the state as a ship in which only the wise ruler knows how to guide it into a safe and harmonious fashion (Plato, 360 B.C. (web source)). Accordingly, one may say that Prospero belongs more to the age of intellectuals than to that of warriors.

It follows from the discussion above that *The Tempest* is a celebration of the victory of the intellectual over the warrior. Shakespeare imagined a beloved community (England) at whose head is Prospero, James I. This imaginary assumption of the English Renaissance community is done in accordance with Erasmus and Plato's terms.

Plot and Characters

In this sub-section, we will analyse the different events that show Shakespeare's inclination towards the theme of peace rather than to that of war. We will focus our attention on the hero's thirst for knowledge, his care for human life as well as happiness. In the study of the plot, we will be more interested in the reasons behind the Duke's loss of his dukedom. Special emphasis will be placed on the way Prospero regains his former position as far as power is concerned. As

for the characters, they will be divided into two groups: the intellectuals (Prospero and Alonso) and the warriors (Antonio, Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo).

The opening confrontation between Gonzalo and the boatswain reveals one of the most important themes in *The Tempest*: order in society, the discord between those who hold power and those who are often the unwilling victims of power. When confronted by members of the royal party, the boatswain orders that they return below deck. He is doing his job, and for him to stop in response to Alonso's request for the master would be foolish. The boatswain cares little for Alonso's rank as King and asks, '*What cares these roarers for the name of king?*' (1-1/ 15–16). The King has no protection from the storm simply because of his rank, because the storm has little care for a man's social or political position. In response, Gonzalo urges the boatswain to remember that the King and his party are the passengers. The implication is that the boatswain should also remember that his social rank makes him subservient to the royal party, regardless of the circumstances.

Gonzalo's words are a clear reminder that even in the midst of a storm, class or status remains an important part of life. However, the boatswain is not intimidated and responds that the royal party should "use your authority," to stop the storm (1-1/ 20–21). As far as the boatswain is concerned, all men are equal in a storm and all equally at risk. Alonso seems to understand that the captain is the ship's final authority, at least initially. His original request for the master reflects his belief that the master is in charge of the ship, and that, as passengers, he (as King) and his retinue fall under the captain's authority. But alarm at the severity of the storm and frustration at the boatswain's order to go below decks causes the

king's party to fall back on the rules of land—the King is the final authority. The boatswain's telling Gonzalo that the king should use his authority to stop the storm is a reminder that the King has no authority under these circumstances. Although he can control men (although not always with absolute certainty), even the King cannot control nature.

The storm and the subsequent rebellion on ship is a metaphor for the rebellion occurring in the English society. In the Elizabethan and Jacobean world, the English society was defined by its class system, in which individuals were born into specific classes by divine right. In the natural order of things (that is, the order defined by God), therefore, the aristocracy is superior. Although the characters of *The Tempest* are depicted as Italian in origin, their experiences and conflicts are English. Indeed, the passengers, who never forget that they are socially superior to the crew, need to be reminded that, during a storm, the captain of the ship is the final authority.

Furthermore, in the period just prior to the composition of *The Tempest*, the English society had been rocked by political, social, and religious conflicts. The Gunpowder Plot (1605), for example, serves as an illustration of the conflict between the Protestant James and his Catholic subjects. The goal of the Roman Catholic conspirators was to murder James and kill the members of both houses of Parliament; fortunately for James, the plot failed. The social unrest in England, however, was exacerbated by James's extravagant spending on court entertainment, especially the staged masques, and the contrast between the poor and the rich became even more evident. Though King James' subjects lived in

severe poverty, their burden was increased as they were taxed to pay for the King's masques (Goldberg, 1983: 77).

In response, unrest grew and would erupt several years later into revolution. There are many tempests to be explored during the course of *The Tempest*. In addition to class conflict, there are also explorations and colonialism (English explorers had been colonizing the New World) and a desire to find or create a utopian society. The storm scene that opens *The Tempest* establishes nature as an important element in the play and emphasizes the role of nature in society. Other tempests will be revealed in subsequent scenes, such as the emotional tempests that familial conflict creates (consider the conflict between Antonio and Prospero) and the tempests of discord (consider Caliban's dissatisfaction and desire for revenge). Finally, there are the tempests caused by the inherent conflict between generations. So, though *The Tempest* might correctly be called a romantic comedy, the title and the opening scene portend an exploration of conflicts more complex than romantic.

By causing the storm, the Duke invites his enemies to witness part of his power. Miranda, his daughter, feels compassionate to those sea-travellers when she sees the storm which denotes her father's power:

*If by your Art (my dearest father) you have / Put the wild waters in this roar,
allay them: / The sky it seems would pour down stinking pitch, / But that the
sea, mounting to th' welkin's cheek, / Dashes the fire out...Had I been any
God of power, I would / Have sunk the sea within the earth, or ere / It should
the good ship so have swallow'd, and / The freighting souls within her.*

(1-2/ 01)

Miranda's words reveal that, deep in her heart, she believes in her father's huge power. She knows that her father is very powerful now. Being persuaded that since

only a god can defeat Prospero, she wishes to be that god and thus save his offspring's lives. After having captured them, the Duke does not do them any sort of harm, but he leaves them on the island until he decides on the appropriate treatment to apply to each one of them. Even during the storm, he acted very carefully so as to keep all of his enemies safe. This is clearly expressed by these words of his: *"I have with such provision in mine Art / So safely ordered, that there is no soul / No not so much perdition as an hair / Betid to any creature in the vessel..."* (I-2/ 34).

Another manifestation of Prospero's power is the love story he is able to create between his daughter and the son of his former enemy, the King of Naples. He organizes their meeting on the island first. Then, he takes great care for the relationship between both lovers in order to make sure there is no passion in their love affair. By so doing, the Duke confirms that love can indeed be tamed by reason and cleared of all sorts of passion.

