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**Prvky propagandy v Shakespearových postavách Jindřicha IV., V. a
VIII.**

Diplomová práce

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Studijní obor: Učitelství pro 2. stupeň ZŠ - anglický jazyk a literatura
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Cílem diplomové práce je srovnáním Shakespeareových her Jindřich IV., Jindřich V. a Jindřich VIII. s historickou realitou poukázat na míru propagandy panovníků v těchto hrách. V analýze je použito více historických pramenů, což se zrcadlí do výsledných údajů, které nahlízejí postavy Jindřichů z různých úhlů pohledu.

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Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala (pod vedením vedoucího diplomové práce) samostatně a uvedla jsem všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

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Anotace

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Cílem této práce je srovnáním Shakespearových historických her Jindřich IV., Jindřich V. a Jindřich VIII. s historickou realitou poukázat na prvky propagandy v těchto Shakespearových dílech. K analýze je použito více rozdílných historických zdrojů, které napomáhají k dosažení přesnějšího srovnání her s historickou realitou. Použití více různých zdrojů zároveň podává komplexnější obraz panovníků a historických událostí a také nahlíží na odlišnosti v Shakespearových hrách z různých úhlů pohledu. V jednotlivých hrách jsou vždy vybrány nejpodstatnější rysy hry lišící se od historické reality, které vykazují znaky propagandy a jsou následně srovnány s historickými zdroji. První kapitola práce je věnována propagandistickému dramatu a jeho prvkům a slouží jako vodítko k pozdější analýze her. Dále přichází popis období vlády jednotlivých panovníků, který napomáhá při rozboru odlišností v realitě a v Shakespearových hrách, jež následuje v dalších kapitolách.

Klíčová slova: Shakespeare, historické hry, Jindřich IV., Jindřich V., Jindřich VIII, propaganda, realita

Annotation

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The aim of this thesis is to compare Shakespeare's historical plays *Henry IV*, *Henry V* and *Henry VIII* with the historical reality and on the basis of this comparison point out the propaganda features in Shakespeare's plays. Different historical sources used in the thesis serve as a means of making the comparison more precise. The use of various historical sources gives more complex depiction of the kings and different historical events and also observes the discrepancies in Shakespeare's play from different perspectives. The most crucial points differing from the reality and evincing the features of propaganda are chosen in the individual plays and are further analysed and compared with historical sources. The first chapter is dedicated to the description of a propaganda drama and serves as a lead to the later analysis of the plays. Next, there is a characterization of the time of the rules of the individual kings which helps the analysis, following in the next chapters, of the differences in reality and in Shakespeare's plays.

Keywords: Shakespeare, historical plays, Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VIII, propaganda, reality

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Introduction

This thesis focuses on the features of propaganda in three of Shakespeare's plays: *King Henry the Fourth*, *The Life of King Henry the Fifth* and *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*.

The topic of the thesis was chosen according to author's interest in history and literature and follows the topic of author's bachelor thesis *Shakespeare's Henry VIII – Reality and Fiction*. The plays were selected due to their differences in the depiction of the kings but also because they are all set in very interesting historical periods.

Firstly, a short description of the features of a propaganda play is given, followed by the characterization of historical backgrounds during the reigns of the individual kings with specific focus on the periods of their reign mentioned in Shakespeare's plays.

Secondly, certain events, usually those differing from reality, are chosen in each play and contrasted with the historical reality in order to draw attention to its propagandistic features. This comparison is always preceded by a summary of the play which is then analysed.

The sources used for this thesis are diverse so that they provide as much information from different perspective as possible. The aim is to compare those sources with the information in Shakespeare's plays but also contrast them with each other to make the final outcome informationally credible to the greatest extent.

As for the propaganda features in Shakespeare's plays, usually the authors concur that there are certain features of propaganda but the plays are not pure propaganda plays. This is also supported by the fact that Shakespeare only highlights the positive qualities of individual kings but does not completely omit their negative ones.

1 What is a Propaganda Play

The aim of this chapter is to highlight and describe the significant features of so called propaganda play and therefore clarify the points later mentioned as propagandistic in Shakespeare's works *King Henry the Fourth*, *The Life of King Henry the Fifth* and *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*.

The definitions of the propaganda play differ in various sources but there are still several significant features they agree on. For example, *Merriam Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature* describes propaganda play as "A type of PROBLEM PLAY that advocates a specific solution to the conflict dramatized."¹ Obviously, in this source, propaganda play is taken as a type of a problem play but in *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* the definition is slightly different. "A drama which deals with a specific problem and, very probably, offers a solution.[...] This type of drama is also known as problem or propaganda play."² From this shortened definition it is evident that problem and propaganda play are the same and are referred to as thesis play. Another definition describing the problem play is "A term commonly used to describe a play which examines a specific social or political problem with the aim of igniting public debate."³ As for the propaganda play itself, it originated in France in the 19th century and was developed by authors such as Henrik Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw or John Galsworthy.

Besides describing a propaganda play, it is also important to define what a propaganda means. Merriam Webster's online dictionary gives following definitions:

1. ideas or statements that are often false or exaggerated and that are spread in order to help a cause, a political leader, a government, etc.
2. the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or

1 MERRIAM-WEBSTER, INC. *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature*. Merriam Webster, 1995. 1236 p. ISBN 0-87779-042-6; p. 910

2 CUDDON, J.A. *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. Penguin Books, 2000. 1024 p. ISBN 978-0140513639, p. 913

3 Problem play [online] Oxfordreference [11.12.2014]
<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100347336>

injuring an institution, a cause, or a person.⁴

These definitions are for the sake of Shakespeare's plays analysed in this thesis actually more important because Shakespeare merely exaggerates and does not write a typical propaganda play. It is important to note that some of Shakespeare's plays are classified as problem plays because according to the literary critics they cannot be seen as pure tragedies or comedies and deal with varieties of problems.⁵ Nevertheless, it is not the case of any of Shakespeare's history plays. Marjorie Boulton in her work *The Anatomy of Drama* implies that propaganda play is nothing new, as the Morality and Miracle plays served as a propaganda of religious doctrine. Shakespeare is mentioned in Boulton's work in connection with propaganda plays as follows:

The propaganda play or didactic drama is one in which the primary motive of the play is the impressing of an idea on an audience, generally a religious, political or social idea. [...]Shakespeare is full of political theories natural to his epoch, and sometimes, as in *King Lear*, of ideas ahead of his time; but even in *Henry V* he is not really a writer of propaganda plays.⁶

Preceding statement only supports the idea that Shakespeare used propaganda features but did not write propaganda plays. This is further highlighted by the analyse of Shakespeare's three history plays in this thesis.

To conclude, propaganda plays as such are the matter of the 19th century but features of propaganda for different purposes can be seen much sooner. Thus, it is not impossible to find such features even in Shakespeare's works.

4 Propaganda [online] Merriamwebster [11.12.2014]
<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/propaganda>

5 These plays are: *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, *Troilus and Cressida* and F.S. Boas also included *Hamlet* but this play was later excluded by W.W. Lawrence.(SCHANZER, 2013, p. 2)

6 BOULTON, Marjorie. *The Anatomy of Drama*. Routledge, 2014. 224 p. ISBN 978-1-317-93614-5, p. 155

2 Britain during the Reign of Henry IV

This chapter concentrates on the political and social conditions during the reign of Henry IV. Closer insight is given in the parts which are related to Shakespeare's play *King Henry the Fourth*.

Henry IV became British King after he had deposed his predecessor Richard II in 1399. This act was enthusiastically supported by British nobility because they were scared of losing their estates and positions. Their fear was caused by a series of measures taken by Richard II. In 1389 a strong dispute arose between Henry Bolingbroke and Thomas Mowbray and as they accused each other of lie in front of the parliament without any obvious outcome, the decision was to let them duel. Everything was settled when Richard II stopped it and banished Mowbray from the kingdom forever and Henry for ten years.

In February 1399 John of Gaunt (Henry's father) died and Henry inherited Gaunt's estates all over England. However, Richard II deprived Henry of his inheritance and consequently gave Henry an excellent reason to invade the country. The fact that Richard took Henry his inherited estates made the lords worried for their own possessions and what is even more important, confirmed them in their support of Henry Bolingbroke's intentions.

When the news about king's departure to Ireland reached Henry he immediately grasped the opportunity and sailed to an unprotected shore of Yorkshire. Once there, he was surrounded and supported by his followers, who helped him significantly to become a king. Before the information about Henry's actions reached Richard II, Henry had many supporters and as Richard arrived in London he was already a prisoner. He was imprisoned in Tower and was forced to abdicate in favour of Henry. Although Henry's claim to the throne was later challenged by his opponents but in this moment he was supported by the parliament. Henry's original intention was probably not to claim the crown as it is mentioned in *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406* but he convinced himself this move to be

right.

He must have been aware that even some of his allies would be dismayed by his pre-emptive bid for the throne, but he probably believed, and with some justification, that his replacement of Richard was the only way to secure the aims of the movement that had coalesced around him shortly after his landing at Ravenspur.⁷

Since Henry became the king, his reign was dependent on the parliament not only because he was "elected"⁸ by them but also in this time parliament had strong influence in financial matters and could therefore control king's affairs home and abroad. The Parliament of this time had many privileges that it regained again not until 17th century. However, the Parliament was not behind the changes but only confirmed them at the end.⁹

There were many conflicts during the reign of Henry IV. One of king's enemies was Owen Glendower, who was the leading person of rebellions in Wales. Later on, Glendower formed an alliance with the Percy family, which means Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland and his son Sir Henry Percy also known as Hotspur. In 1403 Hotspur started a rebellion against the king but was killed in the battle near Shrewsbury by king's forces. Hotspur's father was captured but later was freed by the king, who let him proceed with guarding of the borders against the Scotsmen. Nevertheless, Earl of Northumberland rebelled again two years later, together with his supporters Archbishop Scrope and Thomas Mowbray. Percy was forced behind the borders but Scrope and Mowbray were captured by king's officers and were both beheaded on Henry's order.

Even though the worst conflicts were successfully suppressed, serious health problems started to weaken the king. In the following years he had more problems with Scots and also the French.

7 DODD, Gwylim, BIGGS, Douglas. *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399-1406*. Boydell & Brewer, 2003. 210 p. ISBN 1-903153-12-3, p. 10

8 In those days elections did not have the form we know today.

9 CHURCHILL, Winston S. *Dějiny anglicky mluvících národů. Díl první. Zrození Británie*. Český spisovatel, 1996. 392 p. ISBN 80-202-0641-8

[T]he King had to combat border incursions by the Scots and ward off conflict with the French, who aided the Welsh rebels in 1405–06.

To finance these military activities, Henry was forced to rely on parliamentary grants. From 1401 to 1406 Parliament repeatedly accused him of fiscal mismanagement and gradually acquired certain precedent-setting powers over royal expenditures and appointments.¹⁰

As king's health was continually getting worse several people appeared on the scene to struggle for power. Prince Henry was heavily supported by his step-uncles but as he tried to convince his father to abdicate in his favour in 1411, the king strongly disagreed and the prince was forced to withdraw. However, in 1413 King Henry IV died and was succeeded by his son, who ruled as Henry V.

To conclude, Henry IV was a king liked by his supporters, mostly the nobility, but not that much by ordinary people.¹¹ Even though, he persuaded many people through the years, he was a good king, in the minds of ordinary people Richard II still remained as the perfect king (idolised because of the way he lost his power). Henry proved to be a skilful monarch, however, as he grew older he became more and more unpopular.

10 Henry IV [online] Britannica [22.10.2013]
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/261660/Henry-IV>

11 This was caused by Henry's way to gain the throne. Many lords were highly rewarded for their loyalty to Henry IV and therefore were truly satisfied with him. On contrary, the ordinary people had no profit of him accessing the throne and liked the previous king, thus he was not so popular among them.