In his *Basilikon Doron* (1603), King James I exhibits his vision of the rights and duties of the ruler. According to him, the sovereign is allowed to get interested in intellectual matters provided that he does not neglect his political duties. Moreover, the sovereign must select his readings so as to read the literature more likely to help him in the accomplishment of his political duty (Omescio, 1993: 31). Prospero adopts the extreme aspect of this attitude; he spends his time reading to acquire knowledge, marginalising as such his political duties. This excerpt from the play is a good evidence for the Duke's eagerness for intellectual development: *'And Prospero, the prime Duke, being so reputed / In dignity; and for the liberal*

Arts, / Without a parallel; those being all my study, / The government I cast upon my brother, / And to my state grew stranger' (1-2/ 15).

Whatever his passion for knowledge is, however, the Duke does not remain passive to his enemies' conspiracies. Still sticking to his books of magic, he discovers the benefits as well as the power of knowledge. It is not until he spends twelve years on the island that he finally encounters his usurpers as they are sailing off the island. Now that he masters the art of magic, he uses his knowledge to raise a sea-storm. Thus he compels those who are on board the ship to land on his island so that he can teach them a lesson in respecting the intellectual. He tells Miranda after he sees how much she pitied those who are subject to the storm: *'Be collected, / No more amazement: / tell your piteous heart / There's no harm done'* (1-2/ 15). After a while, he reveals his real identity, and instead of revenge, he adopts a reconciliation policy. The Duke's attitude lengthens the intellectual's distance from the classical means of power, i.e., war (Travelyan, 1986: 179).

The Duke becomes aware of the usefulness of peace in solving political problems especially after his former failure to protect his political status. Prospero's adoption of these pacifist ideas reflects the change of the way of thinking of Renaissance men, who shifted towards peace when dealing with political issues. Theoretically speaking, we learn that the very ideas of Sir Francis Bacon are echoed through the reasoning of Prospero. Both Bacon and Shakespeare's hero agree when considering revenge as being a wild justice that the wise man should avoid (Bacon, 1985: 72-73). This favour of peace and despise of revenge can be fairly seen by the close of the play, when the Duke organizes a feast to celebrate his daughter's marriage. Within the same celebration, he provides the just

retribution for each one of his 'enemies'. These final deeds of his deserve much emphasis for they stand for a momentous principle of the Renaissance humanism, that is reconciliation. Prospero does not display any violence towards his enemies. On the contrary, he reconciles with them. Here is the speech he delivers at the feast:

I'll deliver all, / And promise you calm seas, auspicious gales, / And sail, so expeditious, that shall catch / Your royal fleet far off: my Ariel; chick / That is thy charge: then to the elements / Be free, and fare thou well: please you draw near.
(5-1/ 339)

Indeed, the playwright is not only reflecting Bacon's philosophy but also that of Erasmus. Being deeply affected by the ideals of Erasmus (1467-1536), Shakespeare attempted through the deeds of the intellectual, i.e. Prospero, to denote that war was but a means of destruction and a foe to human nature. War has an unlimited number of bad effects, which Erasmus tries to rank in his collection of proverbs entitled *Adagia Collectanae* (1597):

Do we not see that noble cities are erected by the people and destroyed by princes? That a state grows rich by the industry of its citizens and is plundered by the rapacity of its rulers? That good laws are enacted by representatives of the people and violated by kings? That the commons love peace and the monarchs foment war?

(Erasmus, 1500: 116)

War is a means of destruction rather than of construction, of poverty rather than of richness and of wildlife rather than of civilisation. It is originated by Machiavellian Kings and Princes, who tend to destroy what was built by their subjects. This purely humanist argument raised by Erasmus leads Shakespeare to model his last hero Prospero in the shape of a humanist intellectual, who is conscious enough of his subjects' need for peace.

The common people are in need of peace because it is the best state under which the individual can prosper in his life. Under political stability, man can advance in different fields of life. He can foster knowledge and also reach higher positions in the Great Chain of Being as well as in the actual world: 'by learning man excelleth man in that wherein man excelleth beasts; that by learning man ascendeth to the heavens and their motions' (Bacon, 1605: 32). The human being needs peace since he is a rational creature, who should use his intellectual faculties in solving problems and not a beast whose unique weapon lies in his physical disastrous power. These humanist ethics are the main principles displayed by the Duke of Milan.

Through reconciliation, Prospero's return to Milan was peaceful. This is due to the fact that he is a humanist and an intellectual as well as an agent through whom Shakespeare wants to display the contours of the Renaissance thought. Besides, the Duke refuses to involve himself in war because he is supposed to be the fittest ruler in the Renaissance state. The Renaissance ruler is supposed to be an intellectual, and to respect peace and human life above all. Moreover, he is thought to be powerful only through his knowledge and his involvement in war would rather be a sign of weakness and of being unfit. Erasmus asserts that on the contrary, only those who are not fit to command resort to violence: 'If you cannot defend your realm without violating justice, without wanton loss of human life... give up and yield to the importunities of the age!' (Erasmus: 1518). It is only when he sticks to these principles that he proves to be fit to rule.

Prospero

Right at the opening of the play, we are faced with the sea-storm Prospero raises to bring the sea-travellers on the island so as to deal with them properly on his own grounds. These sea-travellers are those who once caused the Prospero's overthrow as Duke of Milan. During the storm, we are given a set of instances denoting the playwright's earnest preoccupation with the concept of power and the worthiest ruler. We observe the characters neglecting their classical master on the ship, i.e. the King; they scream: *'what cares these / roarers for the name of King?'* (1-1/ 16). They no more consider the King as being their master since he has failed to control the huge sea-storm whereas Prospero is the one who controls it. This idea is further stressed by the Boatswain who addresses himself to King Alonso saying:

If you can command these elements to / silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not / hand a rope more, use your authority: if you cannot / give thanks you have liv'd so long, and make yourself / ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour.

(1-1/ 21)

The Boatswain is emphasising the uselessness of the authority of the classical ruler. The latter cannot control the tempest and is subject to it exactly like his subjects who accompany him on board of the ship. As a result, the true ruler is not the one who sings authority and power but the one who holds them indeed.