3 Britain during the Reign of Henry V

This chapter mainly deals with the historical background during the reign of Henry V but also describes Henry's life before he became a king. As in the previous chapter, also in this one, closer insight is given in the parts which are somehow related to Shakespeare's play *Henry V*.

3.1 Early Life

Henry was born in 1386/1387¹² as the eldest son of Henry Bolingbroke and Mary de Bohun. Henry V had three younger brothers known as Thomas, Duke of Clarence, John, Duke of Bedford, and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Besides other things, Henry was well educated as Cowper mentions in his book.

He was certainly instructed in the military skills suitable for his class – as well as the aristocratic pursuits of hunting and falconry. Owing to his father's influence, he was unusually learned, becoming proficient in Latin, French and English under the tutelage of his uncle, Henry Beaufort.¹³

As Henry's father was exiled by Richard II in 1398, Richard II together with Henry's uncle took care of him.¹⁴ In 1399 Henry Bolingbroke became a king and Prince Henry was created Earl of Chester, Duke of Cornwall, Prince of Wales and soon also Duke of Aquitaine and Lancaster. His position completely changed and since then he had to assist his father and had more responsibility than ever before. In 1403 he was in command of the war against the Welsh rebels. Since then he wanted a place in the government and also on the council, having been there in opposition to his father and archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel. Even though Prince Henry is in Shakespeare's play *The Life of the King Henry IV* described as sometimes

12 The year when Henry V was born differs in various sources. In COWPER, Marcus. *Henry V: Leadership, Strategy, Conflict*. Osprey Publishing, 2010. 64 p. ISBN 978-1-84908-370-6 and MATUSIAK, John. *Henry V*. Routledge, 2012. 281 p. ISBN 0-415-62026-0 there is year 1386. In BEVAN, Brian. *Henry IV*. Palgrave Macmillan, 1994. 166 p. ISBN 0-312-11696-9 there is 1387.

13 COWPER, Marcus. *Henry V: Leadership, Strategy, Conflict*. Osprey Publishing, 2010. 64 p. ISBN 978-1-84908-370-6, p.7

14 Even though Richard II had Henry as a hostage while Henry's father was exiled, he treated him well.

irresponsible person who came to senses no sooner than becoming a king, many sources deny such stories.

Probably they represent no more than the natural ebullience of a young man whose energies found insufficient constructive outlet. The most famous incident, his quarrel with the chief justice, Sir William Gascoigne, was a Tudor invention, first related in 1531.¹⁵

Henry succeeded his father in March 1413 as Henry V. At the beginning of his reign there were events threatening his position. One of these was the Lollard rising in 1414 and the second was the conspiracy led by Richard of York, Earl of Cambridge; Henry, Lord Scrope of Masham, and Sir Thomas Grey, who did it as a support to Henry's cousin Edward Mortimer. As Henry was warned in advance about it, both these incidents were suppressed before they really developed to something bigger. His concerns laid more in the affairs related to France which were heavily approved by the parliament. Henry's aim was to gain territory and also became King of France.

3.2 War with France

As it was mentioned previously Henry's attention was turned to the affairs in France. He laid a claim to Normandy, Touraine and Maine and Gascoigne and Guyenne. Depiction of these events can be found also in *The English Chronicle*.

[...] he held a parlement at Westmynstre, of salle the lordis of the reme, where it was tretid and spoke of hist title that he hadde to Normandie, Gascoigne, and Guyenne, that were his enheritaunce; the whiche the King of Fraunce withheld wrongfulli and vnrightfulli.¹⁶

The most significant and the most famous battle which is also described in detail in Shakespeare's *Henry V* is the battle of Agincourt. In August 1415 Henry

15 Henry V [on-line] Britanica [28.10.2013]

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/261780/Henry-V>

16 DAVIES, John S. *An English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI Written Before the Year 1471*. Camden Society, 1856. 288 p., p. 39

sailed to France and in the mid September his troops captured Harfleur. It was the first victory on the French soil but it cost the army heavy losses. The king left a garrison in Harfleur and as the surroundings of the town were a low-lying marshlands the diseases spread quickly there and Henry was forced to send several thousand of his injured and diseased men back to England. After that he decided to move to English fortress Calais where his ships were waiting. However, they were blocked on their way by the French troops. The French chose the battlefield quite wrong for the size of their army, it was a narrow frontage between two woods where large-scale maneuvers were almost impracticable. This took the advantage from the French side, because with their numerous army and mounted knights in heavy armour they had low chances to move effectively on the battlefield. The battle is described as following:

Henry led his troops forward into bowshot range, where their long-range archery provoked the French into an assault. Several small French cavalry charges broke upon a line of pointed stakes in front of the English archers. Then the main French assault, consisting of heavily armoured, dismounted knights, advanced over the sodden ground. At the first clash the English line yielded, only to recover quickly. As more French knights entered the battle, they became so tightly bunched that some of them could barely raise their arms to strike a blow. At this decisive point, Henry ordered his lightly equipped and more mobile English archers to attack with swords and axes.¹⁷

The victory in the battle at Agincourt was heavily celebrated back in Britain by the ordinary people. However, Henry claimed that they only won because the God wanted it so.

Nevertheless, this unbelievable victory probably supported English in more French conquests.¹⁸ Yet, there seem to be positive outcome in the form of Henry's position in Europe after the victorious battle. In 1416 he was visited by Holy Roman

17 Battle of Agincourt [on-line] Britannica [2.11.2013]

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/9159/Battle-of-Agincourt>

18 KNIGHT, Paul, CHAPPELL, Mike. *Henry V and the Conquest of France 1416-53*. Osprey Publishing, 1998. 48 p. ISBN 1-85532-699-X (p. 5)

emperor Sigismund and together they signed a treaty of alliance, which was certainly beneficial for Henry. In 1420 the Treaty of Troyes was signed, where Henry was acknowledged as the heir to the French throne and regent of France and in the same year was also married to the daughter of the French King, Catherine. In spite of all his achievements, he could not enjoy it for a long time as he died in 1422 of a camp disease.

To sum up, Henry V is described as a very popular king and even nowadays is still referred to as one of the most famous British Kings. His greatest achievement is undoubtedly the victory in the battle at Agincourt. He was loved by ordinary people and was great as a diplomat, however, he did not have much time to enjoy his success because of his early death.

4 Britain during the Reign of Henry VIII

This chapter deals with the events which happened during the reign of Henry VIII but also information about his early life is given. Main focus is on affairs and events mentioned in Shakespeare's play *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*. As Henry VIII is one of the best known and renowned Kings of England, his life is full of various famous but also infamous events.

4.1 Early Life

Henry VIII was born on 28. June 1491 as the second son of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. Until his older brother's death in 1502 he was supposed to enter the Church. He was therefore well educated in languages as Latin, French and Italian but he also studied theology, music and different types of physical activities such as tennis, tournaments or hunting. But as John Scarisbrick states in his book *Henry VIII*, it is not clear how Henry got all his education.

Lord Herbert believed that Henry received the beginnings of a clerical education, as befitted one who was destined for an ecclesiastical career. But there is no evidence for this; and it is not easy to guess what specifically clerical content could have been given to the education of a boy who was not yet eleven years old when it became clear that he would ascend the throne of England rather than that of Canterbury. Nor do we know exactly how Henry acquired his linguistic skills or learned music.¹⁹

Until Henry's ascension to the throne he was held under strict supervision of his father. The probable cause of this was that as Henry VII had already lost five of his eight children and especially Arthur, his successor to the throne, he was very cautious not to lose also his last successor, Prince Henry. Henry was protected from the outer world but this kind of isolation also had a negative impact in a way that he

¹⁹ SCARISBRICK, J.J. *Henry VIII*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968. 561 p. ISBN 0-520-01130-9, p. 5,6

was not included in political affairs and was therefore little prepared for the kingship when he ascended the throne.

As it was usual in these times, Henry's marriage was arranged in advance. Firstly, his father had negotiated a marriage with Eleanor, the niece of Catherine of Aragon, but the circumstances changed with the death of Prince Arthur. In 1503 a treaty was signed which stated the marriage of Prince Henry with widowed Catherine of Aragon. This affair was about to bring more problems in the future than anyone probably assumed at that time. As Catherine was a widow of Arthur, a papal dispensation was needed to make the marriage of Henry and Catherine possible. Dispensation was granted as a result of assumption that marriage of Catherine and Arthur was not fulfilled. The wedding was shortly after Henry's ascension to the throne.

Henry ascended the throne in 1509, after his father died, as Henry VIII. At the beginning of his reign he was quite popular among the ordinary people. However, his choice of advisors may seem rather curious. As well as his father, he did not trust the nobility and therefore were his advisors of any special origin. Among others these were cardinal Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell or Thomas Cranmer. Wolsey's role and influence on Henry's reign is the matter of the next part.

4.2 Role of Cardinal Wolsey in the Reign of Henry VIII

As it was stated in the previous chapter, Thomas Wolsey was not a man of a noble origin. The son of a butcher from Ipswich, Wolsey attended Oxford University and gradually gained an important position in the state administration.

Wolsey was already popular with Henry VII, so there is only little wonder that Henry VIII noticed his unusual skills and the two of them became very close. The reason for the easy rise to power resides in the king's lack of interest in ruling and Wolsey's skill to persuade the king to let him do the work. As Henry was out hunting, hawking or doing any other of his favourite activities, most of the affairs of

the state were in Wolsey's hands. For the Privy Council, dependant on the king, it was hardly possible to reach him. Even when Henry was not out hunting or else, Wolsey received all king's post and sent him only digest, gave him just summaries of treaties and other similar things.²⁰ He was granted several important titles and posts by the pope or the king.

On Henry's recommendation Pope Leo X made him bishop of Lincoln (February 1514), archbishop of York (September 1514), and cardinal (1515). In December 1515 Wolsey became lord chancellor of England. Three years later the pope appointed him a special papal representative with the title *legate a latere*.²¹

An affair of the relations in Europe was important for both the king and the cardinal. Wolsey was highly competent in diplomatic manners and therefore helped the king to achieve his goals. In 1520 Wolsey arranged a meeting with the French King Francis I, meeting known as The Field of Cloth of Gold. The main problem of the whole arrangement was that both kings concentrated more on demonstrating their own wealth instead of effective diplomatic discussions. It was obvious that it raised more rivalry than friendship which is only confirmed by the fact that at this time Henry already negotiated with Francis's enemy Charles V, the newly established Holy Roman Emperor. Despite all the preceding attempts to remain in peace with France, war broke out between France and the Holy Roman Empire in 1521. Henry decided to support the emperor, however, he quickly spent all of England's savings. As Wolsey's attempt to gain money in the form of so called *Amicable Grant* failed, he was entrusted to propose peace to Francis I, to save the situation in 1528. Nevertheless, when Charles defeated French army in Italy and therefore forced France to accept devastating peace treaty in 1529, it was without Henry's contribution. The blame for this failure and England's isolation was put on Wolsey.

One of Wolsey's great achievements was the establishment of different taxes

20 SCARISBRICK, J.J. *Henry VIII*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968. 561 p. ISBN 0-520-01130-9 (p. 43, 44)

21 Thomas Wolsey [online] Britannica [16.11.2013]
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/646717/Thomas-Cardinal-Wolsey>

which brought enough money to finance Henry's expensive plans. Thanks to his prodigious skill in gaining money he himself was very rich, but it made him many jealous and vindictive enemies. Wolsey's estates are often compared to those of the king because of their monumental appearance. One of the significant mistakes of Wolsey's career as far as the taxation is concerned, is so called "Amicable Grant", as mentioned above, of 1525. The tax was so high and in a very short time after another preceding taxation that it raised a rebellion. Eventually the king was forced to cancel this tax.