In this instance, we assume that the Boatswain is taking the floor instead of Shakespeare himself. In his words stated above, he is warning the King and his surroundings about the coming change as far as hierarchy is concerned. He forecasts a change according to which the ancient titles of King and Prince become insignificant and the traditional authority of rulers proves powerless

towards the power of the intellectual. The classical master (the King warrior) has no authority, which is denoted through this sea test, i.e. the tempest. Therefore, he should be replaced by someone who is worthy and apt to rule.

The worthiest ruler ought to have authority upon such circumstances as the tempest and master the surrounding conditions. These features are found in no other character but in the Duke of Milan Prospero. The latter has control over the characters aboard the ship and over the tempest itself. Furthermore, the sea-storm is raised thanks to his magical power. From thence, we infer that the Renaissance is an era which is widely different from the Middle Ages. By contrast to the former era, the Renaissance is not in quest of a warrior leader, it rather requires a leader who should have enough power to protect his subjects. This power is exclusively available in the intellectual, which is fairly displayed through Prospero. Thanks to his knowledge, Prospero is able to handle the tempest and many other things on the island, denoting as such that the fitting sovereign is no more the one who boasts power and authority but the one who actually possesses it.

In terms of plot, the play is structured as a sea-traveller's adventure. J.A. Symonds establishes a parallel between the humanists and their seafaring contemporaries. Speaking about their scholar-poet Francisco Petrarca (Petrarch), he compared him to 'the Columbus of a new spiritual hemisphere, the discoverer of modern culture' (Qtd in Tony Davies, 1997: 73). This comparison applies equally well to Prospero who drifts across the sea to discover Sycorax's island, which he reached with the shore-up books. We note an articulation of two processes of thought and action in the play. One of these processes is the recovery of the ancient knowledge of the Greco-Roman tradition. This process of recovery takes

place in Milan. The other process is discovery of new realms of application of the recovered knowledge.

Tony Davies claims that the Renaissance humanists like Shakespeare were more concerned with the process of recovery rather than that of discovery. According to him, it is the Victorian critics like Symonds who added the dimension of discovery to the humanist writings reflecting in this way their imperialist conscription of Renaissance humanists to their imperialist enterprises. Our analysis shows that Shakespeare articulated these two impulses into a unique plot. Shakespeare was both concerned with the recovery of the Greco-Roman tradition as well as the discovery of new worlds for commercial enterprise. Shakespeare was a Renaissance English man, he cared as much for science as for material interests abroad.

The plot unfolds in three distinctive movements reflecting the structures of humanist thinking detailed by Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola author of the humanist text par excellence *On the Dignity of Man*. Indeed, the name Miranda Shakespeare gives to Prospero's daughter echoes the name of the Renaissance humanist Mirandola. These structures of humanist thinking are: contemplation, action and love. The first part of the play is devoted to contemplation. At this first stage of contemplation, Prospero devotes his time to the development of his intellect and his spirit. In the second stage, that is action, he uses the powers that he won at the contemplation phase to dominate his new world. He shackles the 'forces of evil' and interferes with the laws of nature by causing a storm. In the third phase which constructs the synthesis, love is celebrated in some sort of Christian-Platonist way. As echoing Pico Della Mirandola, Shakespeare makes Miranda

wonder at the discovery of a new humanity best represented by Prince Ferdinand. Even Prospero eloquently speaks about the discovery of a 'brave new world!'.

Thanks to his interest in reading, the Duke has secured a status that is more important than his former one. He does not only regain his former status as Duke of Milan but also maintains an important relationship with the King of Naples after marrying his daughter to the Prince of Naples. Therefore, after experiencing the conspiracy led by his own brother and going through his experience on the island, Prospero becomes more aware of the requirements of his time. As his guards could not protect him from his brother, he learnt that real power lies not in war and physical power. Adopting knowledge, the Duke could discover the best means through which he can both protect himself and his realm and hold a huge power. In this very quality, the Duke does not only become the fittest ruler but a god-like human being who is able to raise a tempest and to punish his enemies the way he likes. Normally, it is restrictively God who is able to have control over natural phenomena and who punishes or forgives his offspring, but in *The Tempest* the intellectual is gifted with such abilities. This detail makes us revert to the idea of the sovereign who stands for the image of God on earth; holding such power, Prospero seems to be an earthly god indeed.

In fact, through this final hero of his, Shakespeare aimed at exhibiting the different issues and innovations the Renaissance age was subject to in a dramatic mould. He began by celebrating the warrior who used to be glorified in the medieval era. The warrior's need for mastering the art of war and having strong physical qualities in a time of war led him to be a valiant warrior. This is what the playwright exhibits through General Talbot in *Henry VI* and Coriolanus in

Coriolanus. Afterwards, Shakespeare moves to the praise of the intellectual who best fits the Renaissance era in which reason is praised over the body.

Besides his readings, Prospero is also an orator. He is a man who masters the use of language. In *The Tempest*, he proves to be highly skilled in this field which is known as the art of rhetoric. This mastery of the art of rhetoric mainly appears in the threats of the Duke to Caliban to keep him under total control whenever the latter has thoughts of rebellion: *'I have us'd thee / (Filth as thou art) with humane care, and lodg'd thee / In mine own cell, / till thou didst seek to violate / The honour of my child'* (1-2/ 130). The art of rhetoric is not only a means of controlling the others; it is equally a means of exhibiting Prospero's knowledge about things around him. This art also displays the great magical power the Duke holds and emphasises the weakness of Caliban: *'If thou neglect'st, or dost unwillingly / What I command, I'll rack thee with aches, make thee roar, / That beasts shall tremble at thy din'* (1-2/ 13). However, language is not the unique instance that manifests Prospero's power. The love affair he creates between his daughter Miranda and the Prince of Naples Ferdinand stands out as another manifestation of his power. The union of these two young lovers represents a further guarantee for the future life of the Duke. It will help greatly in reforming his political status as well as in protecting him against any possible rebellions or conspiracies in the future.