To sum up, the steeper Wolsey's rise to power the quicker was his fall. After few of his missteps the king started to have dangerous doubts about the cardinal. The last thing that caused his fall was the inability to persuade the Pope Clement VII to grant Henry and annulment of his marriage with Catherine of Aragon. As Henry was absolutely determined to marry Anne Boleyn and was therefore desperate to get his first marriage annulled, he considered Wolsey's failure in this case to be very serious. Wolsey's long row of enemies supported king's doubts about him and in 1529 he was deprived of all his offices. In 1530 he was arrested and charged of treason. However, he died on November 4, 1530 on his way to see the king.

4.3 Conflict with the Pope

This subchapter deals with the issue of Henry's conflict with the pope resulting from Clement VII's unwillingness to grant Henry declaration of annulment of his marriage with Catherine of Aragon.

Henry VIII was longing to have a man heir and Catherine's inability to give birth to a healthy boy increased his apprehensions about the legitimacy of his marriage with Catherine.²² His doubts strengthened as one of his mistress, Elizabeth

²² *"And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it [is] an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless."* Leviticus 20,21 – Henry VIII was sure that this statement in the Bible was the reason he should be granted annulment by the pope. However, the statement was only valid in case the previous marriage of Catherine and Henry's brother Arthur was fulfilled and this was not the case.

Blount, gave birth to a healthy boy, Henry Fitzroy. As Ford writes in his book, this was a clear prove that there was something wrong with Catherine.

Henry believed that if he could father healthy sons with other women, it was obviously due to some problem with Katherine that they could not produce a male heir together. Henry thought again about the curse in the Bible on a marriage with a dead brother's widow. He decided it was clearly his duty to marry again, regardless of what the pope said.²³

Not only this fact, but also king's new love was the reason, why he wanted to cancel the marriage. In addition, at the time the king started to court to Anne Boleyn, the queen's appearance was influenced by many childbirths and she was not the youngest. To her, Anne was incomparably more attractive to the king.

The reasons mentioned above were the basis for Henry's struggle. Nevertheless, he probably did not realise his timing and the case itself were highly problematic. At the time he asked the pope for the annulment, Clement VII was a prisoner of Catherine's nephew Charles V,²⁴ who opposed strongly against annulment of his aunt's marriage. As for the matter of the case, asking the pope to declare the marriage illegal that was once approved by the papal power before, was an unwise step to take. After Wolsey's unsuccessful negotiations that were the last deed leading to his fall, his place was taken by Thomas More. Still, during the next three years there was no progress made and Henry pondered over the hope that the decisive trial about his marriage will be held in England and a more radical solution which was to reject Rome completely.

Therefore a revolution was an attractive option to solve the situation and there had to be someone who could come up with the plan and implement it. The man to make it happen was Thomas Cromwell.

The revolution consisted of the decision that the English church should separate from Rome, becoming effectively a spiritual department of state under the rule of

23 FORD, Nick. *Henry VIII: the King, his six wives, and his court*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2005. 112 p. ISBN 1-4042-0163-7, p. 50

24 Holy Roman Emperor, King of Spain and archduke of Austria

the King as God's deputy on earth.²⁵

Making of the Church of England with Henry VIII as its head made the annulment of king's first marriage possible. In 1533 he married Anne Boleyn and left the pope with no ways of interfering in the matter. Even though The Church of England was not dependent on the pope anymore it did not mean that the basis of king's faith was changed.

4.4 Henry VIII and His Marriages

It is a well-known fact and probably the best known about Henry VIII that during his life he had six wives. In connection with Shakespeare's play *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth* only the first two marriages are important, nevertheless, this chapter gives a brief insight into all his marriages.

The fact of being married six times may not be as surprising nowadays, however, it was something unprecedented in Tudor times and even a long time after. Henry's obsession to have a male heir to the throne was most likely one of the crucial reasons for his many marriages but definitely not the only one.

As it was already mentioned in previous chapter Henry's first wife was Catherine of Aragon. She was a daughter of Spanish King Ferdinand II and his wife Isabella I of Castile. Catherine was originally married to Henry's older brother, Prince Arthur. Nevertheless, Arthur died six months after the marriage in 1502. As Henry's father, Henry VII, wanted to preserve the alliance with Spain as much as Ferdinand of Aragon wanted to preserve the alliance with England, they started to negotiate about the marriage of Catherine with Prince Henry. They married in June 1509. Considering the era they lived in, Catherine had an unprecedented influence on the king. She gave him advice and he discussed a lot with her. In their time this was something quite unique, because queens were not supposed to talk to the reign.

²⁵ Henry VIII [online] Britannica [4.2.2014]
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/261947/Henry-VIII/3126/The-breach-with-Rome>

Despite all this, Catherine was unable to give Henry a male heir to the throne and Henry began to fight hard to gain annulment of their marriage. The queen was doing her best to preserve her marriage with the king still, as the previous chapter states, their marriage was annulled in 1533 as Henry became the head of the Church of England and in the same year he married his second wife Anne Boleyn. After the divorce Catherine's life was miserable and full of misfortunes. She was ill and arguing with the king very often. She died in 1536 shortly before Henry's second wife Anne Boleyn was executed.

Anne Boleyn was a daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, who later became Earl of Wiltshire and Ormonde. She spent most of her youth in France. King's attraction to Anne was only a secret one and he did not endeavour to impress her or do anything obvious, until he found out she secretly got engaged with Henry Percy, future Earl of Northumberland. In the Tudor times, all the marriages and engagements among aristocracy had to be approved by the king. When Wolsey came to the king with the information about this engagement, Henry VIII told the Cardinal about his secret feelings for Anne and asked him to cancel the engagement. In 1526 the king appeared on tournament with words written on his attire: "Declare I dare not." This year is considered as the beginning of king's efforts to attract Anne Boleyn. Still he was unpleasantly surprised when Anne refused to become his mistress. She knew what could happen to her and decided to be unattainable. Henry VIII understood that the only way he can have her, is to ask her to marry him. At the end of 1527 Anne agreed to marry the king at the moment he is divorced. Still, it was not until 1533 that they got married and in the same year Anne gave birth to Princess Elizabeth. The king became soon bored with his wife and was annoyed by the fact that he still did not have a male heir. In 1536 he had her imprisoned in the Tower of London on charge of adultery. She was found guilty and beheaded in May 1536 even though it is highly probable she was not guilty as charged.

In the month of Anne's execution Henry married his third wife Jane

Seymour²⁶. Her success was on the field where Henry's first two wives failed, she gave birth to a male heir of the throne, future King Edward VI. Despite the happiness of having a male heir Henry had to deal with a sorrow at his wife's death soon as well because Jane died twelve days after Edward was born. Jane's family was enjoying Henry's favour even after her death and as Edward ascended the throne in 1547, his uncle Edward Seymour became regent as lord protector and his second uncle Thomas Seymour was lord high admiral.

In 1540 Henry married his fourth wife Anne of Cleves. This marriage was arranged purely for political purposes as Henry needed an alliance with Anne's brother William, Duke of Cleves. He believed in the necessity of this alliance because France and Holy Roman Empire were about to unite forces to attack Protestant England. However, when Henry met Anne for the first time he was disappointed by her appearance. The threat of attack faded when the attempts of France and Holy Roman Empire to form an alliance failed and Henry's marriage with Anne was annulled in July, 1540.

Very shortly after annulment of Henry's fourth marriage, on July 28, he married his fifth wife, Catherine Howard. One of ten children of Edmund Howard attracted king's attention while he was still married to Anne of Cleves. At the beginning the marriage was probably happy but in November 1541 Henry was informed by Thomas Cranmer of Catherine's affairs before their marriage. What is more, even though it is still unproved, it is highly probable that she conducted adultery with one of her former lovers. In February 1542 the Parliament passed the Act of Attainder, stating that it is treason for an unchaste woman to marry the king. On the basis of this Act Catherine was executed in the Tower of London on February 13, 1542.

The last of Henry's six wives was Catherine Parr, married to the king on July 12, 1543. A year later she ruled as a regent during king's campaigns in France. She developed a close relationship with Henry's three children and dedicated her time

26 1536 -1537

to their education. The king died on January 28, 1547 and was succeeded by Edward VI. Catherine married Thomas Seymour, brother of Jane Seymour, third wife of Henry VIII, and died in 1548 few days after she gave birth to daughter Mary.

To summarise this chapter, the reign of Henry VIII was full of significant events from his unscrupulous behaviour towards many people to the scandal concerning his marriages and formation of the Church of England. Henry was popular at the beginning of his reign but that changed with time together with his character and increasing cruelty of his deeds. Still, he is one of the best known of English Kings especially for his character.

5 Shakespeare's Henry IV

This chapter concentrates on Shakespeare's play *King Henry the Fourth* and features of propaganda in it. Firstly, there is a summary of the play and then the description of major events and characters is given to be compared with historical reality. The comparison clarifies why certain features can be seen as propagandistic.

5.1 Summary of Shakespeare's Play *King Henry the Fourth*

The play *King Henry the Fourth* belongs to Shakespeare's historical plays. As Hilský notes in commentary to this play in *Jindřich IV., 2. díl*²⁷, it can be considered a part of a tetralogy consisting of *Richard II*, both parts of *Henry IV* and *Henry V*. The plot of the first and second part of *Henry IV* takes place during the reign of Henry IV and ends with his death and coronation of a new king, his son, Henry V. The play differs from other Shakespeare's historical plays in two main aspects. Firstly, it tends more to comedy unlike the other historical plays and secondly, the play is very dynamic not only from the point of view of the settings but also from the point of view of its characters.²⁸

5.1.1 Part I

The first part of the play *King Henry the Fourth* is divided into five acts each with different number of scenes.

As far as the main characters of the play are concerned, they may be described within three groups. There is the King Henry IV with his sons, Henry, Prince of Wales, and his younger brother John of Lancaster. Besides, there are Earl of Westmoreland and sir Walter Blunt, both on king's side. In contrast, there is the group of rebels to which belong Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, his son Harry

27 SHAKESPEARE, William. *Jindřich IV., 2. díl*. Euromedia Group – Knižní klub, 2003. 167 p. ISBN 80-242-1081-9, p. 155

28 SHAKESPEARE, William. *Jindřich IV., 2. díl*. Euromedia Group – Knižní klub, 2003. 167 p. ISBN 80-242-1081-9, p. 157

Percy also called Hotspur, Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, Edmund Mortimer, Hotspur's brother-in-law, Richard Scroop, archbishop of York, Archibald, Earl of Douglas, Glendower, Mortimer's father-in-law, Vernon and sir Michael. The last group are characters connected with John Falstaff, Poins, Bardolph and Peto. Other characters are Lady Percy, Lady Mortimer, Gadshill and Mistress Quickly.

To begin with, in the first act Henry IV acknowledges that in the north Harry Percy succeeded in a battle with Scots and captured some of the Scottish noblemen. However, Mortimer was captured by Welsh rebel Owen Glendower, during the struggles with Welshmen. In the light of Hotspur's success the king compares him with his son, Prince Henry and complains about his behaviour and lack of interest in state affairs. The king summons Hotspur to hear Hotspur's explanation about refusing to issue the prisoners to the king. Meanwhile Prince Henry spends his time with Falstaff in a pub called the Boar's Head. One of Falstaff's henchmen, Poins, is planning an ambush but as Falstaff leaves the pub Poins makes an agreement with the prince to arrive at the place of ambush later and steal Falstaff's loot. Important moment is when Prince Henry says he behaves so boisterous only to make his change to the right son of the king more apparent.

[...]So, when this loose behaviour I throw off,
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.[...]²⁹

As Henry expects, his change will really be noticed later in the play. The scene changes to the palace where Hotspur's uncle, Earl of Worcester, complains that the king forgets their role in his establishment to the throne. Hotspur explains his reason

²⁹ Act I, Scene II, Lines 78-85

The First Part of King Henry the Fourth [online] Bartleby [15.2.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2712.html>

for keeping the prisoners for himself and wants to exchange them for his brother-in-law Mortimer, who was captured by the Welshmen. Yet, the king is enraged and denies to carry out the exchange as he considers Mortimer to be a traitor for he married Glendower's daughter and insists on issuing the prisoners. Hotspur, infuriated by king's attitude, accuses his father of helping Henry IV to gain the throne and decides to throw the king down together with archbishop of York, Glendower and Douglas.

Next, the second act concentrates mostly on the planned ambush from the first act and the trap prepared by Prince Henry and Poins, besides this there is also a scene with Hotspur, Falstaff and his henchmen, without prince and Poins, mug a cart but once they have their loot they are robbed by the prince and Poins and run away scared and without their loot. Next scene depicts Hotspur angry over a warning letter he received, where he is urged to back away from his plans of rebellion. His wife lady Percy is worried about her husband and doubts his love. He ensures her, he loves her, but does not want to tell her about his intentions of rebellion. At the Boar's Head Falstaff describes how they were robbed and according to his description it seems he is undoubtedly a hero. However, the prince reveals the truth and in that moment Falstaff pretends he knew about the plot the whole time. While the prince is enjoying Falstaff's cowardice a messenger arrives from the king, letting the prince know that his father wants to talk to him. Falstaff comes up with an idea to rehearse the audience with the king. He, as the king, reprimands the prince for spending time in a bad company. Then they switch the roles and prince speaks of Falstaff as of a *devil* who corrupts the young. As they are playing a sheriff comes to look for the lost money and the prince promises to return it.

Further, the third act begins with Hotspur's meeting with his allies in Wales and makes fun of Glendower and his boasting. The allies are discussing how they would divide the land in three parts, where Glendower, Mortimer and Hotspur would rule, however, Hotspur is dissatisfied and claims his part smaller and is admonished by Worcester and Mortimer for being greedy. In London the king is berating prince

Henry and reminds him how the King Richard II lost his dignity by spending time in a bad company. The king praises Hotspur, who is courageous, and asks the prince if he intends to take part in the campaign against the rebels. The prince penitently promises to participate and says he will prove his bravery by fighting Hotspur himself. The king sends him to join the troops near Shrewsbury. At the Boar's Head Falstaff thinks his days are coming to an end. Mistress Quickly demands Falstaff's debt to be repaid when the prince and Peto enter. Prince announces that Falstaff will lead a troop of infantrymen.

To continue with, the fourth act begins when Hotspur acknowledges that his father is ill and cannot join rebels' troops. Worcester is worried but Hotspur is still calm and confident. They are informed by sir Vernon that three troops led by the king, Westmoreland and Prince Henry are approaching. In addition, Glendower's troops are delayed but Hotspur claims they are ready for the battle. On their trip to the battlefield Falstaff is complaining about his troop and Prince Henry is surprised by the quality of his soldiers as well. Near Shrewsbury sir Walter Blunt speaks to the rebels declaring king's willingness to redeem the injustice, he did and promises them pardon. However, Hotspur reminds his companions about king's misdeeds and takes his time to think the offer through.

Finally, in the fifth act Hotspur sends Worcester to king's camp where Worcester reminds the king how he turned his back to his old friends after he gained the throne against his promise.

It pleas'd your majesty to turn your looks
Of favour from myself and all our house;
And yet I must remember you, my lord,
We were the first and dearest of your friends.[...] ³⁰

In an attempt to prevent bloodshed Prince Henry suggest he will fight with Hotspur but the king prefers reconciliation. Worcester leaves and the prince is making fun of

30 Act V, Scene I, Lines 34-37

The First Part of King Henry the Fourth [online] Bartleby [15.2.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2751.html>

Falstaff. As Worcester arrives in rebels' camp he withholds king's offer to reconciliation and tells Hotspur to prepare for the battle. Hotspur answers the king and asks Vernon about the prince. The prince is described with respect for his newly gained nobility. On the battlefield Douglas kills Blunt, disguised as the king but quickly finds out there are also others fighting disguised as the king. Prince Henry is wounded but saves the king attacked by Douglas and then kills Hotspur in a fight. Falstaff pretends being dead and prince bids his farewell. After a while Falstaff stands up and takes Hotspur's body to the prince with a prospect of a reward. After a signal for retreat the king lets Worcester and Vernon execute and Douglas is given mercy on prince's request. The battle is won and the king prepares to fight Glendower and Northumberland.

5.1.2 Part II

The second part of the play *King Henry the Fourth* is set in the period between the battle at Shrewsbury in 1403 and the death of King Henry IV in 1413. It is divided into five acts with various number of scenes.

In the first place, in the play there are many characters. To the most important of them belong the King Henry IV, his sons Henry, Prince of Wales, Prince John, Duke of Lancaster, Thomas, Duke of Clarence and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Standing on king's side are Earl of Warwick, Earl of Westmoreland, Earl of Surrey, Harcourt and John Blunt. To the rebels belong archbishop Scrope of York, Lord Bardolph, Lord Mowbray, Lord Hastings, sir John Coleville, Earl of Northumberland. Last but not least, there is Falstaff's party consisting of Bardolph, Pistol, Poins and Peto. Besides the main characters there are for example Lady Percy, Lady Northumberland, Mistress Quickly, Doll Tearsheet or recruits Mouldy, Shadow, Wart, Feeble and Bullcall.

To begin with, the first act of the play starts with the Rumour telling how lord Northumberland, on the basis of false rumour, things his son won the battle and

killed both the prince and the king. However, he is soon informed otherwise and swears to avenge the death of his son. After having regrets about supporting his son in the rebellion against the king he is calmed down by the fact that archbishop Scrope intends to continue the rebellion. In London Falstaff is visited by Lord Chief Justice who announces to Falstaff he is to join the campaign against the rebellions led by archbishop Scrope. In York the archbishop with others is planning the attack on the king. They are worried they will not have the support of Earl of Northumberland but come to conclusion they will manage even without him as a part of king's army is fighting in France and against Glendower. The archbishop is dissatisfied with behaviour of the rebels as they helped the king against Richard II but now they regret their decision.

Secondly, the next act starts at the Boar's Head where Mistress Quickly wants Falstaff to be arrested for not paying his debts. Lord Chief Justice is surprised Falstaff is not on his way to join king's campaign. Still, Mistress Quickly is mad at Falstaff for breaking his promise to marry her. He is not happy about being blamed but then is invited to join her at dinner. Meanwhile, Prince Henry is thinking about his ill father and confides in Poincils he is worried about his father. Bardolph arrives to tell Falstaff is having dinner with Doll and Quickly. Prince and Poincils decide to eavesdrop. In the next scene Earl of Northumberland is determined to join the rebellion but Lady Percy tries to persuade him not to. Therefore, he decides to go to Scotland and observe from there. The dinner is served at the Boar's Head and the trio is visited by Pistol. After a while, Falstaff sends Pistol away and the prince and Poincils come disguised as waiters and overhear Falstaff's derisive speech about them. Poincils reacts by saying pointed remarks about Falstaff's age and potency. In the end the waiters reveal their true identity and Falstaff claims he only said all those things so that some bad people do not like the prince. However, all the joking ends as the prince is called to the palace and Falstaff has to leave to join the fights.

Next, the third act describes king's complaint about how the kingship is ruining his chance to sleep.

Canst thou, O partial sleep! give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
And in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a King? Then, happy low, lie down!
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.³¹

Lord Warwick believes the king will defeat Northumberland soon, however, Henry IV reminds him how the Earl turned against Richard II and now did the same to him. Warwick tries to please the king with the news about Glendower's death. Shallow and Silence are remembering their youth. Falstaff arrives to find new recruits and the country justices remind him what he did when he was younger. The scene ends with Falstaff leaving with new recruits wondering how the country justice remembers things wrongly.

To continue with, the fourth act begins as archbishop Scrope, Mowbray and Hasting arrive in the Gaultree forest with their troops and find out that Northumberland left to Scotland. Westmoreland comes with a message from Prince John offering peace. Archbishop complains about king's behaviour towards his former allies and as Westmoreland turns his attention to Mowbray and reminds him that the king returned him the title of Duke of Norfolk. However, Mowbray points out many things could have been different. Westmoreland promises that Prince John will urge the wrongs right. Mowbray is distrustful about such promises but the archbishop comes to the conclusion that the king is tired of fighting. When they meet the prince in person he repeats his promise. Hastings issues a command to disband the troops and the prince does the same. However, as the rebel troops are far enough Westmoreland arrests Hastings, the archbishop and Mowbray. Prince John accuses them of treachery and commands to execute them. While leaving he meets Falstaff, who brings a captive and reminds the prince to highlight his bravery. The king is sad about the news that Prince Henry is revelling somewhere again. He feels very weak

31 Act III, Scene I, Lines 28-33
The Second Part of King Henry IV [online] Bartleby [22.2.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2831.html>

again and is moved in the adjacent room to recover. Prince Henry arrives thinking his father is dead and takes the crown. As the king awakes he is disgusted by prince's behaviour and when the prince comes back the king reprimands him for being too eager. Also he is worried about the country once the prince becomes the king. The prince explains himself and the king gives him his last advice. Then he is delighted to find out that the chamber he lately passed out in is called Jerusalem and wishes to die there to fulfil the prophecy.

King Henry It hath been prophesied to me many years
I should not die but in Jerusalem,
Which vainly I suppos'd the Holy Land.
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie:
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die.³²

Finally, the fifth act of the play begins with Falstaff's thinking up how to take advantage of his host. Chief Justice is afraid of Prince's revenge as he had him once arrested however, the prince appreciates his dedication to his job and offers him a job of a personal advisor to the king. Falstaff is at Shallow's house when Pistol arrives to announce that Falstaff just became "one of the greatest men in this realm"³³ and Falstaff understands that the king died and that he can now take revenge on the Chief Justice. Nevertheless, as the just crowned King Henry V leaves Westminster, he ignores Falstaff's calling and the Chief Justice is trying to calm Falstaff down. When Falstaff finally reaches the king, he is warned by Henry that he is not who he used to be. Falstaff hopes the king will send for him later but instead he is arrested together with his henchmen. The king summons Parliament and Prince Jan announces the king will declare war against France in a year and a day.

32 Act IV, Scene V, Lines 247-251

The Second Part of King Henry IV [online] Bartleby [22.2.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2845.html>

33 Act V, Scene III, Line 52

The Second Part of King Henry IV [online] Bartleby [22.2.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2853.html>

5.2 Propaganda Elements in Shakespeare's Play *King Henry the Fourth*

This chapter deals with features of propaganda in Shakespeare's play *King Henry the Fourth*. The comparison of the historical truth and the play is given to illustrate the differences and point out the probable propaganda elements of this play.

As it was hinted above, the play tends to combine many different features. Character's personalities are often partly changed or the characters are more of Shakespeare's invention than real people and what is more, there is a wide range of characters from servants of nobility to the king. Also, the period specific features are sometimes mixed with features typical rather for Shakespeare's time than the one of Henry IV. Other aspect attracting the attention is changing of scenes from king's palace to the battlefield or to the Boar's Head.³⁴ The most significant features of the play are the characters of John Falstaff, Prince Henry and also the rebellion against the king and its protagonists. These aspects are further described below.

5.2.1 The Character of John Falstaff

One of the significant characters in the play *King Henry the Fourth* is John Falstaff. He has many different personality traits, which form his own part in the play. As HILSKÝ points out in *The Second Part of King Henry IV* Falstaff is a mixture of several literary and dramatical traditions. The first feature influencing the personality of Falstaff is the character of drunkard, lecher, glutton and egoist gifted with exceptional talent for lies, illusions and cheating presented by Aristophanes in his comedies. Aristophanes's characters had no understanding for wars and ideals as honour or political ambitions. The second aspect forming Falstaff's character is a motive typical for the Middle Ages and Renaissance's carnival culture that is, the

34 HILSKÝ, Martin. *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*. Academia, 2010. 1. edition, 909 p.

ISBN 978-80-200-1857-1, p. 370-372

SHAKESPEARE, William. *Jindřich IV., 2. díl*. Euromedia Group – Knižní klub, 2003. 167 p.