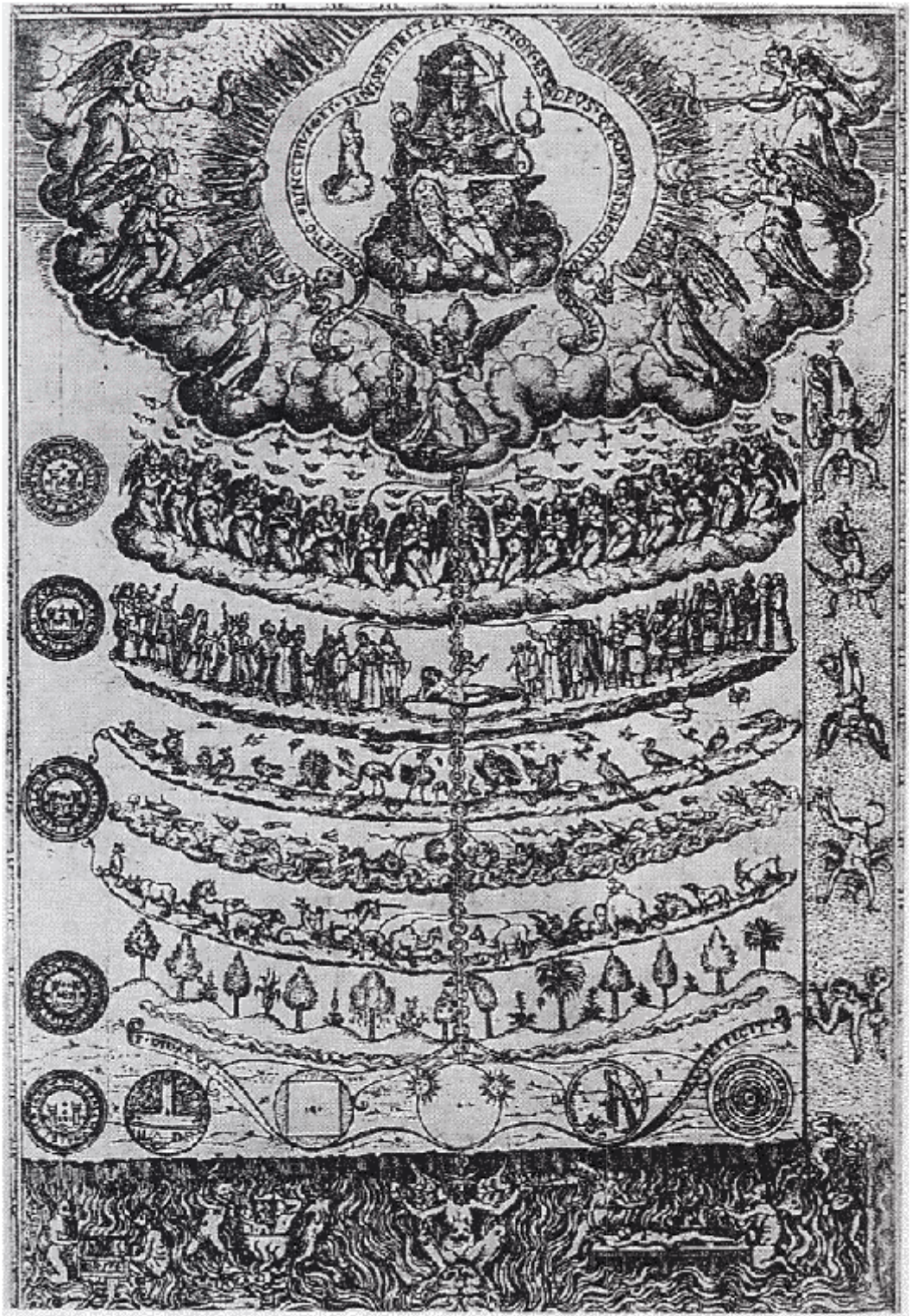
Applying these instances to theory, we find that, as far as the Great Chain of Being is concerned, after spending years learning and reading, Prospero becomes aware of his being distinctive from animals thanks to his intellect which makes him take a distance as regards war (Travelyan, 1986: 154). He is not satisfied with

acquiring knowledge; he further uses it the way that best suits his targets so that he regains his status in power and overcomes his enemies. Thanks to these achievements, the Duke displays a refinement in his moral as well as political situation. This is the point Sir Francis Bacon tries to state in the following quotation besides his criticism of such intellectuals as Prospero who are not interested in knowledge in itself but in using it as a means of getting power:

I do observe nevertheless that their works and acts are rather matters of magnificence and memory than of progression and proficiency, and tend rather to augment the mass of learning in the multitude of learned men than to rectify or raise the sciences themselves.

(Bacon, 1605: 62)

As we have mentioned the Great Chain of Being earlier in this dissertation, we would like to further explain this notion so as to make it clearer for the reader. We thought that it would be best illustrated through representing by a diagram as it appears below:



(From Didacus Valades, *Rhetorica Christiana* (1579))

The diagram above represents the Great Chain of Being in its intimate details. The Chain is built upon an order that should be respected in order to maintain order in the actual world which is its concrete equivalence. If we start at the top, the Chain is headed by God, who is surrounded by angels. These are considered as being the purest creatures in the Chain that is why they come immediately after God. Just below, we find the King, who is the leader of human beings, exactly like God, who is the leader of the whole cosmos. Both the King and the human beings share the same level, yet the King is somehow elevated from his subjects. At the bottom, we reach the level of animals, plants and metals. These constituents of the Chain are classified according to their possession of noble or passionate qualities. Humans, for instance, are elevated from animals because they possess reason whereas beasts are guided by passion and instinct. Refinement for rational creatures in the Great Chain of being depends on the use of the intellectual calibres.

Applying these principles to Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, we infer that Prospero occupies a refined position in the Chain since he makes use of his intellect. He also avoids such passionate behaviour as violence and revenge whereas his enemies (Caliban, Anthonio, Stephano and Trinculo) cannot reach his position. They even lose their former position as human beings because they have bestial and violent manners in order to get rid of their fellow human being, i.e. Prospero. This very reason, i.e. their dependence on passionate manners makes them like beasts.