ISBN 80 242-1081-9, p. 155-158

motive of abundance, freedom and parity represented by the symbol of a body. Falstaff's huge body is mentioned many times in the play and the basic function of it is to transform the clerical ideas and moral ideals into physical images.

The character of John Falstaff was originally named sir John Oldcastle after his historical counterpart. However, sir John Oldcastle and John Falstaff were not actually alike as far as their personality is concerned. John Oldcastle fought for England in the Scottish campaign and also during the Welsh wars, where he made his friendship with Prince Henry. In 1404 he became a representative of Herefordshire in Parliament and became Sheriff in 1407. Thanks to his marriage with Joan, sir John Oldcastle gained the title Lord Cobham in 1409.³⁵ He was known to be strong supporter of the Lollard movement and both Henry IV and at the beginning of his reign also Henry V did not oppose to it. Nevertheless, shortly before Henry IV's death the evidence against him being a heretic was intensified. In 1413 he was imprisoned in the Tower of London but escaped shortly after. With Oldcastle in leading, the Lollard movement turned from heresy to rebellion.

[S]er Johan Oldcastelle knyghte, lord Cobham, was arestid for lollardrie, and put in to the tour of Londoun; and anon aftir he brak out therof, and fledde into Walis and there kepte him longe tyme, and atte laste the lord Powis took him, but he made gret defens and was sore wounded er he myghte be take; and thanne he was brought in a horsliter to Westmynstre, there he was iuged to be drawe vnto saint Gilis feld, and there he was hanged and brent on the galowe3 for his falls oppinions.³⁶

As it is mentioned in the extract from the *English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI Written Before the Year 1471* John Oldcastle was captured again in 1417 and was hanged and burnt. For English Protestants he became a martyr, on contrary, English Catholics denigrated him and made him a lewd tempter of the young and Prince Henry.

The point of view of the Catholics was preserved in stories and inspired Shakespeare's character of John Oldcastle. However, the Protestants did not reject

35 BEVAN, Brian. *Henry IV*. Palgrave Macmillan, 1994. 166 p. ISBN 0-312-11696-9; p. 137,138

36 DAVIES, John S. *An English Chronicle of the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI Written Before the Year 1471*. Camden Society, 1856. 288 p.; p. 46

their martyr and as the 7th Lord Cobham became Lord Chamberlain and therefore the patron of the Shakespeare's playing company it was no longer possible to show sir John Oldcastle as a negative character and Shakespeare changed the name of one of his famous characters from Oldcastle to Falstaff.³⁷

5.2.2 The Character of Prince Henry

A major event in both volumes of *King Henry the Fourth* is the development of the character of Prince Henry. In this chapter the character of the play is compared with its historical counterpart to clarify the roles the character fulfils in the play.

At the beginning of the play the prince spends most of his time with Falstaff and his companions doing basically nothing and certainly does not live up to the expectations of his father, who also compares his son with the young Henry Percy. However, it is essential to note that according to various sources the difference between the character in Shakespeare's play and the real Prince Henry appears to be highly significant. Shakespeare's reasons for making the character of the prince the way he did might be diverse. Since the play tends to be more of a comedy than historical play in some ways, the character fits the play more, if depicted witty and blithe. Contrary to this, there is undoubtedly a moralising effect in the change of prince's approach to his status, which might as well be one of Shakespeare's intentions as Hilský mentions in his work.³⁸ As it was already stated in the chapter summarising the play *Henry IV*, Prince Henry was not presented in the best light in Shakespeare's work. However, in contrast to prince's previous unflattering description, the crucial point of the play arises when the prince is summoned to the king and is asked to go to the battle against the rebels, which he accepts with unyielding responsibility.

Prince [...]Percy is but my factor, good my lord,
To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf;
And I will call him to so strict account

37 SHAKESPEARE, William. *Jindřich IV., 2. díl*. Euromedia Group – Knižní klub, 2003. 167 p. ISBN 80 242-1081-9; p 159

38 HILSKÝ, Martin. *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*. Academia, 2010. 1. edition, 909 p. ISBN 978-80-200-1857-1; p. 375

That he shall render every glory up,
Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,
Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.
This, in the name of God, I promise here:
The which, if he be pleas'd I shall perform,
I do beseech your majesty may salve
The long-grown wounds of my intemperance:
If not, the end of life cancels all bands,
And I will die a hundred thousand deaths
Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow.
K. Hen. A hundred thousand rebels die in this:
Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein.³⁹

This dialogue was in the book much longer but the important message it gives is that the prince is ready to change his behaviour and make his father proud again. An interesting notion was made by the king highlighting the resemblance of Prince Henry to Richard at the time of Henry IV's disembarkation in England while he (the king) was more like Henry Percy now.⁴⁰ To compare the play with the reality the historical background follows.

Firstly, before Henry IV ascended the throne he was exiled and spent two years in France. Meanwhile Henry Monmouth (future Prince Henry) was taken under the protection of King Richard II, who treated him very kindly and made him a knight in 1399. Even as Richard II found out that Henry's father disembarked in England he was not accusing the boy of anything. After Henry IV took the throne he knighted Prince Henry, which was a startling move as that was already done by Richard II. Besides being created Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall and Earl of Chester, he was given a place in Parliament and with this Henry began to take part in the public affairs.

In 1400 problems arised in Wales and the king had to deal with them. With

39 Act III, Scene II, Lines 150-164

The First Part of King Henry the Fourth [online] Bartleby [11.10.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2732.html>

40 Act III, Scene II, Lines 96-99

The First Part of King Henry the Fourth [online] Bartleby [11.10.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2712.html>

the situation somehow calmed down, the prince was left at Chester to administer the North of Wales while his father went to Scotland to deal with other affairs. Still, Henry was only a thirteen-year-old boy at the time so the Council did his job, specifically Chief of the Council the famous Henry Percy also known as Hotspur. Here a serious discrepancy of Shakespeare's play and historical events occurs. In the play Henry Percy is presented as of similar age as Prince Henry and serves as a model of a perfect son by the king, however, in reality he was even older than the King Henry IV, even though by only 3 years, and there was no sort of rivalry between the prince and Hotspur. As for Sir John Oldcastle and his role in Prince Henry's life it is certain that they knew each other but not the way it is described in Shakespeare's play. Oldcastle owned the prince his ascent as the prince appraised Oldcastle's knightly values.

In 1402 there arose serious problems in Wales once more. One of the armies was entrusted to the young prince, nevertheless, the weather was unfortunately bad and the Welsh escaped to the mountains while king's army was heavily weakened by the weather. The point of mentioning this event is to show that contrary to Shakespeare's character of the prince, the real Prince Henry did not linger in pubs but was engaged in state affairs since his early age. He was protecting the borders with Wales and also joined the battle at Shrewsbury where he was wounded but refused to yield and thus motivated his companion warriors. In comparison with Shakespeare's play, the prince is not believed to be the one to kill Hotspur. It is true that Hotspur died in this battle but it is unknown by whose hand. This and the other rebellion are further described in the following chapter.

As for Henry's role in the Parliament and state affairs after dealing with the rebellion, he demanded his voice in the government and place on the council, however as he had a different opinion as his father it was a bit problematic. For some time he had his say, however, after the king started to think the the only goal of the prince is to take his crown, Henry's authorities were dramatically reduced. Nevertheless, in 1412 he regained his father's trust and began to participate in the

state affairs much more. As far as the scene where the prince takes the crown thinking his father is dead is concerned, it is probably based on a legend which might be truth since king's illness manifested itself by fainting fits. Nonetheless, the legend differs a bit from the scene in Shakespeare's play in a way. Shakespeare highlighted prince's eagerness to have the crown but the legend concentrates on the right of having it, as the king knows his claim to the crown was not without question.

The last thing to mention is the way time is handled in the play. Shakespeare depicts affairs that happened in the time span of approximately eleven years but in the play it seems like the individual events followed one another in a very short time. Obviously, it is impossible to describe everything in detail in a play, which is probably why Shakespeare dealt with the events this way.

In summary, the character of Prince Henry is described in a different fashion in comparison with his real counterpart. Not only the prince but also the events are twisted to fit the plot of the play and also its comical character. It seems that Shakespeare took the most significant parts of King Henry IV's rule and put it in his play.

5.2.3 Rebellions against the King

In the first place, King Henry's rule was definitely not an easy one. From the beginning, he had to struggle with his doubtful claim to the throne, causing his strong dependence on the lords who helped him gain the crown and were later reason for his considerable uneasiness in connection with two notoriously known rebellions. What is more, there were consistent troubles with the Welsh, who were, as always, unwilling to be under English control, at least not wholly. Later on, he also began to have serious health problems, which made him unable to deal with state affairs in the extent he would probably want. Shakespeare deals with all these aspect of Henry IV's reign or at least mentions them, however, he transforms the events to fit his play and need, so the historical reliability is in certain points questionable. This chapter deals

with the rebellions depicted in Shakespeare's play and puts them in comparison with historical reality.

At the beginning of the first part of *King Henry the Fourth* Shakespeare mentions that Owen Glendower captured Edmund Mortimer. It is important to highlight that this event was an escalation of a longer lasting problems happening in Wales. However, there is a similarity with the real historical event. As it happens, in 1402 Glendower truly captured Hotspur's brother-in-law but the circumstances of this event appeared to be rather odd and therefore rumours spread that Mortimer and his troops, surprised by the attack of the Welsh, were defeated thanks to Mortimer's treason. The most substantial issue of this event is not as much the fact that Glendower captured Mortimer, as much as the outcome of the whole situation. The king was forced to march to Wales with heavy force once again but once again failed to achieve some satisfactory results. What is more, the Percies suppressed a rebellion in Scotland. Henry wanted them to hand over the captives but Hotspur refused it. He wanted the king to ransom his brother-in-law which was the king unwilling to do and had serious reasons for it, as Mortimer meanwhile married Glendower's daughter. This and also other events, like the necessity to finance the defence of Wales from Hotspur's private resources, triggered the Percies' rebellion.

To continue with, in 1403 the rebellions in Wales led by Glendower continued. Prince Henry was entrusted to be his father's Lieutenant on the Marches of Wales. From the beginning he had to struggle with inefficient financial support and therefore had to remain at Shrewsbury. He was sent money and could take measures against Glendower, for once with positive results. Nevertheless, the victories he and Thomas Carew gained in Wales would not be possible if Hotspur had reached Glendower's army. The circumstances that led Percies and Glendower to form an alliance are unknown. The rebellion that arised from this alliance is also described in Shakespeare's *King Henry the Fourth*. The battle at Shrewsbury was the decisive point of it. It is crucial to realize that the king was surprised by the fact that Hotspur, his father and the Scottish Earl of Douglas had joined together against him

as he was helping them to settle the matters in Scotland. Fortunately, he was given a notion about the upcoming battle in advance and set out to join the prince in Shrewsbury. Once Hotspur reached Chester he was joined by his uncle, the Earl of Worcester, who was shortly before a steward of Prince Henry's household. Hotspur together with his uncle wanted to win the royal army and join Glendower afterwards this, however, never happened. Shakespeare mentions in his work that the battle broke out because Worcester did not pass on the peace message from the king to Hotspur but this situation is merely based on a narrative. As Kingsford writes in his work it was probably because of king's adviser Earl of March that the battle broke out. It is known fact, victorious was the royal army. As it was already mentioned in the previous chapter some details of the battle described by Shakespeare differs from the reality in certain aspects. For example, Hotspur was not killed by the prince as stated in the play and also the prince did not leave the battlefield unscathed but was wounded in a face. The rebel leaders captured in the battle were beheaded at once. This victory, however, did not settle the matters in the kingdom to peaceful. The Welsh continued to raid the country and the king had to deal with troubles in the north.