From what has been said above, we can say that Prospero can be considered as a King Philosopher. The notion of King Philosopher implies that the

sovereign is not only a man of politics but an intellectual as well; i.e. someone who uses his reason to meditate about things around him. Moreover, the Duke does not care for traditional manners in gaining power but tries to elevate himself by using peaceful and rational means in acquiring power. Once more, if we establish a link between Prospero and the concept of the Great Chain of Being, we conclude that he is a human being who attempts to escape falling to the level of beasts by adopting peaceful attitudes in order to reach higher levels, i.e., that of the angels and of God. In addition to the Duke, characters like Miranda and Ferdinand can be interpreted as being symbols for the human being's potential to love and to be loved without being overcome by the passionate extremes of love. The remaining characters (Caliban, Anthonio, Trinculo and Stephano) are the enemies of the intellectual. They are passionate warriors. As a result, they are all defeated, except those who recover their reason afterwards as King Alonso.

A pertinent point should be highlighted here, which is related to the difference between King Henry VI and Prospero. Both are protagonists in Shakespeare's political and historical drama. First, *Henry VI* and *The Tempest* were written in different eras so that while the trilogy was performed in 1594, in the Elizabethan age, *The Tempest* was first performed in 1611, during the Jacobean age. Seventeen years had a pertinent role and a vital importance in the dissemination of the Renaissance philosophy among all parts of society.

This progress can be manifest in the extent to which both Prospero and King Henry succeed in achieving their task that is to display the change in the ideals of the Renaissance. i.e. the shift to value reason over physical force. In time King Henry found a number of difficulties and obstacles in his task amongst his

entourage, Prospero could establish his beliefs and impose them upon his enemies in a respectively easier way. Henry VI lived in an age which still considered war as a major activity the sovereign had to master. In such circumstances, he brought about new challenging ideas to his society; he praised reason and books rather than muscles and arms. The atmosphere he was living in was not yet ready to welcome such innovative ideas, which led to his victimization. In fact, King Henry was almost lonely both to defend his humanist ideas and to face the main stream, which still leant on war. Prospero, on the other side, came at the rightful moment, when the individuals started being aware of the difference between humanism and bestiality and between ethics and passions, which facilitated his task so much. Furthermore, he knew how to use his knowledge and how to save the human life even if it was the life of his enemies. He equally tamed the passion of love as far as his daughter's relationship with Prince Ferdinand is concerned.

Caliban

Caliban serves to illustrate ideas about the social hierarchy of the Renaissance world, which formulated a socially rigid—and very political—hierarchy of God, King, man, woman, beast. This order was based on the patriarchal tradition and the teachings of religious leaders, which postulate a hierarchical order for mankind based on physiological and physical characteristics. Other means of defining a place within this order were emotional stability and the ability to reason. Based on these definitions, beasts were lower in the evolutionary scale than all humans. According to this rather rigid social hierarchy, Caliban belongs to the bottom of the Elizabethan social hierarchy, having little perceived social worth.

Prospero is really the centre of the play, since the other characters relate to one another through him and because he manipulates everyone and everything that happens. The play ends with Prospero's victory over his enemies; he is the most powerful. An important part of Caliban's appeal is his ambiguity of character. The audience first learns of Caliban from Prospero's description to Ariel, in which the child of the witch, Sycorax, is described as '*A freckled whelp, hag-born—not honoured with / A human shape*' (1-2/ 285–286). The audience learns more about Caliban's physical description from Trinculo and Stephano, who describe Caliban as less than human. Trinculo asks if the form before him is '*a man or a fish?*' (2-2/ 24), and Stephano describes Caliban as a '*moon-calf*' (2-2/ 104), a deformed creature.

But it is not his appearance that makes Caliban monstrous in Prospero's eyes, nor was Caliban treated as a slave. Caliban, himself, relates that Prospero treated him well, teaching him about God when the two first met (1-2/ 337–338). But it was Caliban's attack on Miranda that resulted in his enslavement and the change in Caliban's social position. Caliban sees the attempted rape of Miranda as a natural behaviour. Had he not been stopped, Caliban would have '*peopled else / This isle with Calibans*' (1-2/ 353–354). Reproductive urges are a natural function of animals.

Yet humans modify their desires with reason and through social constraints. Without reason to modify his impulses, Caliban's behaviour aligns him with the animals. But, at the same time, he is clearly more than a beast. Critics make much of Caliban's name as an anagram for cannibal. However that does not mean that Shakespeare defines this character as someone who would eat people, as modern

readers may assume. Instead, the Elizabethan meaning of cannibal is better described as someone who is a savage, uncivilized and untamed. Caliban is more closely defined as an innocent, more like a child who is innocent of the world and its code of behaviour.

Caliban / Prospero relationship

In Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poetry* (1580), the author argues that poets have a responsibility to make learning more palatable through their art (Ibid, 58). Shakespeare fulfils Sidney's requirement by using his plays to explore complex ideas and issues, and thus, he makes learning more palatable for the audience. Prospero does the same thing when he uses his art to make Caliban's learning more palatable. Caliban is never harmed through Prospero's magic, and Prospero prevents Caliban from injuring anyone else. But Caliban does learn, through the use of Prospero's magic, that Trinculo and Stephano are not gods, nor are they honourable men who can be trusted. Trinculo and Stephano are really the dregs of society, useless opportunists, who think only of pleasure and greed. The ending of the play does not suggest their redemption. But the ending does suggest Caliban's. He is finally able to see Trinculo and Stephano for what they are, and he is able to reconcile with Prospero.

Rather than view the relationship between Prospero and Caliban as that of master and victim, let us consider instead that Prospero uses force to control Caliban not because he wants to dominate or enslave this 'savage' man but because this is the traditional means to subdue a 'beast'. Caliban's behaviour is more closely aligned to the beast than to man, and thus, he must be controlled in a similar manner. By the play's conclusion, Prospero must forgive his enemies; this

is, after all, a romantic comedy. But if Prospero is to fulfil Sidney's mandate, Caliban must also learn from his master how to be more human. His final speech (5-1/ 298–301) indicates he has learned some valuable lessons and that he became more human.

Caliban is not the noble savage that is so often used to describe the victims of social injustice; instead he is the child of the witch Sycorax and the devil. So what might be the aim of Shakespeare behind making Caliban's parentage a by-product of black and not white magic and evil? In fact, *The Tempest* suggests that nature is more complex than it seems at first glimpse. The conclusion works to illustrate the best that human nature has to offer, through resolution and promise. Harmony and order are restored in a world where chaos has reigned thanks to the reconciliatory policy of Prospero, mainly towards Caliban.

Prospero proves to be a domineering, manipulative and patriarchal ruler of the island but somehow unmerciful-during the sea-storm. All of these qualities might also be attributed to King James and his rule of Britain. However, at the end of *The Tempest*, Shakespeare tries to dramatize Prospero's turn-off to be an extremely merciful and peaceable sovereign who still retains his overwhelming and fascinating qualities. In fact, this is the model of the Prince after which James I seems to have fashioned himself.

General Conclusion

This dissertation is a tentative analysis of the prevailing themes of war, love and knowledge in selected plays written by Shakespeare: the trilogy of *Henry VI* (1594), *Coriolanus* (1607), a Roman tragedy, and *The Tempest* (1611), a comedy. The analysis has been carried out basically from a new historicist perspective. We have paid close attention to the historical circumstances that made Shakespeare deal with the themes of war, love and knowledge in his drama. The results of the research in our discussion of the plays are as follows: In *Henry VI*, a trilogy set in the period which is called the War of the Roses, Shakespeare foregrounded the interplay of war and peace with reference to Henry VI, a pacifist King. We have attempted to develop the argument that Shakespeare's trilogy has features that remind us of the medieval morality plays in the sense that war and peace are two antonyms embodied by historical figures. Through this play, the dramatist wants his contemporaries to learn a lesson from English history in order not to slide back to the same violence as that of the War of the Roses.

We have tried to show the similarities between the period of the War of the Roses and the Elizabethan period, marked by attempts to overthrow Queen Elizabeth. Such attempts were carried successfully by Shakespeare who seemed to warn the British that the country would be involved in a cycle of violence and bloodshed conditions similar to the ones of the War of the Roses. The only way through which they can escape this cycle of violence is by adapting themselves to the requirements of the Renaissance age. In other words, the playwright wants to exhibit the bad effects of war upon the lives of human beings, on the one hand,

and the positive effects of peace, on the other. By so doing, he will make them distinguish what best suits them, war or peace.

Carrying the same aim of Shakespeare, which is to show the bad effects of war and the advantages of peace, *Coriolanus* came in 1607 to complete the stream of thinking brought by the preceding plays. Yet, what is specific about this Roman tragedy is that it has a satiric tone which is used by Shakespeare in order to mock the ideals of war and heroic fighting. This tone was mainly adopted in order to allow the playwright to speak his mind as far as the issues of war and peace are concerned and to fit to the specificities of a play which is mainly based on a Roman account.

Nearly eight years later, Shakespeare tackled the theme of war, love and knowledge always with reference to England, through a play that was set in an unknown island, i.e. *The Tempest* (1611). Yet, the political situation in England seemed not to be as catastrophic as it was announced in *The Tempest*. After all, James I proved to be a wise King. It should be inevitable to acknowledge that he managed to avoid war with Spain by the truce of twelve years he made in 1608. In his very last play, armed with powers of wish-fulfilment strengthened by his experience in writing romance, Shakespeare takes on the more resistant material of history as a vehicle for expressing a pacifist outlook. In an ironic and poignant conclusion to the saga of Erasmian influence on Renaissance culture, the poet recreates Henry VIII, the King who betrayed the hopes of the London Reformers, in their image of the perfect peacemaking Christian Prince.

On the basis of the evidence presented in this dissertation, one can argue that if Shakespeare's position as regards war was uncertain before and after 1599, his abhorrence of war became increasingly more vigorous. One can also argue that the playwright had an enthusiastic support for King James I. This support stemmed partially from his own desire to further the King's peacemaking mission. It is true that after Shakespeare's death, King James' continuing accomplishments in this cause could not preclude the tragic outbursts of either the Thirty Years War, in the latter days of his reign, or of the English civil war, during the reign of his son. Nevertheless, by recovering the early Humanists' rejection of military politics, culture, and ideology, both the mature Shakespeare and his royal patron strengthen a tradition of worshipping peace.

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Abstract

Ce Mémoire traite trois pièces théâtrales importantes écrites par William Shakespeare, avec référence aux thèmes de la guerre, la paix, l'amour et le savoir. Les pièces théâtrales sont *Henry VI*, *Coriolan* et *La Tempête*, écrites en 1594, 1607 et 1611 respectivement. L'un des arguments développés dans le Mémoire est la position de Shakespeare par rapport à ces thèmes qui était déterminée par le contexte intellectuel et sociopolitique durant lequel les pièces furent produites. Par exemple, l'analyse montre qu' *Henry VI* était écrite dans des conditions de confusion politique et de la peur de l'instabilité politique due aux conspirations, que ce soit en Angleterre ou ailleurs. Shakespeare a montré une position ambiguë envers la guerre et la paix. Il a favorisé l'idéal de la paix, il a donné plus d'importance au danger de la guerre qui peut mener le pays encore une fois à des désastres similaires à ceux de la Guerre des Roses. La guerre est restée latente, mais elle n'a pas complètement disparu comme Elizabeth I/ Henry VI étaient décrits comme des monarques qui aiment le savoir. Dans *Coriolan*, Shakespeare a réussi à se moquer des amoureux de la guerre. Le temps a changé avec l'acquisition du pouvoir par James I, connu par son pacifisme. Quand Shakespeare a écrit *La Tempête*, il a montré l'homme de la Renaissance par excellence sous la forme de Prosper qui a introduit des idées révolutionnaires sur la pratique de la politique. Prosper était considéré comme le meilleur représentant de l'homme de la Renaissance, il a aussi relié la pratique de la politique à celle de l'éthique. Le savoir est devenu le meilleur moyen pour imposer la force et garantir la stabilité politique. L'analyse des pièces se base sur 'New Historicism', qui s'intéresse au contexte politique et à ses productions.