Next, after some serious problems with the Welsh an invasion was planned to suppress the Welsh raids. Nevertheless, the invasion had to wait as the news of an open rebellion led by the Earl of Northumberland, who had been joined by Lord Bardolph, Thomas Mowbray and Archbishop of York, reached the prince. The problems in the north required both the prince and the king. Fortunately, the rebellion in 1405 ended before it could even fully start thanks to Mowbray's and Scrope's surrender. Northumberland and Bardolph had escaped from Scotland and joined Glendower in Wales. In spite of their escape they did not gain much. In 1406 the Welsh were defeated and both Northumberland and Bardolph fled. In Shakespeare's play these events are described in a different style. First of all, the outcome of this rebellion in favour of the king is said to be of John of Lancaster's doing. However, the resources do not support this theory and therefore it can be supposed that it is

Shakespeare's invention more than historical reality. What is more, the Earl of Northumberland together with Lord Bardolph are said to be handled by a sheriff of Yorkshire.⁴¹ This information is also not based on truth because, as it was stated above, both Lord Bardolph and the Earl of Northumberland fled to Scotland. As for the Earl of Northumberland he rose again in 1408 and was killed in the following battle. As in the previous cases, the change of historical truth in the play was probably done in order to fit the events to the play and also to highlight the historical value of individual characters.

To summarize this chapter, there are many discrepancies in the whole play such as the character of John Falstaff, who was made worse than he actually was, or the young prince described as lazy and without interest to royal affairs or the rebellions, which were simplified and changed. As it was hinted many times previously, these differences are made to fit the play and also to form the characters and emphasize their changes and deeds. The latter can also be seen as a propaganda feature because it always serves to show the characters in better light and enhance their qualities.

41 Act IV, Scene IV, Lines 105-107
The Second Part of King Henry IV [online] Bartleby [19.11.2014]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2831.html>

6 Shakespeare's Henry V

As well as with the previous play *King Henry the Fourth* this chapter concentrates on comparing the play *The Life of King Henry the Fifth* with historical reality and thus highlighting what can be seen as propaganda features. First there is a plot overview and then the comparison with historical reality follows.

6.1 Summary of Shakespeare's play *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*

To begin with, the play *The Life of King Henry the Fifth* is often considered as patriotic because of several reasons. It highlights Henry V's change and good deeds and the chorus, in contradiction to the text of the play, seems to serve as a sort of idealizing tool as Hilský points out. Also the play was used to encourage the patriotic views during World War II as it was made into a film but with significant changes or shortenings of the text of the play. The following chapter summarizes the play in order to point out the important moments which are later compared with real historical events.

6.1.1 *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*

The play is divided into five acts, each varying in the number of scenes. As for the characters, there are King Henry V, Dukes of Gloucester, Exeter and York, Archbishop of Canterbury, the traitors the Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop and Sir Thomas Grey; Charles VI, the King of France, Lewis, the Dauphin, Dukes of Burgundy, Orleans and Bourbon or a French Herald Mountjoy. Of course, there appear also other characters such as Pistol, Bardolf, Nym or Mistress Quickly.

The Life of King Henry the Fifth begins with the chorus telling people how they should see the play, the actors and the events it covers. The first act begins as the Archbishop of Canterbury talks to the Bishop of Ely about the law which will

dramatically decrease the property of the Church and also the change how the king changed. Afterwards they meet with King Henry, who as asking the archbishop about *the Salique law* and his right to claim the French throne. The archbishop explains that even the contemporary King of France inherited the right to the throne from his grandmother and Henry should therefore claim his right to the throne. Dauphin's envoy brings a gift to the king and tells him to stay away from France but Henry is offended by the gifted tennis balls and tells the envoy that they have just changed into cannonballs.

The second act describes how England is preparing for the war in France and that three noblemen, the Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop and sir Thomas Grey, were bribed by the French to kill the King of England before he sets out to France. Meanwhile in London Bardolf tells how Mistress Quickly married Pistol instead of Nym and there is a quarrel when Pistol and Nym arrive. A boy enters that Falstaff is seriously ill and Nelly remembers how heartbroken he was after the king banished him. The king arrives to Southampton together with the traitors and pretends not to know about the conspiracy. He grants a pardon to a drunkard but the traitors blame him for being indulgent. The king objects that if he does not pardon minor offence how could he pardon bigger crimes and hands them documents proving their treason. They confess immediately and the king is resentful how easily they betrayed him and lets them execute. In London Pistol informs the others about Falstaff's death and they set out to France. King Charles VI is preparing to meet the English and is worried. Dauphin claims it will be easy to defeat them but the constable objects that the King of England changed a lot and also he is a descendant of the Black Prince. Exeter comes with a message from Henry inviting the King of France to renounce the throne and reminds Dauphin that his joke with the tennis balls will not go unnoticed.

The chorus asks the audience to imagine disembarking of the English army and siege of Harfleur and Henry's reply to French king's offer to surrender in exchange for the princess and some duchy. The third act itself begins with Henry commanding to proceed with the attack and Pistol and Nym are probed into the

battle. The time for negotiation arrives and King Henry states the city will be razed to the ground and its inhabitants killed. Harfleur then surrenders and Henry leaves for Calais. Princess Catherine tries to learn English from a lady attending her. King Charles is furious because King Henry crossed the river Somme and Dauphin complains about French women being too friendly with English soldiers. Charles wants Henry captured and the constable says it will be easy to defeat tired English troops. Bardolf is caught stealing in a church and is beheaded. Others are warned by King Henry to handle French people with respect. The King of England is asked to withdraw, however, he only says he hopes to reach Calais but if they attempt to stop him he will fight.

As well as the previous acts, also the fourth act begins with the chorus. It describes the night before the battle and how the armies deal with the upcoming battle. King Henry goes disguised in the camp and talks firstly to Pistol and afterwards with three soldiers. He claims to belong to Thomas Erpingham's troop and supports king's decision start this war. There is a contradiction in what he and what the soldiers think about the war. After returning to his tent he thinks about what the soldiers said and how much and if he is any different from them. Then he asks God for forgiveness that his father took the throne by force. There is sixty thousand soldiers in the French army, which means there is a strong superiority five to one. Westmoreland wants at least ten thousand more men but the king opposes that the less they are the bigger the glory for them. The battle begins and against the odds the French are quickly dispersed but Bourbon commands to next attack. King Henry lacks men to guard the captives and orders them to be killed. The French kill the boys who were guarding the luggage which somehow justifies that King Henry killed the captives. Montjoy asks for permission to count and burry their dead which means that the English won the battle. There are ten thousand dead in the French army but only twenty five soldiers and three noblemen in English army. The king prepares to leave France.

The chorus describes how the king returned to England and was celebrated.

In France, Fluellen forces Pistol to eat a leek because he was mocking it. Pistol says that Nelly died and decides to go back to England and be a pickpocket. King Henry V, Westmoreland, Exeter, Bedford and others meet with King Charles VI, his wife, princess Catherine, Duke of Burgundy and others. They meet to discuss the conditions of peace. King Henry is left alone with the princess and Alice and wants her to say she will marry him. In the end the King of France agrees to all the conditions including marriage of his daughter with Henry. They hope their child will ensure the peace between the two countries. Henry V kisses the princess and plans the wedding. The chorus ends the play with an epilogue from which is obvious that England lost France because of greedy people who ruled instead of small Henry VI.

6.2 Propaganda Elements in Shakespeare's Play *The Life of King Henry the Fifth*

This chapter concentrates on the differences and discrepancies in the play *The Life of King Henry the Fifth* in comparison with reality. Two major events, the treason of Cambridge, Scrope and Grey and the battle of Agincourt, are further analysed and dealt with to point out the differences between the play and reality. As it was already said in the first chapter, the play itself, as well as other Shakespeare's plays, is not a propaganda play as it is, however, there are certain propaganda features.

6.2.1 The Treason of the Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop and Sir Thomas Grey

To begin with, this subchapter deals with the issue of an unfulfilled conspiracy against the King Henry V. As it was already hinted in the third chapter, Henry V did not have many troubles with rebellions as his father had, not only because he treated both the nobility and ordinary people with respect and kindness, but also because he was not seen as an usurper of the throne as his father was.

However, at the beginning of his reign there was a problem with the lollard movement, not dealt with in Shakespeare's play, and also there was the mentioned conspiracy of Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scrope and Sir Thomas Grey which is further described below.

On 31st July 1415, Edmund Mortimer, the Earl of March arrived at Porchester castle and insisted on having an immediate audience with the king.⁴² The reason for this was for the king certainly shocking. The Earl of March confessed to be the stooge of the plot prepared by the three conspirators. As it was clear from Cambridge's confession, the plan was to move the Earl of March to safety in Wales and firstly with the help of the Scots and secondly the Lollards seize the power and proclaim the Earl of March the King of England. The reasons of Earl of Cambridge were not as surprising, because even though, he was not forgotten by the king, in comparison with his brother, the Duke of York and close companion to the king, he was "only" granted the title of earl and pension of 350 mark but no lands or the prospect. Thanks to his marriage with Anne Mortimer, the sister of the Earl of March, his son was would under certain conditions inherit all the claims of the Mortimers together with the rights to throne. Therefore he felt probably unsatisfactory rewarded and treated by the king. Nevertheless here arises the discrepancy between Shakespeare's play and the historical reality.

K.Hen. [...] My Lord of Cambridge here,
You know how apt our love was to accord
To furnish him with all appertinents
Belonging to his honour; and this man
Hath, for a few light crowns, lightly conspir'd,⁴³

His intentions were not only because of the money, as Shakespeare suggests in his play, but also because of the dynastic rights of Edmund Mortimer to throne. To be

42 MATUSIAK, John. *Henry V*. Routledge, 2012. 281 p. ISBN 0-415-62026-0, p. 123;

But KINGSFORD, Charles L. *Henry V.: The Typical Mediaeval Hero*. G.P. Putnam's sons, 1901. 418 p., p. 124, states it happened on 20th July 1415

43 Act II, Scene II, Line 89-93

The Life of King Henry the Fifth [online] Bartleby [14.1.2015]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2922.html>

more precise, the whole idea of the conspiracy in Shakespeare's play is to gain more money but in fact, the point was to highlight the dynastic rights.

However, the reasons of another participant of the conspiracy, Lord Scrope, are not as clear as Cambridge's. He had been a Royal Treasurer and was very close to the king. Also, he played a significant role in negotiations with France. Therefore, it is not clear why he consented to join this conspiracy. Shakespeare writes that the conspirator were bribed by the French and as Kingsford writes in his book:

Popular rumour alleged that the conspirator were bribed with French gold; if there is any truth in this story it is perhaps possible that Scrope was the go-between, and the mercenary author of the whole conspiracy.⁴⁴

But as it is obvious from this statement, there is probably no evidence proving that this conspiracy was really paid with the French money but Shakespeare writes about this fact as if it were true. The reason may be as usual to highlight some purpose in the play, in this case, the war in France.

The third man involved in this conspiracy was, as mentioned above, Sir Thomas Grey. As a brother-in-law to the Earl of Northumberland and son-in-law to the Earl of Westmoreland, he was indeed a dangerous enemy to the king.

From this it is obvious that the conspirators were not ordinary people but members of higher social class and therefore had the possibility to influence other people. They endangered king's position and it is only natural that the king acted very quickly to settle the matter. They were all found guilty and were beheaded.

To conclude, this event was, besides the Lollard uprising in 1414, the only major rebellion against Henry's position. The way Shakespeare deals with it in his play is, in comparison with the reality, changed but the names and the aim of the treason was left intact.

44 KINGSFORD, Charles L. *Henry V.: The Typical Mediaeval Hero*. G.P. Putnam's sons, 1901. 418 p.; p. 123

6.2.2 The Battle of Agincourt

To begin with, the most significant event in Shakespeare's *The Life of King Henry the Fifth* is surely the conquest of France, or more precisely, the famous battle of Agincourt. Not only it is an important feature of Shakespeare's play but as Hilský mentions it had and still has a great value in certain periods of history because of its military and national significance.

In the play the conquest was preceded by parliamentary sessions concentrating on Henry's claim to the French throne. Contrary to Shakespeare's play, the Archbishop of Canterbury did not have his speech concerning the *Salique law* and probably did not participate in the parliamentary sessions dealing with this problematic. Another point is that even though there were preparations for a law thanks to which the king would gain considerable amount of church's property, it was the matter of Henry IV's reign, however, it was never discussed again during the reign of Henry V. The church donated king's wars but to an extent mentioned in the play. Last but not least, the story with the tennis balls is not based on historical event but in Shakespeare's time had a strong propaganda significance.⁴⁵

Firstly, as the English disembarked at the shore of France about three miles from Harfleur it was important to besiege the town as it was strategically well positioned. The town was not very well protected but still it took some time to the English to gain complete control of it. As Kingsford mentions in his work, the English army was suffering from fever and dysentery because of bad food and also for autumn very warm weather, which made it difficult for the soldiers in their armour. An interesting notion is that among the soldier who died of fever or dysentery was also the Earl of Suffolk. This information is in contradiction to Shakespeare's play as he states there that Suffolk died in the battle of Agincourt together with the Duke of York.

45 HILSKÝ, Martin. *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*. Academia, 2010. 1. edition, 909 p. ISBN 978-80-200-1857-1; p. 384

K.Hen. Where is the number of our English dead? [*Herald presents another paper.*] Edward the Duke of York, the Earl of Suffolk,⁴⁶

As Kingsford points out, also the French had to deal with diseases. Nevertheless, they were reluctant to surrender until they found out there is no help coming. Harfleur was secured against potential enemies with a garrison under the command of the Earl of Dorset and Henry decided to move back to Calais and then to England. On their way to Calais there were several minor skirmishes, however, the real problem arised as they got nearer the ford of Blanche-Tague, where they planned to cross the Somme. A Gascogne man was captured and claimed that the ford is held by a six thousand army. But as Kingsford states in his book, certain chronicler wrote that the story was completely made up and there didn't have to be any battle. However, the English believed the story and resolved to reach Calais some other way. Nevertheless, all the bridges across the Somme were destroyed and the opposite bank was guarded by French forces. On the 19th October they finally managed to cross the Somme. The French stated there will oppose the English army on their way to Calais and after several days both armies stopped near the village of Agincourt.

The evening before the battle was very different in the French and English camps. Contrary to the perfect order that reigned in the English camp, the French were disorganised and as they were assembled hastily they had no proper equipment either. An important detail of the battle was that the night before it was stormy with heavy rain which seriously affected the conditions on the battlefield. On the morning of the battle Henry chose to divide his army in three division with the archers on either wing and all the men-at-arms were, in comparison to the French, on foot, the king included. As for the size of the armies it is difficult to say specific number as this information differs in various sources, but it can be assumed that the English was around ten thousand men,⁴⁷ the French had at least three times as many men as the

46 Act IV, Scene VIII, Lines 69-70

The Life of King Henry the Fifth [online] Bartleby [14.1.2015]

<http://www.bartleby.com/70/2948.html>

47 Here the sources diverge not as much as in case of the French army.

English. The French formed in a fairly strong position, if they remained in defensive, about a mile away from the English army but the battlefield narrowed towards the English which appeared to be the one of the decisive facts of the battle. Other problems of the army were in the way they organized their divisions and also not including their archers in the formation. Kingsford describes the French army as follows:

The first division included a good number of crossbowmen, who should on all sound principles have held the foremost place; but the men-at-arms would not give way to them, saying that they did not need their help, so that they were stationed a little in the rear, where they could be of no use whatever. The men-at-arms themselves were crowded so close together that they could not handle their pikes without shortening them; and their long coats of mail, plate-armour, and greaves were so heavy that they could not march without difficulty.⁴⁸

From this it is obvious that the French thought they were strong enough and did not consider the possibility of losing this battle.

There was one more offer to the English to surrender but they decided against it and marched forward within the bowshot of the enemy and came to a halt. The archers planted their stakes in front of them as a protection and waited. As the French cavalry saw the archers getting ready they decided to override them but the space, as it was already mentioned, was narrow and it was impossible for the French to charge effectively and the ones that reached the English were slain. The rest turned and retreated spreading disarray amongst the French army. What is more, the main line began to advance against the original plan. They had to cross a newly ploughed field, sodden with rain and turned into morass thanks to constant trampling the previous night. It made their advance extremely difficult and though they continued to press on, the English archers fulfilled their task and the columns of the French were so tight they could scarcely move their weapons. The front lines fell beneath the arrows and those behind stumbled over the dead and wounded. The English archers drew their swords and axes and went ahead and as the whole English army moved

48 KINGSFORD, Charles L. *Henry V.: The Typical Mediaeval Hero*. G.P. Putnam's sons, 1901. 418 p. ; p.148

with them the French were slain. Most of the French rear-guard fled without even joining the battle as they saw the situation was seriously to their disadvantage. The English were engaged in the battle when news arrived there is an imminent threat of another attack, Henry ordered to kill all the French prisoners. The battle was won by Henry's perfect leading but also by the French disorder and wrong assessing of the situation.

As for Shakespeare's depiction of the battle it was made suitable for the play but there appears to be only one discrepancy concerning the French prisoners. The play presented it as an answer to killings of the boys who guarded English baggage, however, as Hilský points out, there is no evidence to prove this story. It is highly possibly that, as with most of the discrepancies in the play, Shakespeare modified this story to make the King of England look even more heroic. Otherwise there are no differences as far as the battle of Agincourt is concerned.

To conclude, the battle was one of the most amazing English victories and it is only natural that Shakespeare chose it as the principal motif of his play. It also explains why it was so popular in Shakespeare's time and even now as it highlights the heroic nature of the battle and Henry's decision. Certainly, it has features of propaganda but not in the negative meaning of the word.

7 Shakespeare's Henry VIII

This chapter deals with Shakespeare's play *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth* concentrating on its comparison with reality in order to point out the features of propaganda. A summary of the play is given, followed by chapters focusing on different events and aspects of the play contrasted with real historical events.

7.1 Summary of Shakespeare's *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*

To begin with, it is crucial to mention the difference among the previous two historical plays and *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*. Both *King Henry the Fourth* and *The Life of King Henry V* put the kings to the centre of the plot and highlight their life, achievements and, in the case of Henry IV, his death and fall from power. Unlike the previous two, Henry VIII is presented mostly in a positive way and the rise and fall undergo other character such as Anne Boleyn, Cardinal Wolsey, Queen Catherine and others. As Hilský points out the play is classified as a historical play more for its name than for its content and handling of the character of the king. The following chapter highlights the important events in the play some of which are later contrasted with reality.

7.1.1 *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*

This play is divided into five acts, each with different number of scenes. There are many different characters but among the most important the following can be named: the King Henry VIII, Cardinal Wolsey, Queen Catherine, Anne Boleyn, Dukes of Buckingham, Norfolk and Suffolk; Earl of Surrey, Thomas Cranmer and also Stephen Gardiner.

The first act shows the very important conversation between Buckingham

and Norfolk. Besides discussing the meeting of the French and English King, Buckingham also disapproves of Cardinal Wolsey's behaviour and actions which are unknown to the king. He wants Wolsey to be punished but Norfolk warns him about cardinal's power. He is afraid that everything Buckingham knows can be turned against him but Buckingham insists that his findings are duly justified. However, Buckingham is arrested and taken to the Tower. The king is about to hear Buckingham's defence but Queen Catherine warns the king against Wolsey and the Duke of Norfolk mentions the newly established taxation which caused disturbances among the public. Even though Wolsey is behind them, he denies his guilt. Wolsey defends himself unexpectedly skilfully and what is more, he turns the events which happened lately for the benefit of himself. The surveyor of the Duke of Buckingham gives evidence against his lord and although he lies the king believes him. Queen Katherine is disgusted by the behaviour of the cardinal. Wolsey hosts a masked ball and among the guests is also Anne Boleyn. After a while the king comes in a disguise and dances with Anne but is recognised by the cardinal. Henry inquires Lord Chamberlain about Anne, obviously charmed by her beauty.

In the second act of the play the Duke of Buckingham is sentenced for treason and asks his friends to pray for him. There is a rumour about king's uncertainty about his marriage with a former wife of his brother.

Cham.: It seems the marriage with his brother's wife
Has crept too near his conscience.⁴⁹

The cardinal is suspected to be behind king's doubts. Cardinal Campeius arrives from Rome to help with the upcoming process and the king asks his secretary to inform the queen about it. Anne Boleyn is given the title of Marquess of Pembroke by the king. Catherine is defending herself in front of the king and accuses the cardinal of being instigator of her suffering and refuses to be judged by him as she thinks he is too biased against her. She wants this cased to be judged by the pope himself.

49 Act II, Scene II, Lines 13-14

The Famous History of the King Henry the Eighth [online] Bartleby [26.1.2015]
<http://www.bartleby.com/70/3422.html>

The third act shows devastated Catherine and is visited by Cardinals Wolsey and Campeius, who try to persuade her to let the problem be solved by the king. She does not want to but in the end she agrees. The king is angry as he read a letter written by Wolsey to the pope asking him to postpone the decision about king's divorce with Catherine of Aragon. Nevertheless, the king has been already married to Anne Boleyn without cardinal's knowledge. Among the documents there is also list of Wolsey's property which shocks the king and as Wolsey arrives he is deprived of his position and realizes this is his end.

The major point of the fourth act is the coronation of Anne Boleyn which is connected with celebrations and contrasted with the living conditions of the former Queen. A strange relationship between Stephen Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester, and Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury is mention as well. The news about Wolsey's death reach Catherine and even though she hated him she changes her opinion after nice words of her servant. She falls asleep and has a vision about angles. As she wakes up, she writes a letter to the king and the act ends with her death.

The last act begins as Gardiner finds out about Anne giving birth and makes a notion that without her and Cranmer, the archbishop, England would be better. Henry receives Cranmer to talk to him about the upcoming hearing in front of the Privy Council. He knows Cranmer is loyal to him and exhorts him to say everything. He also assures him that he stands behind him and will protect him if necessary. After their conversation and old lady comes to announce a birth of a baby girl. Cranmer is left standing outside the hall where the Privy Council meets and after he is summoned the situation escalates in the attempt of the Council to take him to the Tower. However the king arrives very angry with the behaviour of the Council and forces them to reconcile. The christening of the baby princess Elisabeth is held and Cranmer foretells her astonishing future. The king is very happy about having a daughter.

7.2 Propaganda Elements in Shakespeare's *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*

This chapter covers the features of propaganda in Shakespeare's play *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth*. As it was already hinted in the previous chapter, the play differs from other of Shakespeare's historical play in its depiction of the king. This fact itself can be easily seen as propagandistic but there are also other features. Shakespeare tends to omit the negative sites of the reign of Henry VIII or at least makes them seem more appealing. There are two main events which are of high significance in the reign of Henry VIII and are dealt with and contrasted with reality in the following subchapters. These are the influence of Cardinal Wolsey and Henry's marriages to Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. Apart from this, there is also a serious condensation of time. It is not very surprising as it happened also in the previous two plays but in the case of *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth* the time span is about twenty five years, which is unusually long time. Precisely, it was since the meeting of Francis I of France with Henry VIII at the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520 until Cranmer's summons to the Privy Council in 1544.⁵⁰

7.2.1 Wolsey's Influence during the Reign of Henry VIII

Firstly, Cardinal Wolsey played an immensely big role in the reign of Henry VIII. As the king was more fond of hunting and tournaments rather than political issues he let Wolsey rule instead of him for almost fifteen years. Wolsey was very skillful not only on the field of domestic policy but also foreign policy and law. Though a member of church he did not hold to humble life of a religious man. He held expensive parties, took bribes, freely traded with the property of the church and was very rich. However, his loyalty to the king and king's support were strong enough to allow him do as he pleased.⁵¹ This chapter contrast Wolsey's involvement in

50 KLACLOVÁ, Milena. *Shakespearův Jindřich VIII - realita a fikce*. Bakalářská práce, 2012.

51 HILSKÝ, Martin. *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*. Academia, 2010. 1. edition, 909 p. ISBN 978-80-200-

Buckingham's case, the newly established taxation and also Wolsey's fall from power, all of these mentioned in the play, with historical reality.