ملخص الأطروحة :

مثل العقل والعاطفة، يشكل موضوعا الحرب والسلام إحدى الثنائيات المتناقضة التي ما انفك المؤلفون في عصر النهضة يتفكرون حولها. فكان التفكير في مسألتي الحرب والسلام عنصرا جوهريا من عناصر الحركة الإنسانية. إذ أن الإهتمام بالحرب والسلام نشأ من السمات التي تميز المذهب الإنساني وأعني إعلاؤه لمفهوم الشهرة ، وانبهاره بالثقافة العسكرية في اليونان وروما ، وتركيزه على كرامة الإنسان وحرية ، وسعيه لتحقيق المعرفة العلمانية في التاريخ وعلم النفس ، وإلتزامه السياسي بتحسين نوعية الحياة الشخصية والمؤسسية.

وفي كثير من الأحيان كانت الرؤية الإنسانية لموضوعي الحرب والسلام منقسمة إلى موقفين متعارضين فهناك الداعي للحرب وهناك الداعي للسلام. و دعاة الحرب كميكافيللي (Machiavelli) الذين يربطهم بعض العلماء ب "المدنية الإنسانية" يمجدون الأمير أو خادم البلاط الملكي المثالي بوصفه جنديا أو عالما ، ويعتبرون أن نشاط المحارب شرط أساسي لتحقيق الانجازات وإشباع الحاجات ، كما أنه أساسي أيضا لتحقيق النظام الاجتماعي والاستقرار. أما بالنسبة لمنافسيهم دعاة السلام ، مثل إيراسموس (Erasmus) و بالديسار كاستغليون (Baldeare Castiglione) الذين غالبا ما كانت يطلق عليهم 'الإنسانيون المسيحيون' ، فيتصورون الأمير أو خادم البلاط المثالي بوصفه الفيلسوف والفقير، و يسمون الفلسفة العسكرية بغير الدينية ، وغير الاخلاقية وغير عملية. ورسمت هذه المناقشة شكل القرارات التي كان يتخذها الملوك و الأعمال الفنية التي كان ينتجها الفنانون و المؤلفون خلال القرنين السادس عشر والسابع عشر.

ودأب شكسبير مرارا وتكرارا على تصوير هذا الخلاف بين أفكار دعاة الحرب ودعاة السلام حول الصراع في العديد من المسرحيات التي خصصها للخوض في المسائل العسكرية. وترسم هذه الأطروحة خط تطور فكر شكسبير من مساند متردد للحرب إلى نصير حاسم للسلام في خلال مساره في كتابة المسرحيات.

ويقول شكسبير أن نقطة تحول لهذا التطور وقعت في الفترة بين 1594 و 1603 – وهي تواريخ نشر المسرحيتين التين تتحدثان عن الحرب وهما هنري السادس (1594) وهاملت (1603)، ويضيف أن هذا التحول في موقف يعكس تحولا في السياسة الخارجية البريطانية التي بدأت خلال العقد الأخير من حكم الملكة اليزابيث وانتهت باعتلاء الملك جيمس الأول للحكم. وعاش شكسبير في عصر مهم للغاية ، أي عصر النهضة. وشهد عصر النهضة إحياء التعلم على أساس العودة إلى المصادر الكلاسيكية والتقدم في مجال العلوم (كلير & الدكتور ميلان ، 1994 : 14).

ومع ذلك ، لا ينبغي اعتبار هذا التعريف بأنه المفهوم ملائم لتعريف عصر النهضة. فالمفهوم يعني التقدم على جميع المستويات للفكر الإنساني : الفنون والآداب والفلسفة والهندسة المعمارية والعلوم ، الخ. ومن خلال مثل هذه قفزة الفكرية الكبيرة ، شكل عصر النهضة ، في الواقع ، خطوة في اتجاه العصر الحديث.

وكتب شكسبير مسرحياته في فترة انتقالية من تاريخ بريطانيا. وقد اشتمل هذا التحول على الانتقال من أواخر العصور الوسطى إلى عصر النهضة في أوائل الفترة. ونحن نفترض انه في هذه الفترة الانتقالية عرف شكسبير بالتأكيد عدة أشكال من الرجل المثالي ، وهو المحارب ، الحبيب ورجل الفكر. ونعتقد بأن هذا التفاعل بين المثل العليا ينعكس بشكل رائع في مسرحيات شكسبير هنري السادس (1594) ، هاملت (1601) وعاصفه (1611) ، مهما كان النوع الذي تنتمي إليه المسرحيات. أحد الأسباب التي أدت بشكسبير لتناول موضوع الحرب هو انه كان يريد تلقين الإنجليز في العصر الاليزابيثي والجاكوبي درسا عن حروب الورود.

وعلى أساس تحليلنا للثلاثية هنري السادس ، فإننا نستنتج أن احتفاء شكسبير بالسلام يرجع إلى كون الكاتب المسرحي لا يريد لشعبه العودة إلى الحرب الأهلية التي أصابت المجتمع الانجليزي في صميمه . حتى أنه وجه مناقشته نحو مدح السلام وعرض مزاياه على جميع أطراف المجتمع.

ولذلك يمكننا أن نقول أن المسرحيات التاريخية ، لاسيما هنري السادس حكايات قد قدمت من دون انقطاع على خشبة المسرح من أجل تحقيق هدف تربوي بحت. هنري السادس مسرحيه وجهها شكسبير للكشف عن الآثار الحقيقية للحرب والسلام على السواء على حياة الناس واختيار ما يناسبهم بشكل أفضل.

وبعد وفاة الملكة اليزابيث الأولى في 1603 ، تبوأ الملك جيمس الأول عرش انكلترا. وباعتلائه عرش انكلترا ، أعلن عن انتهاء العهد الإليزابيثي وبداية العهد من الجاكوبي في تاريخ انكلترا.

وقد تميز العهد الجاكوبي ، مثل سابقه ، أي ، العصر الاليزابيثي ، بمجموعة من السمات.