As far as Buckingham's case is concerned, it was definitely more important issue than presented in the play. Contrary to Shakespeare's play the Duke of Buckingham was not tried and sentenced for treason just because cardinal Wolsey did not like him. As Scarisbrick observes in his book, the Duke of Buckingham was a serious threat to the king and throne, however, it was probably his own fault that he ended sentenced for treason. Certain prior allegedly told the duke that one day he would be a king. And there was more disconcerting information addressed to the king.

When on another occasion the duke thought that he had so offended the king that he might find himself facing despatch to the Tower, he declared that, were this to happen, he would do what his father had wanted to do for Richard III, that is, kneel before him and then stab him;[...] he had boasted of how he would wait for more opportune time to carry out his design, talked of those nobles who would support him and said that all Henry had done was done unjustly. He had accused Wolsey of heinous vice and of procuring for the king, and declared that the death of Henry's son was divine vengeance.⁵²

It is no wonder the king felt that the possibility of rebellion threatens and with Wolsey's support and his hatred towards the duke there were no more obstacles in accusing Buckingham of treason and sentencing him to death. The crucial evidence was given by Buckingham's former surveyor. The play states that Wolsey bribed him but Scarisbrick only states that the surveyor reached Wolsey with the evidence, however, says nothing about the bribe.

As far as the taxation mentioned in the play is concerned, it is indeed, to certain extend, based on historical reality. In 1525 Wolsey established a taxation in order to lower the impact of inflation and also to pay some of king's expenses on warring. The taxation was ironically called "Amicable Grant" but it was so high that it caused serious furore and the king was forced to invalidate it and grant a pardon to

1857-1; p 397

52 SCARISBRICK, J.J. *Henry VIII*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968. 561 p. ISBN 0-520-01130-9; p. 121

those who could not afford to pay it. It was one of Wolsey's ill-conceived mistakes, nevertheless, it is important to note that he was otherwise very skillful on the field of taxes. "He adroitly opposed the parliament and argued with them until he reached at least some success."⁵³ This ability undoubtedly helped Wolsey to gain and maintain king's favour as he was able to bring money for king's different activities.

Last, there were several things which causes Wolsey's fall from power, all of them partially caused by his greed. First of these things was his inability to secure the annulment of Henry's marriage with Catherine of Aragon and also the fact, that he was negotiating other bride than the king had in mind. The king wanted to marry Anne Boleyn but Wolsey disliked her because of her support of Protestantism and reformation in the continental Europe, especially German speaking countries. What is more, he was fearing the influence she had on the king. The moment the king found out about Wolsey's secret negotiations about marrying him to someone else than Anne Boleyn he was furious. Is if this was not enough, he also found documents containing the list of Wolsey's property unfortunately folded among other state documents by the cardinal. He had to face king's disgrace and was stripped of all his property except for York. Wolsey was arrested and died on his way to London in the morning of 29th November 1530.⁵⁴

To conclude this chapter, cardinal Wolsey was the victim of his own greed and also of king's cruelty to certain extend. His rise was steep as well as was his fall, which was described, in a shorter version, also in Shakespeare's play. Wolsey was oblivious to his enemies and it was surely one of the thing that made his fall even quicker.

53 KLACLOVÁ, Milena. *Shakespearův Jindřich VIII - realita a fikce*. Bakalářská práce, 2012. p. 15

54 WRANGHAM, Francis. *The British Plutarch: containing the lives of the most eminent divines, patriots, statesmen, warriors, philosophers, poets, and artists of Great Britain and Ireland, from the accession of Henry VIII, to the present time. Vol. I*. London: J. Mawman, 1816. 574 p.; pages 44-74

7.2.2 Henry VIII and His Relationship with Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn

This subchapter concentrates on the marriage of Henry VIII and his first two wives, Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. Shakespeare's play *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth* highlights the end of Henry's first marriage with Catherine of Aragon and beginnings of his second marriage with Anne Boleyn.

Firstly, Catherine of Aragon was originally married to Henry's older brother Arthur. However, Arthur died six months after their marriage in 1502. As both the King of England and the King of Spain wanted to preserve their mutual alliance they negotiated the marriage of prince Henry with the widow after prince Arthur, Catherine. Nevertheless, there were two obstacles which needed to be dealt with and later one of them appeared to be the main supportive evidence in Henry's successful attempt to annul his marriage with Catherine.⁵⁵ The first one was that the princess was five and half year older than Henry and second was the fact that the Bible forbid to marry Henry to marry wife of his brother.⁵⁶ In April 1509 the King Henry VII died and his son Henry succeeded as Henry VIII. His doubts about the marriage with Catherine of Aragon were chased away by Ferdinand of Aragon and they were married in June 1509. Catherine had an unprecedented influence, on that time, on the king. She gave him advice and he discussed a lot with her. In their time this was something unique because queens were not supposed to talk to the reign.

Unfortunately, the queen was unable to give Henry a male heir to the throne and as she gave birth to a dead baby-boy his doubts about the marriage deepened.

55 However, to make it happen the Reformation in England started and Henry was named the head of the newly established Church of England (1531) and with the help of Thomas Cranmer gained the annulment he wanted so much.

56 "And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it [is] an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless." Leviticus 20,21; but it is important to note that this was not a very convincing evidence as there is another important part of the Bible defining this case otherwise: "If brethren shall dwell together, and one of them shall die and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without to a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in to her, and take her to him for a wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her." Deuteronomy 25,5

What is more, one of his mistresses gave birth to a healthy boy (1519) which did not help to put his doubts to rest. As Ford states in his book it only supported them:

Henry believed that if he could father healthy sons with other women, it was obviously due to some problem with Katherine that they could not produce a male heir together. Henry thought again about the curse in the Bible on a marriage with a dead brother's widow. He decided it was clearly his duty to marry again, regardless of what the pope said.⁵⁷

In 1526 Henry started to court Anne Boleyn and in 1527 proceeding to annul the first marriage started. Shakespeare's shows the whole process in a very simplified version as Catherine was unwilling to let the pope decide this case, in fact it was not until May 1533 that Henry gained the annulment. In January 1533 he secretly married Anne Boleyn even though his marriage with Catherine was not yet annulled but she had been banished from the court in 1531.⁵⁸ The conditions in which Catherine was forced to live after the annulment were pitiful. She fell ill and very often argued with the king about different matters. She died in 1536.

Secondly, there is the matter of Henry's relationship with Anne Boleyn. The king certainly met Anne Boleyn on one of cardinal's feast in 1522 but gave her no attention as at that time it was Anne's sister Marry, who was his mistress. His interest turned to Anne some time later but it was only in a form of secret admiration. Nevertheless, since he wanted her for himself, he did not hesitate to ask Wolsey to cancel her secret engagement with Henry Percy. In 1526 the king appeared on tournament with words written on his attire: "Declare I dare not." This year is considered to be the beginning of king's efforts to attract Anne Boleyn. Still he was unpleasantly surprised when Anne refused to become his mistress. Therefore Henry realized that the only way he can have her is to marry her. Anne was hesitant about his proposal but at the end of the year 1527 she finally decided to say yes. He immediately started to act and attempted to annul his marriage with Catherine of Aragon. In 1531 Henry VIII broke up with Catherine after he became the head of the

57 FORD, Nick. *Henry VIII: the king, his six wives, and his court*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2005. 112 p. ISBN 1-4042-0163-7; p. 50

58 WEIR, Alison. *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*. Grove Press, 2007. 656 p. ISBN 0-8021-3683-4; p. xi

Church of England. Two years later he secretly married Anne Boleyn and in the same year she gave birth to princess Elizabeth. Even though the play orders these events so that it seems they happened in a short time the reality was quite different. It was eleven years since Henry met Anne for the first time until their marriage in 1533.

Finally, it is important to highlight the changes in time order of the play. There are several events which overlap or follow shortly in succession. As it is obvious from the previous two chapters cardinal Wolsey and Catherine of Aragon did not die in the same year. In fact, Wolsey died in 1530 when the queen was still present at the court, she died in 1536. Also, Wolsey was not alive when the king married Anne Boleyn as the play states. Another difference concerns the title of Marquess of Pembroke granted to Anne Boleyn. In the play Henry granted it to her in time when Wolsey was still alive and Catherine was still queen and present at the court. None of this actually fits the reality as she was not granted the title until 1532. This feature certainly distinguishes this play from the previous two, though it was common that the time was somehow shortened there the events still succeeded in the same way as in reality. In *The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth* Shakespeare seems to abandon the historical reliability of the previous two plays and tends to make the events and features of the play seem more positive than they were in reality. This can surely be seen as a propagandistic feature and as Hilský observes the play was probably written on the occasion of engagement celebrations of princess Elizabeth with Frederick V.⁵⁹ Therefore it can be appraised in both ways. Either it was meant as a propagandistic or as a celebrative play or may combine both features.

To conclude this chapter, it is obvious this play differs quite a lot from the previous two not only in the way it handles the time order but also in its approach to depicting the king. It is surely surprising that Shakespeare chose this way of depicting Henry's life and it can be seen as ironic that the original name of this play was *All is True*. As there are many aspects, concerning Wolsey or the queen, that are certainly not true.

59 HILSKÝ, Martin. *Shakespeare a jeviště svět*. Academia, 2010. 1. edition, 909 p. ISBN 978-80-200-1857-1; p. 402

Conclusion

The aim of this work was to compare three of Shakespeare's plays with various historical sources in order to find and highlight propaganda features in the individual plays.

As Shakespeare chose certainly very famous personalities for his plays it was not difficult to search for sources concentrated on the specific periods, however, the main task arose in finding the most interesting events in the play and afterwards in the secondary literature. The topic proved to be very extensive as Henry IV, V and VIII were undoubtedly significant personages of the British history and the time of their reigns is full of remarkable affairs. The topic of this thesis can surely be further developed in many aspects.

The most enriching part of working on this thesis was not only to uncover the differences among the individual plays but also to ascertain various information about the reigns of the kings and the seemingly insignificant aspects that preceded the significant events. Another gripping feature is definitely the way Shakespeare wrote his plays and his approach to changing the historical truth. It is obvious from this thesis that he had diverse reasons for doing so and it could be subject for further research.

The first chapter gave more precise description about what it is a propaganda play and helped to explain the choice of the aspects of propaganda in next chapters. As for the historical background in the next three chapters, it was crucial to enlist the sequence of events in the reigns of the kings in order to highlight the differences in Shakespeare's plays. The information uncovered in the first three chapters was later useful in the comparison of the plays with reality and gave the reader a lead as what to look for in the plays. As far as the actual analysis of the plays is concerned there are several similarities among them such as in the case of depicting the king in a more positive way than the reality was. It can be seen in all three plays but it is most remarkable in the play *The Famous History of the Life of*

King Henry the Eighth.

To conclude, writing this thesis was definitely beneficial to the author not only in the case of clarifying the course of different matters during the reigns of the three kings but also helped to extend the knowledge about the individual kings.

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