وكان العصر الجاكوبي العصر الأكثر أهمية الذي شهد تمثيل مسرحيات شكسبير هاملت (1603) والعاصفة (1611) لأول مرة في حين أن تمثيل ثلاثية هنري السادس لأول مرة كان قد تم خلال فترة حياة الملكة اليزابيث الأولى. وكتبت هاملت ومثلت في فترة انتقالية في تاريخ انكلترا حيث وصل جيمس الأول لعرش انكلترا. واعتبر كثير من الناس وصول جيمس الأول الى العرش بأنه عملية اغتصاب. بالنسبة لكثير من الانجليز، لم يكن جيمس الأول ،وهو أمير اسكتلندي مثقف، التي كانت تقريبا مستعمرة انجليزية منذ القرن الثاني عشر ، الحاكم المناسب لإنجلترا.

ووفقا لجميع الادلة ، فإن شكسبير ، الذي كان يشتبه في أنه ابن اليزابيث الأولى ، على الأقل روحيا ، أورد هذه الشكوك في عهد جيمس الأول الذي كان أحد السكان السابقين لمستعمرة. وكما ذكرنا أعلاه ،

كان يُنظر إلى الملكة اليزابيث بأنها ملك انجلترا، في حين أن جيمس الأول هو ملكتها. فمن السهل أن نستنتج من ذلك أن إعتلاء جيمس الأول الحكم كان إنقلاب ، على الأقل على المستوى الرمزي. وفي الواقع، كما أوضح العديد من المؤرخين، تورط جيمس الأول مباشرة في انتفاضة اسيكس (Essex) التي أدت إلى وفاة اسيكس (Essex) الذي كان واحدا من عشاق الملكة اليزابيث الأولى. ولذلك ، يمكننا أن نستنتج أن شرعيه إعتلاء للملك للعرش كانت مثار تساؤل وجدل لأن جيمس الأول أراد أن يحصل عليه بالقوة من اليزابيث الأول ، وهي عمته "الملكية". وكتب وليام شكسبير آخر مسرحياته، *العاصفه* (1611) ، عندما استتب الحكم تماما لجيمس الأول. وكون أنها مُثلت لأول مرة بعد ما يقرب من ثماني سنوات بعد إعتلاء الملك جيمس الأول لعرش انكلترا أمر مهم جدا من نواح عديدة. و القارئ اللبيب سرعان ما يلاحظ أن نفس الاهتمامات بالحرب وخطر أخذ السلطة بقوة السلاح تتواجد في كل من مسرحيات شكسبير وكذا الحياة السياسية الفعلية في انكلترا خلال عهد الملك جيمس. وهذه بعض النقاط التي تم تفصيلها في الفصل الأخير من هذه الأطروحة. .

بالاعتماد على دراستنا للمسرحية ، نستنتج أن هذه المسرحية الأخيرة لسكسبير في الواقع تعرض بشكل أفضل نزعه الفلسفية مع عمق ثقافته ، أي تزايد في الاهتمام بالمعرفة والمثقفين (cavell كافييل ، 1987 : 02). وعلى عكس كل من *هنري السادس وهاملت*، تعد *العاصفه* أفضل عمل تم فيها توضيح أفكار الكاتب المسرحي وتبيينها صراحة لاستكمال ما كان يُلمح له فقط في المسرحيات السابقة. وعلى نحو أكثر وضوح ، كُتبت مسرحيتا *هاملت* و *هنري السادس* كتابية لتمهيد الطريق لتأسيس الأفكار الخلاقة لعصر النهضة في حين أن مسرحية *العاصفه* تأتي لإتمام مهمتهما ، وكشف ما لم يتم توضيحه بشكل كاف في المسرحيات السابقة.

ولم يعد هناك مزيد من المكان للكتابة عن إراقة الدماء ومناظر الحرب الكلاسيكية. وإنما أضحي التركيز على الانسانية، والاتجاهات الفكرية و المناهضة للحرب التي ينبغي على الحاكم أن يحترمها. ويمكن أيضا أن نستقرأ مسرحية *العاصفه* بوصفها قطعة مسرحية مجازية استخدم فيها الكاتب المسرحي شخصيات واقعية لتمثيل أفكار عصر النهضة وكذا الأفكار المخالفة لعصر النهضة. ففي شخصية بروسبيرو (prospero) على سبيل المثال ، يقدم شكسبير المثل العليا للمعرفة والفكر.

وبصفته رمزا للمعرفة ، أُعطي الدوق (Duke) ما يكفي من القدرة على تجاوز كل المثل العليا الأخرى المتمثلة في أعدائه ، وفي الواقع يدل ذلك على أنه لا توجد أي وسيلة أخرى أنجح من المعرفة لتلبية طموح الشخص للحصول على السلطة السياسية. وعلى أساس الأدلة المقدمة في خلال هذه الأطروحة المتواضعة ، يجوز القول أنه إذا كان موقف شكسبير فيما يتعلق بالحرب موقفا ملتبسا من قبل ، فإن مقتله للحرب بعد 1603 مافئى يتزايد ويصبح أكثر شدة. ويمكننا أن نضيف أيضا أنه على الرغم من الأدلة التي ذُكرت

أعلاه والتي تدين الملك جيمس ، أيد شكسبير بحماسة الملك جيمس، وهذا التأييد نبع على الأقل من رغبته في مواصلة مهمة صنع السلام التي أطلقها الملك جيمس.

صحيح انه بعد وفاة شكسبير ، لم تتمكن المساعي المتواصلة للملك جيمس في سبيل هذه القضية أن تحول دون تفجر حرب الثلاثين عاما المأساوية في الأيام الاخيرة من حكمه ، أو دون اندلاع الحرب الأهلية الانجليزية في عهد ابنه .

ومع ذلك ، بعودة الرفض الإنساني السابق للسياسة العسكرية وثقافتها وفكرها ، أدى كل من شكسبير الذي بلغ أوج نضجه ورعاية الملك له إلى تعزيز تقاليد سيادة وتبجيل السلام.